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A PROPOSAL FOR A TYPOLOGICAL
READING OF DANIEL 11

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A PROPOSAL FOR A TYPOLOGICAL
READING OF DANIEL 11

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For the glory of God

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	viii
PREFACE.....	xii
Chapter	
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
History of Interpretation of Daniel 11	1
Pseudo-Prophecy View	2
Assessment of Pseudo-Prophecy View	6
Single Fulfillment View	9
Assessment of Single Fulfillment View	20
Typological Interpretation	21
Assessment of Typological Interpretation.....	25
Summary	26
Thesis and Methodology.....	27
2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF DANIEL 11.....	29
The Kings of Persia	29
Cyrus the Great (558–530 BC).....	29
Cambyses II (530–522 BC).....	31
Smerdis/Gaumata (522 BC)	33
Darius the Great (522–486 BC).....	36
Xerxes I (486–465 BC)	37
Artaxerxes I (465–424 BC).....	39

Chapter	Page
Xerxes II (424 BC).....	40
Secydianus (424 BC).....	41
Darius II (423–404 BC).....	41
Artaxerxes II (404–358 BC).....	42
Artaxerxes III (358–338 BC)	44
Artaxerxes IV (338–336 BC).....	45
Darius III (336–330 BC)	45
The Hellenistic Kings	47
Alexander the Great (336–323 BC).....	47
The Successors (323–275 BC)	48
The Seleucids and the Ptolemies	50
Onias III and the Temple of Leontopolis	58
Antiochus IV and Daniel 11:21–45	62
General Observations	62
Descriptions That Fit Antiochus IV	63
Descriptions That Do Not Fit Well with Antiochus IV.....	63
Conclusion	66
3. TYPOLOGY IN OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECIES: CASE STUDIES	68
2 Samuel 7:12–16	70
Interpretations of 2 Samuel 7:12–16	72
A Typological Interpretation	78
Summary	87
Isaiah 7:14.....	87
Interpretations of Isaiah 7:14.....	88
A Typological Interpretation of Isaiah 7:14.....	101

Chapter	Page
Summary	107
Conclusion	108
4. A TYPOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION OF DANIEL 11: PART 1.....	110
Verse-by-Verse Commentary	110
Daniel 11:2	117
Daniel 11:3–4	120
Daniel 11:5	120
Daniel 11:6	121
Daniel 11:7–9	122
Daniel 11:10–12	124
Daniel 11:13	126
Daniel 11:14	126
Daniel 11:15	127
Daniel 11:16	127
Daniel 11:17	129
Daniel 11:18	130
Daniel 11:19	131
Daniel 11:20	132
Daniel 11 and the Akkadian Prophecies	136
Conclusion	140
5. A TYPOLOGICAL READING OF DANIEL 11: PART 2.....	142
Verse-by-Verse Commentary	142
Daniel 11:21	142
Daniel 11:22	143
Daniel 11:23	146

Chapter	Page
Daniel 11:24	147
Daniel 11:25–27	150
Daniel 11:28	153
Daniel 11:29–31	153
Daniel 11:32–35	158
Daniel 11:36–39	160
Daniel 11:40–45	167
A Proposal for a Typological Reading of Daniel 11	174
Ambiguities Exist in the Prophecy	175
Discrepancies Exist between the Prophecy and the (Initial) Fulfillment(s)	176
Scripture Supports Multiple Fulfillments	177
Fulfillments Fulfill the Type	179
Not All Fulfillments Are Equal	180
Conclusion	181
6. CONCLUSION	183
Summary of the Study	182
Implications of the Study	185
BIBLIOGRAPHY	189

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AB	Anchor Bible
ABD	<i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i> . Edited by D. N. Freedman. 6 vols. New York: Doubleday, 1992
ABR	<i>Australian Biblical Review</i>
ACW	Ancient Christian Writers
AfO	<i>Archiv für Orientforschung</i>
AJSL	<i>The American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures</i>
Ant.	<i>Jewish Antiquities</i>
ApOTC	Apollos Old Testament Commentary
BASOR	<i>Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research</i>
BDB	Brown, Francis, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs. <i>A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> . Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House, 1994. Accordance Bible Software
BIOSCS	<i>Bulletin of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies</i>
BJS	Brown Judaic Studies
BSac	<i>Bibliotheca Sacra</i>
BSC	Bible Student's Commentary
CBQ	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
ConcC	Concordia Commentary
COS	<i>Context of Scripture</i> . Edited by William W. Hallo. 3 vols. Leiden: Brill, 1997–
CTJ	<i>Calvin Theological Journal</i>
DJD	Discoveries in the Judaean Desert
EDBT	<i>Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology</i> . Edited by Walter A. Elwell.

Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1996

<i>ETL</i>	<i>Ephemerides theologicae lovanienses</i>
<i>ExpTim</i>	<i>Expository Times</i>
<i>FGH</i>	<i>Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker</i>
<i>HUCA</i>	<i>Hebrew Union College Annual</i>
ICC	International Critical Commentary
<i>IEJ</i>	<i>Israel Exploration Journal</i>
<i>Int</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
ITC	International Theological Commentary
<i>JAH</i>	<i>Journal of Ancient History</i>
<i>JAJ</i>	<i>Journal of Ancient Judaism</i>
JAL	Jewish Apocryphal Literature Series
<i>JAOS</i>	<i>Journal of the American Oriental Society</i>
<i>JATS</i>	<i>Journal of the Adventist Theological Society</i>
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JBR</i>	<i>Journal of Bible and Religion</i>
<i>JCS</i>	<i>Journal of Cuneiform Studies</i>
<i>JEA</i>	<i>Journal of Egyptian Archaeology</i>
<i>JETS</i>	<i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
<i>JHS</i>	<i>Journal of Hellenic Studies</i>
<i>JISCA</i>	<i>Journal of International Society of Christian Apologetics</i>
<i>JNES</i>	<i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i>
<i>JSJ</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Period</i>
<i>JSOT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i>
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement
KAT	Kommentar zum Alten Testament
LCL	Loeb Classical Library

MSJ	The Master's Seminary Journal
NAC	New American Commentary
NCB	New Century Bible
NICOT	The New International Commentary on the Old Testament
<i>NIB</i>	<i>The New Interpreter's Bible</i> . Edited by Leander E. Keck. 12 vols. Nashville: Abingdon, 1994–2004
<i>NIDOTTE</i>	<i>New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis</i> . Edited by Willem A. VanGemeren. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997. Accordance Bible Software
<i>OGIS</i>	<i>Orientalis Graeci Inscriptiones Selectae</i> . Edited by Wilhelm Dittenberger. 2 vols. Leipzig: Hirzel, 1903–1905
OTL	Old Testament Library
<i>PAAJR</i>	<i>Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research</i>
<i>REJ</i>	<i>Revue des études juives</i>
<i>RestQ</i>	<i>Restoration Quarterly</i>
<i>RSR</i>	<i>Recherches de Science Religieuse</i>
<i>SBET</i>	<i>Scottish Bulletin of Evangelical Theology</i>
SHBC	Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary
<i>SJOT</i>	<i>Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament</i>
SPIB	Scripta Pontificii Instituti Biblici
<i>ST</i>	<i>Studia Theologica</i>
STDJ	Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah
<i>TDNT</i>	<i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i> . Edited by G. Kittel and G. Friedrich. Translated by G. W. Bromiley. 10 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964–1976. Accordance Bible Software
<i>TDOT</i>	<i>Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament</i> . Edited by G. J. Botterweck and H. Ringgren. Translated by J. T. Willis, G. W. Bromiley, and D. E. Green. 8 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974–
TOTC	Tyndale Old Testament Commentary
<i>TS</i>	<i>Theological Studies</i>
<i>TynBul</i>	<i>Tyndale Bulletin</i>

<i>VT</i>	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WGRW	Writings from the Greco-Roman World
<i>WTJ</i>	<i>Westminster Theological Journal</i>
<i>ZAW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
ZBK	Zürcher Bibelkommentare
<i>ZDMG</i>	<i>Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft</i>
<i>ZPE</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik</i>

PREFACE

It has been a long journey to reach this point, and I would not be here without the support of many. First and foremost, I would like to express my deepest thanks to my doctoral supervisor, Dr. Duane Garrett. Dr. Garrett's teaching and writing have profoundly shaped my understanding of typology and Old Testament theology. This dissertation is only possible because of Dr. Garrett's guidance. His faithfulness to the Lord, his love for the church, and his care for students all demonstrate a model of the Christian life. My special thanks also go to Dr. Jim Hamilton and Dr. Robert Plummer who have gladly agreed to join my defense committee and have offered insightful comments. I am also grateful for Dr. Fuller, Dr. Gentry, Dr. Betts, and Dr. Polhill; I deeply benefitted from their teachings. My former professors at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary have prepared me well for biblical study. Dr. Stuart has been a mentor to me both academically and pastorally. In addition, he has delightedly agreed to be the external reader for my dissertation. I'm also grateful to Dr. Keazirian, Dr. Spencer and his wife (also Dr. Spencer), Dr. Kaminski, Dr. Petter and his wife (also Dr. Petter), Dr. Beckman, and Dr. Yao, to name just a few.

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Language fades away when I think of my wife Yaoyao (Yoyo) Ye. Her

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I thank God for saving me and calling me to serve in his kingdom. I feel so unworthy of all the love that he has lavished upon me. May his kingdom come and may his name be glorified!

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Scholars generally agree that Daniel 11:2–35 accurately portrays the Persian and Hellenistic history down to the life of Antiochus IV Epiphanes. This consensus breaks off regarding the rest of the chapter. The difficulty of interpreting Daniel 11:36–45 has been felt throughout history.¹ This introductory chapter first reviews the three common approaches to interpreting Daniel 11. It then gives the thesis of the monograph as well as its methodology.

History of Interpretation of Daniel 11

Since most scholars agree that Daniel 11:2–35 (39) accurately depicts the history from Persia until Antiochus IV, the biggest controversy being on Daniel 11:36 (40)–45, this section will survey only the various interpretations of these verses. A variety of interpretations have been proposed, which generally fall into three categories: (1) Daniel 11:36–45 is an erroneous prophecy about the end of Antiochus IV.² (2) This passage refers to another entity (some believe that the shift begins with Dan 11:40). (3) The passage should be read typologically, which means that the passage describes Antiochus IV but is not limited to him.

¹ For example, in his commentary on the book of Daniel, Jerome tries to refute the interpretation of Dan 11 proposed by Porphyry, who contends that Dan 11 is an *ex eventu* prophecy. Jerome offered detailed comments on Dan 11 in order to expose Porphyry's misrepresentation and to show *the difficulty* in the Scripture. Jerome, *Jerome's Commentary on Daniel*, trans. Gleason L. Archer (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1958), 143. Tremper Longman III states that anyone who does not acknowledge a difficulty in Dan 11:36–45 is "a polemicist in the worst possible sense." Tremper Longman III, *Daniel*, NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999), 265.

² Since other historical accounts about the end of Antiochus IV do not agree with what the passage claims, critical scholars argue that it is the very passage by which one may precisely date the book of Daniel. E.g., Norman Porteous, *Daniel: A Commentary*, OTL (London: SCM Press, 1965), 170.

It will show that while the first two approaches of interpretation are radically different, they share a common hermeneutical assumption: both tend to take the prophecy in a “strictly literal” way. They seem to assume that a biblical prophecy is an accurate prediction of one specific future figure. Therefore, all details must be fulfilled in a single person or entity. Such a literalistic reading leads to two attendant interpretations: either the prophecy is false, or it must be fulfilled in another figure for whom all the details fit precisely. In contrast, a typological interpretation is radically different from the first two approaches, in which discrepancies between Daniel 11:36–45 and the life of Antiochus IV do not prove that the prophecy is a pseudo-prophecy about Antiochus IV. Neither is it evidence that the prophecy must be about another entity. Rather, the discrepancies serve as a signal for a typological reading. The fulfillment of the prophecy includes but is not limited to Antiochus IV; it could be fulfilled multiple times.

Pseudo-Prophecy View

The consensus of modern critical scholarship is that Daniel 11:40–45 is intended to predict the last years of Antiochus IV, but unfortunately the prediction did not come true. This view is already anticipated as early as Porphyry’s work (AD 234–305).³ Porphyry believes that the prophecy in Daniel 11 was written by a person who lived at the time of Antiochus IV; hence, Daniel 11 tells authentic history rather than future events.⁴ He claims that Daniel 11:40–41 records another war waged by Antiochus IV (175–164 BC), in the eleventh year of his reign, against his nephew, Ptolemy Philometor.⁵ No historians who write about Antiochus IV, however, have mentioned this war. It is highly possible that this alleged war did not happen at all (see chap. 3 for more

³ Porphyry’s original work is not extant. His view is presented in Jerome’s commentary on Daniel. Jerome, *Commentary on Daniel*, 136–41.

⁴ Jerome, *Commentary on Daniel*, 15.

⁵ Jerome, *Commentary on Daniel*, 139.

details). Porphyry is probably depending on Daniel 11 rather than on extra-biblical sources for the claim of the alleged war.⁶ He is accused by Jerome of concocting some details about Antiochus IV.⁷

Modern critical scholars agree with Porphyry in dating Daniel 11 to the second century BC. Nevertheless, they have rejected Porphyry's interpretation of Daniel 11:40–45. Instead, they insist that while Daniel 11:2–39 is history written as prophecy, verses 40–45 make a genuine—yet also an errant—prediction⁸ about the end of Antiochus IV. Their arguments may be summarized as follows: (1) Daniel 11 is most likely written during the reign of Antiochus IV; (2) Daniel 11:36–45 is still referring to the life of Antiochus IV because no change of subject occurs between either Daniel 11:35 and 11:36 or Daniel 11:39 and 11:40; (3) Daniel 11:2–39 is generally in line with the known history, but the events described in Daniel 11:40–45 did not happen.

First, all critical scholars agree that Daniel 11 is written during the time of Antiochus IV. At first glance, to list this argument for the interpretation of Daniel 11 may seem surprising since one may assume that the interpretation of Daniel 11 contributes to the dating of the chapter, not the other way around. The relationship between dating and interpretation, however, is more complicated than it appears to be. The late dating of Daniel 11 is pivotal to the proposed interpretation. Otherwise, if, as the conservative scholars argue, the chapter is written by Daniel in the sixth century BC, the critical interpretation would not stand.

⁶ S. R. Driver, *The Book of Daniel*, Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1900), 197; R. H. Charles, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1929), 318.

⁷ Jerome, *Commentary on Daniel*, 141.

⁸ It is a *genuine* prophecy because the author was no longer writing prophecy after events. It is an *errant* prophecy because what he predicted did not come true.

The late dating of Daniel 11 is argued from (1) the basis of the relevance and (2) the language of prophecy.⁹ (1) Concerning relevance, Donald E. Gowan asserts that there is no reason for a sixth-century prophet to recount details of the third- and second-century kings.¹⁰ In other words, to Gowan, events happening centuries later have no relevance to a sixth-century BC prophet, and would not be prophesied by the prophet either. J. J. Collins also makes a similar claim.¹¹

(2) S. R. Driver argues from the standpoint of the language of prophecy. He admits that prophets could predict both near and remote future events. Nevertheless, he argues that the language of the prophecies about near and remote future events would be different. When the prophets predict definite future events, the events are of the proximate future only; when they predict events of more distant future, the prophecies are general and indefinite.¹² He further reasons that the events down to Antiochus IV's persecution are described precisely. When the prophecy concerns the end of Antiochus IV's life, "the prophecy either breaks off altogether (viii. 25, ix. 27), or merges in an *ideal* representation of the Messianic future (vii. 27, xii. 1–3)."¹³ As a result, the prophecy is probably written before the death of Antiochus IV and did not know his end.

The second argument of the critical interpretation of Daniel 11 is that the king (of the north) in Daniel 11:36–45 is still Antiochus IV. The definite article attached to מלך ("king") in Daniel 11:36 points back to the king of the north in verses 21–35. The title "the king of north" reappears in Daniel 11:40–45. Grammatically speaking, no signs of

⁹ Scholars also depend on other historical factors as well as linguistic evidence in dating the book of Daniel.

¹⁰ Donald E. Gowan, *Daniel*, Abingdon OT Commentaries (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2001), 151.

¹¹ John J. Collins, *Daniel: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 26.

¹² Driver, introduction to *The Book of Daniel*, lxvi.

¹³ Driver, introduction, lxvi.

change of subject have taken place,¹⁴ which is acknowledged even by conservative scholars.¹⁵

Finally, the last argument of the critical interpretation of Daniel 11 is that Daniel 11:2–39 corresponds with the historical accounts up until Antiochus IV but 11:40–45 does not fit the last years of Antiochus IV.¹⁶ Most critical scholars take the passage as the author’s genuine yet errant prediction about Antiochus IV.¹⁷ Some scholars have gone further to propose sources behind the so-called “genuine yet errant prediction about Antiochus IV.” Richard J. Clifford contends that the self-exaltation in Daniel 11:36 is reusing an old Canaanite myth about the rebellion in the heavens, and Daniel 11:40–12:3 may also have Canaanite ancestry.¹⁸ J. C. Lebram reasons, based on the parallelism between Antiochus IV and Cambyses, that verses 40–45 are derived from the account of the death of Cambyses.¹⁹ Porteous believes that the author is possibly inspired by the prophecy of Isaiah (10:32–34), or by the incident of Sennacherib’s retreat from Jerusalem

¹⁴ Collins, *Daniel*, 389.

¹⁵ E.g., Allan M. Harman, *A Study Commentary on Daniel*, Evangelical Press Study Commentary (Darlington: Evangelical Press, 2007), 289.

¹⁶ E.g., Driver, introduction, lxvi; Charles, *Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Daniel*, 318; James A. Montgomery, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, ICC (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1959), 465–66; Porteous, *Daniel*, 169–70; Louis F. Hartman and Alexander A. Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel*, AB (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1978), 302–3; André Lacocque, *The Book of Daniel* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1979), 232–33; Robert A. Anderson, *Signs and Wonders: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, ITC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984), 142; W. Sibley Towner, *Daniel*, Int (Atlanta: John Knox, 1984), 164; Collins, *Daniel*, 386; Daniel L. Smith-Christopher, “Daniel,” in *NIB*, vol. 7, *The Twelve Prophets*, ed. Leander E. Keck et al. (Nashville: Abingdon, 1994), 147; Paul L. Redditt, *Daniel*, NCB (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999), 187; Sharon Pace, *Daniel*, SHBC (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2008), 333; Carol A. Newsom, *Daniel: A Commentary*, OTL (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2014), 359.

¹⁷ E.g., Driver, *The Book of Daniel*, 197; E. W. Heaton, *The Book of Daniel* (London: SCM Press, 1956), 240; Porteous, *Daniel*, 168–70; Hartman and Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel*, 302–3; Gowan, *Daniel*, 150–51.

¹⁸ Richard J. Clifford, “History and Myth in Daniel 10–12,” *BASOR* 220 (1975): 23–26. See also Collins, *Daniel*, 389; Benjamin V. Waters, “The Two Eschatological Perspectives of the Book of Daniel,” *SJOT* 30, no.1 (2016): 94–95. Waters argues that Dan 11:36–45 is a later interpolation.

¹⁹ Jürgen-Christian Lebram, “König Antiochus Im Buch Daniel,” *VT* 25, no. 4 (1975): 767–71. Paul Niskanen furthers Lebram’s thesis by adding that the author of Dan 11 may have the written account of Cambyses by Herodotus at hand. Paul Niskanen, “Daniel’s Portrait of Antiochus IV: Echoes of a Persian King,” *CBQ* 66 (2004): 378–86.

(Isa 37:36ff.; 2 Kgs 19:35ff.) to describe Antiochus's departure in Daniel 11:44.²⁰ Lastly, G. W. Buchanan diverges from the consensus critical view in suggesting that verses 40–45 form an appendix about Antiochus III.²¹

Assessment of Pseudo-Prophecy View

Though seemingly reasonable, the critical view is not without challenges. First, against Driver, though not common, prophecies do use precise language to predict distant future events in the Bible. For instance, in 1 Kings 13:1–2, a man of God came to Bethel and prophesied against the altar where Jeroboam was standing, stating that a descendant of David named Josiah would kill the priests of the high places who offer incense on that altar and burn human bones on it. This prophecy was fulfilled about three hundred years later (2 Kgs 23:15–20). Other similar examples include God's promise to Abraham in Genesis 15:12–20, which God proclaims will be fulfilled four hundred years later, and Joshua's prophecy about Jericho, which again is fulfilled after a few hundred years (Josh 6:26–27; 1 Kgs 16:34).²²

Second, the argument of relevance is also problematic. The claim that prophesying about distant future events has no relevance to present situations is more like an assumption rather than a warranted conclusion. Instead, being able to declare what will come distinguishes the true God from the false idols (Isa 44:6–7) and demonstrates the sovereignty of God over history. The message is “profoundly relevant” to people both in the past and in the present.²³

²⁰ Porteous, *Daniel*, 170.

²¹ George W. Buchanan, *The Book of Daniel*, Mellon Biblical Commentary, vol. 25 (Lewiston, NY: Mellen Biblical Press, 1999), 362.

²² To argue that all these distant-future-predicting prophecies are also pseudo-prophecies because their language is specific would be either making circular arguments or making arguments based on unproven assumptions. Consider this: (1) Assumption: all distant-future-predicting prophecies will use general languages and all near-future-predicting prophecies use specific languages. (2) These prophecies appear as distant-future-predicting prophecies but use specific languages. (3) Therefore, these prophecies must be pseudo-prophecies. In this argument, the unproven assumption (1) is used to draw a conclusion (2).

²³ Iain M. Duguid, *Daniel*, Reformed Expository Commentary (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 2008),

Third, the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls has also posed challenge to the critical interpretation.²⁴ Several Daniel manuscripts have been found among the Dead Sea Scrolls. Every chapter of Daniel is represented in these manuscripts, except for chapter 12. However, one of the nonbiblical scrolls, known as the Florilegium (4Q174), quotes Daniel 12:10 as written in the book of Daniel the prophet.²⁵ Therefore, it can be said that all chapters of Daniel have been attested. These scrolls are dated from 125 BC to AD 50. The oldest of them—4QDan^a, which contains Daniel 11:13–16—dates to 125 BC. Abegg and others conclude that the book of Daniel became popular and widely used at Qumran within forty years of composition.²⁶ However, this conclusion has already assumed the dating of Daniel to about 165 BC. If one allows the dating of the manuscripts to inform the dating of the book of Daniel, the conclusion would be opposite, as Price comments: “Such a close date to the supposed auto-graph (Maccabean period) presents difficulties because there would be insufficient time for such copies to be produced, distributed, and then received within Judaism.”²⁷

Furthermore, if, as the critical view argues, Daniel 11 was written shortly before the death of Antiochus IV, verses 1–39 are a pseudo-prophecy, and verses 40–45 are a genuine yet errant prediction, then the message is hardly encouraging to the Jews under the severe persecution inflicted by Antiochus IV, because not only would they know that it was just a pseudo-prophecy, but also the message would be quickly falsified

195.

²⁴ The dating of the book is critical to its message. The dissertation further addresses this issue.

²⁵ John M. Allegro, *Qumran Cave 4.1 (4Q158–4Q186)*, DJD 5 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1968), 54–55.

²⁶ Martin G. Abegg Jr., Peter W. Flint, and Eugene Ulrich, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible: The Oldest Known Bible, Translated for the First Time into English* (San Francisco: HarperSan Francisco, 1999).

²⁷ J. Randall Price, *Zondervan Handbook of Biblical Archaeology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2017), 178. See also Bruce K. Waltke, “Date of the Book of Daniel,” *BSac* 133, no. 532 (1976): 320–22; Thomas E. Gaston, *Historical Issues in the Book of Daniel* (Oxford: TaanathShiloh, 2009), 151.

within one to two years of composition.²⁸ It is puzzling why such a passage was so quickly accepted as authoritative and admitted into the canon without any revision.

A few scholars, while dating Daniel 11 to the second century BC, have attempted to save the author from the embarrassment of the “erroneous prediction.” For instance, John Goldingay argues that the predictions in Daniel 11 should not be read as the precise predictions about future events; rather, they “paint an imaginative scenario of the *kind* of issue” that the present state leads to.²⁹ Paul M. Lederach maintains that the purpose of Daniel 11 is to tell the certainty of the end of Antiochus IV rather than the exact manner and time of it.³⁰ In a similar vein, C. L. Seow writes, “The hallmark of biblical prophecy has never been the precise fulfillment of predictions to their last detail.”³¹ W. B. Nelson argues that verses 40–45 are merely a hope for what would happen to Antiochus IV.³² This interpretation is no better than the standard critical one. If the chapter was dated to about 165 BC, everything described in Daniel 10 would be a fabrication. The most logical conclusion would be that Daniel 11:40–45 is at most the author’s wishful hope for what did not turn out to be, since it gives an apparently detailed prophecy about what would come, but in reality, things did not happen that way.

The book of Daniel clearly treats the passage as a real prophecy. The message is from the Book of Truth told by a celestial figure; it is not of human origin. Scholars take Daniel 11:40–45 as an errant prophecy, or as the imagination or hope of the author, because they are convinced that the passage cannot be correlated with the historical

²⁸ Mark K. Mercer, “An Historical, Exegetical, and Theological Study of Daniel 11:2b–12:4” (ThD diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 1987), 35.

²⁹ John Goldingay, *Daniel*, WBC, vol. 30 (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1989), 305.

³⁰ Paul M. Lederach, *Daniel*, Believers Church Bible Commentary (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1994), 251–52.

³¹ C. L. Seow, *Daniel*, Westminster Bible Companion (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2003), 184–86.

³² William Nelson, *Daniel*, Understanding the Bible Commentary (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013), 289.

accounts about the events taking place in the last years of Antiochus IV.³³ Their logic is simple: Since verses 40–45 are about Antiochus IV, and since they do not correlate with the historical records about him, this passage should be regarded as the author’s own creation.

Single Fulfillment View

In contrast to the relatively unified view of the critical scholarship, the conservative side is more divided about the king of the north related in the last verses of Daniel 11. Throughout history, conservative scholars have predominantly argued that the king of the north is the antichrist of the end times. Nevertheless, other views have emerged.

Rome (65–54 BC). Robert Gurney argues in a short article that Daniel 11:40–45 prophesies about the events in 65–54 BC. Having observed a possible link between “the time of the end” in 11:40 and the same phrase in 8:17 as well as the he-goat representing Greece (8:21), Gurney concludes that “the time of the end” is connected with the Greek empire (he holds that the fourth kingdom is the Greek empire).³⁴ He further suggests that Daniel 11:40–45 describes the destruction of the Greek empire, which eventually leads to the first coming of Christ.³⁵

According to Gurney, the northern kingdom is Rome. Antiochus Asiaticus, the king of Syria is attacked by the king of the south (Egypt) and Scarus, the legate of Pompey (the king of the north), resulted in the annexation of Syria to Rome in 65.³⁶ The tidings from the east and the north refers to the threat from the Parthians, against whom

³³ E.g., Goldingay, *Daniel*, 305.

³⁴ Robert J. M. Gurney, “A Note on Daniel 11:40–45,” *TSF Bulletin* 47 (1967): 10–11.

³⁵ Gurney, “A Note on Daniel 11:40–45,” 10–11.

³⁶ Gurney, “A Note on Daniel 11:40–45,” 11.

Crassus (representing the north kingdom) undertook a campaign in 54 BC and was killed.³⁷

The Roman Empire. John Calvin has mentioned a variety of views expressed by both Jews and Christians in the Reformation era. Calvin himself argues that not a single person, but the Roman Empire is in view in Daniel 11:36–45. This interpretation is based on three reasons: (1) no single individual can fit the prophecy; (2) the word *king* often means *kingdom* in the book of Daniel; and (3) the Romans alone fit the prophecy.³⁸

Calvin then goes on to explain how the Roman Empire has fulfilled Daniel 11:36–39.³⁹ While the Greeks worshipped the gods of their fathers, the Romans dared to insult all religions and to promote atheism as possible; they even allowed a temple to be built for themselves in Asia. They created their own deities (v. 37). They used religions only to keep their subjects obedient (v. 36a). They neither loved their wives nor the female sex (v. 37). The Romans were successful in wars (v. 36b). They acquired great wealth for themselves and enriched their subjects (v. 39).

The main points of Calvin’s interpretation of Daniel 11:40–45 are as follows⁴⁰: Calvin still sees the king of the north as Syria, and the king of the south as Egypt. Egypt with the help of Syria attacked Rome at the beginning of the triumvirate (v. 40). Both, however, were defeated and reduced to provinces of the latter. Pompey subdued Judea and entered the temple, but Crassus plundered the temple at Jerusalem (v. 41). The Romans were triumphant over many nations, including Mithridates, all of Asia Minor,

³⁷ Gurney, “A Note on Daniel 11:40–45,” 11. Gurney elaborated on this interpretation in *God in Control: An Exposition of the Prophecies of Daniel* (Worthing, England: Henry E. Walter, 1980). Daniel Block follows Gurney’s identification of the king of the north as Antiochus Assiaticus. Daniel I. Block, “Preaching Old Testament Apocalyptic to a New Testament Church,” *CTJ* 41, no. 1 (2006): 50–51.

³⁸ John Calvin, *Daniel 7–12*, trans. Thomas Myers, *Calvin’s Commentaries* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996), 339.

³⁹ Calvin, *Daniel 7–12*, 339–57.

⁴⁰ Calvin, *Daniel 7–12*, 357–67.

Armenia, Egypt, and finally Persia (v. 42). The defeat of Crassus at Carrhae (53 BC) and the setback of Antony by the Parthians (36 BC) are understood as fulfillment of verse 44a, and the return of the Roman standards by the Parthians to Augustus (20 BC) as fulfillment of verse 44b. Verse 45 pronounces the downfall of the Roman empire, which was not fulfilled in a short period. After the sack of Jerusalem by Titus, the Roman empire suffered a series of defeats, till its ultimate ruin. The sea in verse 45 refers to the Persian Sea.

It is worth noting that Calvin understands Daniel 12:1 to refer to the increasing oppression after the advent of Christ, and Daniel 12:2 to mark a transition from the proclamation of the gospel in the first century to the final day of the resurrection without explicit notification.⁴¹ According to this interpretation, a leap of history still exists. It only comes later in the prophecy, between 12:1 and 12:2.

King Herod and Caesar Augustus. Philip Mauro has argued that in Daniel 11:36–39, the prophecy is about King Herod, then it shifts in verses 40–43 to the Actian War between Antony (at the urgency of Cleopatra) and Augustus, and finally it turns back to prophesy about Herod in verses 44–45. Mauro defends his position by listing four reasons: (1) the prophecy is given in a continuous historical order, allowing no “break” (i.e., a leap from second century BC to the end time) in between; (2) the prophecy concerns “the latter days” of Jewish history (Dan 10:14); (3) verses 40–45 prove that the prophecy is still about the era of the conflicts between Syria and Egypt; and (4) Daniel 12:7, which Mauro takes to refer to the scattering of the Jewish national power, indicates that the prophecy of Daniel 11:2–12:4 ends with the dispersion of the Jews when Titus sacked Jerusalem.⁴²

⁴¹ Calvin, *Daniel 7–12*, 369–75.

⁴² Philip Mauro, *The Seventy Weeks and the Great Tribulation* (Swengel, PA: Reiner, 1970), 138–39. Mauro’s work was originally published in 1921. His interpretation generally follows that of James Farquharson, whose work was published in 1838. A major difference is that Farquharson argues that the

Mauro interprets Daniel 11:36 as follows⁴³: “the king,” without other qualifications, by default, should refer to the king over the people of Israel. Herod acted “according to his will,” namely, he prospered politically in gaining favor from Julius Caesar, then from Mark Antony, and then from Octavius Caesar, and murdered even his own family. In appointing his brother-in-law Aristolulus as the high priest and shortly after murdering him, Herod exalted himself above any god. In decreeing to slaughter all babies of Bethlehem in order to kill Christ, Herod attacked the God of gods. Regarding verse 37, Mauro first argues that Herod, though being of Idumean origin, addressed himself as a Jew and was so regarded. Then he explains that by introducing Caesar worship Herod paid no respect to the God of his fathers. “The desire of women” is taken to be Christ, whom Herod attempted to kill.⁴⁴ Verses 38 and 39a are taken to be fulfilled in Herod’s building of cities and strongholds and naming them in honor of the Caesars.⁴⁵

Based on Plutarch’s account, *Life of Mark Antony*, Mauro argues, in verses 40–43, the king of the north is Augustus, and the king of the south is Antony, who was accompanied by King Herod to fight against Augustus and was defeated by him.⁴⁶ The tidings from the east (v. 44) is taken by Mauro to refer to the message brought by the wise men from the east, that the star of the king of the Jews had appeared in the east (Matt 2:1–2); and the tidings from the north is understood to refer to the message from Antipater (the oldest son of Herod) at Rome that Herod’s other two sons had calumniated their father to Caesar.⁴⁷ Lastly, a time of trouble in Daniel 12:1 is taken to refer to the

archangel Michael is Jesus Christ. See James Farquharson, *A New Illustration of the Latter Part of Daniel’s Last Vision and Prophecy* (London: Smith, Elder, and Co., 1838), 155.

⁴³ Mauro, *Seventy Weeks and Great Tribulation*, 141–44.

⁴⁴ Mauro, *Seventy Weeks and Great Tribulation*, 144–45. Mauro understands that the “women” here must be women of Israel and the “desire” of every Israelite woman is to become the mother of Christ.

⁴⁵ Mauro, *Seventy Weeks and Great Tribulation*, 146–48.

⁴⁶ Mauro, *Seventy Weeks and Great Tribulation*, 152–57.

⁴⁷ Mauro, *Seventy Weeks and Great Tribulation*, 158.

siege of Jerusalem by Titus, and Daniel 12:2 the proclamation of the gospel by Jesus and the apostles, which brings a renewed life and eternal salvation to those who receive the gospel and condemns those who reject it with eternal punishment.⁴⁸

Vespasian and Titus (AD 67–70). Jason Parry tries to revive a Jewish view that Calvin has mentioned in his commentary,⁴⁹ relating Daniel 11:36–45 to the events taking place in AD 67–70. Parry first aligns Daniel 10–12 in parallel with Daniel 2, 7, 8, and 9, attempting to demonstrate structurally that either 11:36–45 or 11:40–45 represents the fourth kingdom of Rome, and 12:1–3 represents the Messianic kingdom of God.⁵⁰ Parry opts for the former, on the basis that the final phrase of Daniel 11:35 (עַד עַתָּה קִץ בִּי (עוֹד לְמוֹעֵד) allows for the shift from the third kingdom to the fourth kingdom, and the 3ms pronominal suffix on עָמוּ in Daniel 11:40 “nearly requires” verses 36–39 to be grouped with the following verses.⁵¹ By analyzing Daniel 2, 7, and 9, he concludes that the fourth kingdom ends before the inauguration of the fifth kingdom, the kingdom of God. Parry then argues, since in the New Testament the kingdom of God (Daniel’s fifth kingdom) is inaugurated in the context of the Roman Empire (Daniel’s fourth kingdom), the fourth kingdom in Daniel 11 must be the historical Rome.⁵²

Based on this analysis, Parry then seeks to identify the historical fulfillment of Daniel 11:36–12:3. He argues that Daniel 11:36–39 is a characterization and summary of John of Gischala, a leader of the first Jewish revolt against Rome from AD 67–70; verse 40 is a proleptic summary of events occurring in AD 67–70, described in verses 41–45;

⁴⁸ Mauro, *Seventy Weeks and Great Tribulation*, 168–70.

⁴⁹ Calvin, *Daniel 7–12*, 338.

⁵⁰ Jason T. Parry, “Desolation of the Temple and Messianic Enthronement in Daniel 11:36–12:3,” *JETS* 54, no. 3 (2011): 489.

⁵¹ Parry, “Desolation of Temple and Messianic Enthronement,” 500.

⁵² Parry, “Desolation of Temple and Messianic Enthronement,” 499–500.

the king of the south is Tiberius Julius Alexander, and the king of the north is Vespasian (and his son Titus acting on behalf of Vespasian).⁵³

Constantine I and the Pope. The Jewish interpretation to some degree differs greatly from other conservative interpretations. Ibn Ezra (ca. 1092–1167), Isaiah da Trani (ca. 1180–ca. 1250), Abarbanel (1437–1508), and Malbim (1809–1879) see the person described in Daniel 11:36 as Constantine I, who conquered many lands, converted the people to Christianity, and convened and influenced the Council of Nicea, which adopted doctrines such as Trinity, the virgin birth, the incarnation, and the transubstantiation.⁵⁴ These Jewish rabbis argue, beginning with Daniel 11:36, after the conversion of the Romans, the pope then becomes the king of the north.⁵⁵ They see the priestly vow of celibacy as fulfillment of “no regard for the desire of women” in verse 37,⁵⁶ Jesus as “the god that his ancestors did not know” in verse 38, lofty churches and cathedrals to be “fortified strongholds” in verse 39.⁵⁷ Lastly, the clash between the king of the north and the king of the south is taken to refer to a war between the Christians and the Muslims.⁵⁸

Revolutionary France and Turkey. Some Adventist commentators identify the power in Daniel 11:36–39 as revolutionary France in the year 1789 and following. Their reasoning is as follows: (1) a new power is in view in this passage because it immediately follows the “time of the end”; (2) it is an atheist power; (3) the French

⁵³ Parry, “Desolation of Temple and Messianic Enthronement,” 501–19.

⁵⁴ A. J. Rosenberg, *Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah: A New English Translation* (New York: Judaica, 1991), 108.

⁵⁵ Rosenberg, *Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah*, 109.

⁵⁶ Rashi understands that beautiful woman metaphorically represents the Jewish people. Hersh Goldwurm, *Daniel: A New Translation with a Commentary Anthologized from Talmudic, Midrashic, and Rabbinic Sources* (Brooklyn, NY: Mesorah, 1989), 312.

⁵⁷ Rosenberg, *Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah*, 109.

⁵⁸ Rosenberg, *Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah*, 110.

Revolution and its aftermath mark the close of the 1260-year period (“time, times, and a half” in Dan 12:7) of prophecy.⁵⁹ Those who hold this view also see Turkey as the king of the north in verses 40–45.⁶⁰

Papacy, the antichrist. Louis Were represents another trend among the Adventists, taking the papacy as the antichrist, the subject in view in Daniel 11:36–45. Were’s view may be summarized as follows⁶¹: Daniel 11:15–17 describes the conquest of Syria, Palestine, and Egypt by the Romans. The Roman Empire thus replaces Syria, becoming the northern kingdom. Daniel 11:17–21 prophesies about Julius, Augustus, and Tiberius Caesar. Verse 22 mentions the takeover of the Jewish nation by the Romans (AD 70) as well as the murder of Jesus Christ (AD 31) in the nineteenth year of Tiberius. From verse 23, the prophecy goes back to the League made by the Jews with Rome (161 BC) until the final conflict and the Second Coming of Christ. Verse 25 describes the annexation of Egypt to Rome in the battle of Actium (31 BC). Verse 28 marks the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70. Verses 29–30 refers to the recapitalization of the Roman Empire from Rome to Constantinople, which signals the downfall of the empire. Beginning with verse 31, the papacy then becomes the spiritual king of the north.

Daniel 11:31–35 describes the persecution of God’s people by the papacy in the Dark Ages.⁶² Were comments on verse 31 that the papacy struck “the very heart and seal of God’s law” and thus struck at “the very center of the entire sanctuary service” by changing the Sabbath.⁶³ Verse 36 is fulfilled in the exaltation of the Pope as a god and the

⁵⁹ This view is recorded in Francis D. Nichol, ed., *The Seventh-Day Adventist Bible Commentary* (Washington DC: Review and Herald, 1953), 4:875.

⁶⁰ Nichol, *Seventh-Day Adventist Bible Commentary*, 4:877.

⁶¹ Louis F. Were, *The King of the North at Jerusalem* (Melbourne, Australia: L. F. Were, 2002), 41–43. This view is held by many Adventists. See Donn W. Leatherman, “Adventist Interpretation of Daniel 10–12: A Diagnosis and Prescription,” *JATS* 7, no. 1 (1996): 120–40.

⁶² Were, *King of North at Jerusalem*, 46, 82.

⁶³ Were, *King of North at Jerusalem*, 44–45.

inculcation of reverence for Mary.⁶⁴ The celibacy of the papal priests and nuns fulfills verse 37.⁶⁵ Examples of the fulfillment of the dividing of the land in verse 39 includes Pope Adrian IV's papal Bull, "Laudabiliter" (AD 1155), which gives permission to Henry II to invade Ireland, Pope Alexander III's ratification of the Bull (AD 1172), and the two Bulls (AD 1493) of Alexander VI that "presumed to divide the Western world between Portugal and Spain."⁶⁶

Since the reference is to the *spiritual* king of the north, the entire passage is read spiritually. Were reasons that "the holy mountain" refers to Jerusalem so long as God's presence dwells there; it then becomes the church after God has rejected the Jewish nation.⁶⁷ In the book of Daniel, "north," "south," and "east" cannot be literal.⁶⁸ In Daniel 11:40, Egypt, the king of the south, should be read in a spiritual sense as the French Revolution, which assaulted the papacy.⁶⁹ "Edom, Moab, and the main part of the Ammonites" in verse 41 are the remnant of God's people in Isaiah 11:11–16, who accept God's last-day message of salvation and thus are able to escape the hand of the king of the north.⁷⁰

Since God's throne is said to be in the north (Ps 48:2; Ezek 1:4; Isa 14:13, 14; etc.), and the heavenly beings or messengers are said to come from the east horizon (Rev 7:2), the loud cry (Rev 18:1; Ezek 43:1–4) then is "the tidings from the east and the north" that trouble the king of the north.⁷¹ Verses 44–45 describe the last conflict between

⁶⁴ Were, *King of North at Jerusalem*, 115.

⁶⁵ Were, *King of North at Jerusalem*, 47.

⁶⁶ Were, *King of North at Jerusalem*, 29–34.

⁶⁷ Were, *King of North at Jerusalem*, 61–62.

⁶⁸ Were, *King of North at Jerusalem*, 68.

⁶⁹ Were, *King of North at Jerusalem*, 69.

⁷⁰ Were, *King of North at Jerusalem*, 71–72.

⁷¹ Were, *King of North at Jerusalem*, 68–70.

the papacy and God's people: the spiritual Babylon will oppress the spiritual Israel, but ultimately, God will destroy his enemies.⁷²

The antichrist and Russia. M. R. DeHaan contends that Daniel 11:36–45 describes the antichrist. The antichrist is “associated with the political head of the revived Roman empire of the end time who corresponds to the beast out of the sea in Revelation 13.”⁷³ DeHaan explains that the antichrist will be an atheist (v. 37) and a materialist (v. 38), and he will be attacked by the king of the south and the king of the north when he seeks to divide the land of Israel (v. 40).⁷⁴ The king of the south refers to a federation of the Arab tribes; the king of the north refers to the confederacy led by Russia, and from the east are the Chinese and Japanese nations (v. 44). The basis for DeHaan's identification of these powers is that “directions in Scripture are always with reference to, and in relation to, the land of Palestine.”⁷⁵

The end-time antichrist. The most popular interpretation of Dan 11:36–45 (or vv. 40–45) among conservative scholars by far is that this passage refers to the antichrist in the end of the world. This interpretation may be traced back to as early as the beginning of the third century. Hippolytus of Rome, in his *Commentary on Daniel* (written between AD 202 and 211), takes Daniel 11:36–45 to refer to the antichrist in the end of the world before the second coming of Christ, though he does not give justification on why the prophecy suddenly leaps from Antiochus to the antichrist in the eschaton.⁷⁶

⁷² Were, *King of North at Jerusalem*, 77, 79, 83, 87.

⁷³ M. R. De Haan, *Daniel the Prophet* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1947), 298.

⁷⁴ De Haan, *Daniel the Prophet*, 298–300.

⁷⁵ De Haan, *Daniel the Prophet*, 300. For a similar view, see George M. Harton, “An Interpretation of Daniel 11:36–45,” *Grace Theological Journal* 4, no. 2 (1983): 205–31.

⁷⁶ Hippolytus, *Hippolytus of Rome: Commentary on Daniel*, trans. T. C. Schmidt (Scotts Valley, CA: CreateSpace, 2010), 4.48.1–5.54.5.

Throughout the centuries, this has been the majority view among conservative commentators. To be sure, some of the aforementioned interpretations also see antichrist in Daniel 11:36–45. The difference is that these interpretations have attempted to identify who the antichrist is and claim that at least a portion of the text has already been fulfilled in history, whereas the end-time antichrist view locates everything in the future eschaton.

Stephen Miller gives the following reasons for the end-time antichrist view⁷⁷:

(1) Daniel 11:36–45 does not fit the historical accounts of the last years of Antiochus IV⁷⁸; (2) the ruler of Daniel 11:36–45 lives in the last days (cf. v. 40)⁷⁹; (3) the “times of distress” in Daniel 12:1 are the same as the distress before the second coming of Christ in Matthew 24:21; (4) the resurrection takes place immediately following God’s deliverance of his people (Dan 12:2); and (5) verses 36–39 seem to introduce the ruler as if for the first time. Steinmann adds that in verse 35, the people of God will be refined by the persecution of Antiochus for “the time of the end.”⁸⁰

Many who hold the same view disagree on the interpretation of certain details. Some examples include the following: First, some maintain that Daniel 11:36–39 describes Antiochus IV,⁸¹ while others argue that the leap of time already begins at Daniel 11:36.⁸² Second, concerning the religious or ethnic identity of the antichrist, Theodoret

⁷⁷ Stephen R. Miller, *Daniel*, NAC, vol. 18 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1994), 305.

⁷⁸ As E. J. Young comments on v. 44, “These facts do not fit the life of Antiochus.” Edward J. Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1949), 252. See also John F. Walvoord, *Daniel*, John Walvoord Prophecy Commentaries (Chicago: Moody, 2012), 346; Andrew E. Steinmann, “Is the Antichrist in Daniel 11?,” *Bsac* 162, no. 646 (2005): 202; Joe Sprinkle, *Daniel*, Evangelical Biblical Theology Commentary (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2020), 321–22.

⁷⁹ J. Paul Tanner, *Daniel*, Evangelical Exegetical Commentary (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2020), 686.

⁸⁰ Steinmann, “Is the Antichrist in Daniel 11?,” 203.

⁸¹ E.g., Ronald W. Pierce, *Daniel*, Teach the Text Commentary (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2015), 183–87.

⁸² E.g., Arno C. Gaebelin, *The Prophet Daniel: A Key to the Visions and Prophecies of the Book of Daniel* (New York: Our Hope, 1911), 270–80; Miller, *Daniel*, 306; John Phillips, *Exploring the Book of Daniel: An Expository Commentary*, John Phillips Commentary (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2004), 143; Kirk R. MacGregor, “A Contemporary Defense of the Authenticity of Daniel,” *JISCA* 9, no. 1 (2016):

believes that he is a zealous Zeus worshipper.⁸³ John Phillips claims that the antichrist “will be raised in the Judeo-Christian, possibly in the Catholic, faith.”⁸⁴ John Walvoord identifies him as the Roman world ruler, who is also the little horn of Daniel 7.⁸⁵ Gaebelein states that the antichrist must be a Jew.⁸⁶ Harman, however, argues that the antichrist is not necessarily a Jew.⁸⁷ Third, scholars also disagree on whether the king of the north in Daniel 11:40 is the same person as the antichrist. Some argue that the king of the north should be distinguished from the king in Daniel 11:36, the antichrist,⁸⁸ while others regard the king of the north as the antichrist.⁸⁹ Last but not least, concerning “Edom, Moab, and the main part of the Ammonites,” Theodoret understands these nations allegorically, taking them to be God’s chosen people.⁹⁰

45.

⁸³ Theodoret of Cyrus, *Commentary on Daniel*, trans. Robert C. Hill, WGRW 7 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2006), 307.

⁸⁴ E.g., Phillips, *Exploring the Book of Daniel*, 209.

⁸⁵ Walvoord, *Daniel*, 272.

⁸⁶ Gaebelein, *The Prophet Daniel*, 188. See also Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel*, 249. H. A. Ironside, in a book originally published in 1920, claims the Antichrist is a Jew living in Palestine, who could be living at the time of his writing! H. A. Ironside, *Daniel* (Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux, 2005), 147.

⁸⁷ Harman, *A Study Commentary on Daniel*, 292.

⁸⁸ For instance, Walvoord writes, “the king of the north . . . probably includes all the political and military force of the lands to the north of the Holy Land; hence the term could include Russia as well as related countries.” Walvoord, *Daniel*, 277. See also John F. Walvoord, “Russia: King of the North: Part 1,” *Fundamentalist Journal* 3, no. 1 (1984): 34–38; Walvoord, “Russia: King of the North: Part 2,” *Fundamentalist Journal* 3, no. 2 (1984): 23–27; William Kelly, *Notes on the Book of Daniel*, 8th ed. (New York: Loizeaux, 1952), 220–39; Leon J. Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1973), 308–310; Rodney Stortz, *Daniel: The Triumph of God’s Kingdom*, Preaching the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2004), 210–11; John Whitcomb, *Daniel*, Everyday Bible Commentary (Chicago: Moody, 2018), 55–56; De Haan, *Daniel the Prophet*, 300–301. Tanner argues that the king of the north is “a confederation of northern Arab nations that will attack the antichrist and his forces in this military conflict centered in the Middle East.” J. Paul Tanner, “Daniel’s ‘King of the North’: Do We Owe Russia an Apology?,” *JETS* 35, no. 3 (1992): 328.

⁸⁹ Carl F. Keil and Franz Delitzsch, *Daniel*, trans. M. G. Easton, Commentary on the Old Testament, vol. 9 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2011), 468–70; Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel*, 251; Gleason L. Archer Jr., *Daniel*, in *Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, *Daniel and the Minor Prophets*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1985), 147.

⁹⁰ Theodoret of Cyrus, *Commentary on Daniel*, 311–13.

Assessment of Single Fulfillment View

Besides the above-mentioned views, there have also been other interpretations. For instance, some regarded the king in the passage to be Nero,⁹¹ or Muhammad,⁹² or Napoleon Bonaparte.⁹³ The conservative scholars agree with the critical scholars that the last verses of Daniel 11 do not fit the life of Antiochus IV. They, however, hold to the early dating of the book and regard the prophecy as genuine as well as reliable. Consequently, unlike critical scholars, conservative scholars take pains to pinpoint the subject and the events in Daniel 11:36–45. Nevertheless, such a task appears not an easy one. As has been shown, a variety of interpretations have been sought to make sense of the passage. These interpretations often reflect the faith traditions of the commentators.

There are several problems with the single fulfillment interpretations. First, the variety within the single fulfillment view itself appears to be problematic. It shows how unconvinced these scholars are by others' interpretations. These interpretations are often forced to correlate historical events with the prophecy. Second, no clear grammatical marker or transitional language indicates a shift of subject between verse 35 and verse 36 or between verse 39 and verse 40.⁹⁴ This is even explicitly admitted by some of the end-time antichrist view advocates.⁹⁵ Third, a strictly literal reading cannot always be maintained throughout Daniel 11:36–45. Fourth, it will be shown that even within Daniel 11:21–35, strictly literal fulfillments cannot always be established.

On the other hand, one must also account for the discrepancies between Daniel 11:36–45 and the historical accounts of Antiochus IV. Furthermore, the connection

⁹¹ Mentioned in Jerome, *Commentary on Daniel*, 133.

⁹² Mentioned in Calvin, *Daniel 7–12*, 346.

⁹³ Mentioned in Kelly, *Notes on the Book of Daniel*, 225.

⁹⁴ Andrew E. Hill, *Daniel*, in *Expositor's Bible Commentary*, vol. 8, *Daniel–Malachi*, ed. Tremper Longman III and David E. Garland, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006), 199.

⁹⁵ John C. Jeske, *Daniel*, *People's Bible Commentary* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1992), 211; Harman, *A Study Commentary on Daniel*, 289; Duguid, *Daniel*, 204.

between Daniel 11:36–45 and the resurrection prophecy in Daniel 12:1–3 also requires explanation.⁹⁶ A third interpretation tries to solve the problem—that is, a typological interpretation of the last verses of Daniel 11.

Typological Interpretation

A recent commentary on Daniel written by Paul House best illustrates the difficulty of interpreting Daniel 11:36–45. Dissatisfied with the critical view and the aforementioned single fulfillment view, House contends that Daniel 11:36–39 is a summary of Antiochus IV’s triumphal years (175–169 BC), and that 11:40–45 “repeats some of his victories, reviews his losses in 168–164 BC and reports his death.”⁹⁷ Consequently, Daniel 11:40–45 is not about the Antichrist in the end of the world.⁹⁸ House takes the “time of trouble” in Daniel 12:1 to refer to the clashes with the Seleucids and the internal disputes, as well as the persecution of God’s people by the hand of the Romans. Thus, according to House, Daniel 12:1 is not about the end of the world either.⁹⁹

There are at least two difficulties with this interpretation. First, regardless of their positions, all other commentators surveyed in this chapter agree that Daniel 11:36–45 does not fit the historical accounts of Antiochus IV. This is the main, if not the only, reason that these commentators throughout history have turned to other interpretations. Second, the sudden switch from the persecution of God’s people by the hand of historical Rome to the resurrection of individuals also deserves explanation. House himself seems to agree with it when he writes, “Virtually all scholars conclude that 12:2–3 describes the

⁹⁶ That Dan 12:2 is a prophecy about individual resurrection is also recognized by critical scholarship. See John J. Collins, *Encounters with Biblical Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005), 28, 32; Hartman and Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel*, 309.

⁹⁷ Paul R. House, *Daniel: An Introduction and Commentary*, TOTC, vol. 23 (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2018), 178.

⁹⁸ House, *Daniel*, 179–80.

⁹⁹ House, *Daniel*, 180.

resurrection of individuals.”¹⁰⁰ He rejects the critical view that “many” in Daniel 12:2 is limited to the saints of Antiochus IV’s era and following Baldwin, understands the word in this context a synonym to “all.”¹⁰¹ Nevertheless, House does not explicitly explain when the resurrection occurs.

House seems to be aware of these difficulties. Commenting on Daniel 11:40–45, he writes, “Daniel 11:40–45 presents the end of Antiochus IV, and *perhaps all such leaders* [emphasis added].”¹⁰² This statement opens the possibility for a typological reading. While insisting that Daniel 12:1 describes the persecution of God’s people in the early centuries and thus it “does not depict the end of the world,” House quickly adds, “the end of the world, by definition, provide the most severe troubles ever experienced.”¹⁰³ He also states that as believers have cried out for God’s help in every time of terrible trouble, “the end of time will be no different.”¹⁰⁴ Though not explicitly stated, in these comments House actually loosens his interpretation and attempts to bridge the gap between the early centuries and the end time resurrection. The tension caused by the gap may be alleviated by a typological interpretation.

Before surveying the typological interpretation, it is worth noting that virtually all advocates of the end-time antichrist view take Antiochus IV to be a type of the eschatological antichrist. In this sense, their interpretation is also typological. Nevertheless, the typological interpretations discussed in this section differ radically from the end-time antichrist view in that the former sees more than one fulfillment in Daniel

¹⁰⁰ House, *Daniel*, 181.

¹⁰¹ House, *Daniel*, 181. Baldwin thus comments on Dan 12:2, “our author can be seen to be thinking of a general resurrection prior to judgment.” Joyce G. Baldwin, *Daniel: An Introduction and Commentary*, TOTC, vol. 23 (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 1978), 226.

¹⁰² House, *Daniel*, 171.

¹⁰³ House, *Daniel*, 180.

¹⁰⁴ House, *Daniel*, 180.

11:36–45, whereas the latter sees only one fulfillment. Typological interpretations may be further divided into two categories: double-fulfillments and multiple-fulfillments.

Double fulfillment. Jerome contends that Daniel 11:21–45 applies more appropriately to the antichrist at the end of the world.¹⁰⁵ This leads scholars to regard his interpretation as belonging to the end-time antichrist view. A closer examination of Jerome’s argument reveals that his reasoning is along the line of typological reading. Jerome writes, “Since many of the details which we are subsequently to read and explain are appropriate to the person of Antiochus, he is to be regarded as a type of the Antichrist, and those things which happened to him in a preliminary way are to be completely fulfilled in the case of the Antichrist.”¹⁰⁶ Here Jerome takes Antiochus to be a preliminary fulfillment; the Antichrist living in the end of the world is the ultimate fulfillment. To support such an interpretation, Jerome appeals to Psalm 72, a prayer of Solomon. Jerome points out that Psalm 72 claims to refer to Solomon at the beginning, yet not all details in the psalm can be applied to him.¹⁰⁷ Solomon is a type of Christ.¹⁰⁸

Stuart Olyott reasons that from Daniel 11:36 the author starts to say things that appear to describe Antiochus IV but do not fit him. The prophecy is about the end of the world. Daniel is caused to look through Anitochus IV to the antichrist who is prefigured by him.¹⁰⁹ He also believes that 2 Thessalonians 2:4 describes the same person. He concludes that verses 21–45 begin with a vision of Antiochus Epiphanes which then

¹⁰⁵ Jerome, *Commentary on Daniel*, 135–44.

¹⁰⁶ Jerome, *Commentary on Daniel*, 129.

¹⁰⁷ Jerome, *Commentary on Daniel*, 130.

¹⁰⁸ Jerome, *Commentary on Daniel*, 130. See also Mary Reaburn, “St. Jerome and Porphyry Interpret the Book of Daniel,” *ABR* 52 (2004): 9–12.

¹⁰⁹ Stuart Olyott, *Dare to Stand Alone*, Welwyn Commentary (Darlington: Evangelical Press, 1982), 155.

merges into a vision of the antichrist that becomes the only figure in the end.¹¹⁰ Similarly, Tremper Longman III contends that in light of the New Testament, readers may see references to Antiochus Epiphanes in Daniel 11:36–45 that describe him as anticipatory of the antichrist.¹¹¹

Multiple fulfillment. Dissatisfied with the double-fulfillment interpretation, a number of scholars have proposed a multiple-fulfillment interpretation for Daniel 11:36–45. According to Joyce Baldwin, the fulfillment of Daniel 11:36–45 is not confined to any one era of history. While Antiochus IV is an initial fulfillment of the passage, he is only the prototype of others to come.¹¹² Advocates of the end-time antichrist view may admit that many antichrists will precede the final antichrist,¹¹³ but they do not regard them as fulfillments of Daniel 11:36–45, whereas the multiple fulfillment view takes them as fulfillments of the prophecy. Baldwin gives six reasons on why a multiple-fulfillment typological reading should be adopted:

(i) there are details which do not apply to Antiochus if our information about him from other sources is accurate. (ii) The emphasis throughout is less on the king's deeds than on his character which prompts his deeds. (iii) The account keeps returning to the persecution which will be directed against the godly people and the covenant. (iv) Throughout the book the proud are manifestly brought low or suddenly cut out of the picture by death. God's sovereign way of bringing this about is a marked emphasis in the case of Nebuchadrezzar, Belshazzar, Alexander and his successors. (v) These rulers become progressively more anti-God as the book draws to its conclusion. (vi) The chapter takes up the point made in 8:17, where that vision was "for the time of the end." At the height of his vindictive cruelty Antiochus will be serving God's purpose to refine and cleanse his people "for the time of the end" (cf. verse 40).¹¹⁴

¹¹⁰ Olyott, *Dare to Stand Alone*, 156.

¹¹¹ Longman, *Daniel*, 267. Longman claims to follow Baldwin. His interpretation, however, is closer to the double-fulfillment interpretation, whereas Baldwin holds a multiple-fulfillment view (see below).

¹¹² Baldwin, *Daniel*, 220–22.

¹¹³ E.g., Olyott, *Dare to Stand Alone*, 154.

¹¹⁴ Baldwin, *Daniel*, 221.

Desmond Ford notes that in the book of Daniel, “king” often stands for “kingdom” or “dynasty”; hence, Daniel 11:36–39 describes not a single individual, but a system of power that persists until the end of time.¹¹⁵ Essentially, his view is not so different from that of Baldwin, since the power system manifests itself in various ways throughout human history.

Assessment of Typological Interpretation

The strength of a typological interpretation is that in addition to the attempt to account for the discrepancies between Daniel 11:36–45 and the extra-biblical historical accounts of Antiochus IV, it does better in bridging the contexts of the passage. “The king” in verse 36 points back to the king of the north described in verses 21–35. The continuity between verses 21–35 and verse 36 should be accounted for. On the other hand, the individual resurrection mentioned in Daniel 12:2 appears to look forward to an end-time scenario.

Several questions remain to be answered for typological interpretations of Daniel 11:36–45. First, from where do readers find signals for typology? Though not exclusively the case, discrepancies between prophecy and the initial fulfillment signify a possible typological interpretation. The majority of commentators see discrepancies begin with either verse 36 or verse 40. Jerome, however, comments that discrepancies already exist in verse 21–35. To answer this question, one must examine the history from Cyrus to Antiochus IV and compare it with Daniel 11.

Second, what are the best biblical examples that support the proposed typological interpretations? Jerome uses Psalm 71 to bolster his double fulfillment typological interpretation. Though not necessarily ill-suited, this psalm might not be the best candidate. The psalm is a prayer, not a prophecy. Critics may argue that prayers do

¹¹⁵ Desmond Ford, *Daniel* (Nashville: Southern Pub. Assn., 1978), 272.

not necessarily demand fulfillment as prophecies do because they are human wishes. To support the typological reading of Daniel 11, Baldwin cites Matthew 24 and Mark 13. The Mount of Olives discourse of Jesus Christ, however, supports the double-fulfillment interpretation rather than the multiple-fulfillment interpretation. As Cranfield has pointed out (quoted by Baldwin herself), the prophecy has both historical and eschatological fulfillments.

Third, which typological interpretation should be adopted, double fulfillment or multiple fulfillment? Double-fulfillment typological interpretation claims that all the detailed descriptions that do not fit Antiochus IV will be fulfilled in the end-time antichrist. It is not necessarily the case for multiple-fulfillment typological interpretation. According to multiple-fulfillment interpretation, the prophecy is fulfilled multiple times in history. It does not require that all details are fulfilled in every fulfillment. Some details may apply more appropriately to some fulfillments, others may apply only to one of the fulfillments. All fulfillments fulfill the type prophesied in the prophecy, not necessarily all the details of it.

A fourth question also deserves exploration, although it is rarely raised by either advocates of typological interpretation or by their critics: even if one could argue for a typological interpretation of the last verses of Daniel 11 (whether vv. 21–45, vv. 36–45, or only vv. 40–45), what should one make of the other verses of the chapter? Is it sufficient to argue that the first verses of Daniel are accurate predictions about the history, and then the prophecy suddenly switches to a typology?

Summary

The above summary of approaches in interpreting Daniel 11:36–45 has shown that virtually all commentators agree that Daniel 11:36–45 does not fit the life of Antiochus IV. Critical scholarship argues that the passage is a pseudo-prophecy about Antiochus IV. On one hand, the strength of the interpretation is that the continuity

between verses 21–35 and 36–45 has support from the text. On the other hand, the interpretation is heavily dependent on the dating of the chapter to around 165 BC. The Daniel manuscripts of the Dead Sea Scrolls pose a challenge to this late dating.

Most conservative commentators hold a single-fulfillment view. Nevertheless, their interpretations differ greatly and often reflect their faith traditions. Though these interpretations vary, they all attempt to show Daniel 11:36–45 either has been fulfilled in history or will be fulfilled in the end of the world. The difficulty with the single-fulfillment view is that the passage does seem to continuously prophesy about the same person mentioned in verses 21–35.

Both the standard critical view and the single-fulfillment view appear to share a common hermeneutical assumption, namely, they assume the prophecy can only be fulfilled *once* and in a *strictly literal* way. The difference is that the critical view takes the prophecy to be still about Antiochus IV, while the single-fulfillment view takes it to be about another entity.

Thesis and Methodology

This dissertation argues that Daniel 11 is best read typologically. It also argues that a multiple-fulfillment typological interpretation should be adopted. Chapter 2 surveys the Greco-Roman history as it relates to Daniel 11, in order to verify whether the historical accounts and Daniel 11 correspond well with each other. I demonstrate that even setting aside Daniel 11:36–45, difficulties still exist in reconciling even Daniel 11:2–35 with the historical accounts. Therefore, a strictly literal fulfillment cannot always be maintained even before verse 36. Nevertheless, I argue that the discrepancies should not surprise the reader if biblical prophecies and promises are correctly understood.

Chapter 3 is devoted to the study of the biblical prophecies and promises (prophecies and promises share similar features). Some prophecies are direct predictions about specific future events, such as the division of Solomon’s kingdom in 1 Kings

11:30–39, the deeds of Josiah in 1 Kings 13:2, and the famine in Acts 11:28. Others have much to do with typology, such as the book of Joel, God’s promise to David in 2 Samuel 7:11–16, and the birth of a son in Isaiah 7–11. Through the study of biblical prophecies and promises, this dissertation demonstrates that certain biblical prophecies and promises are fulfilled typologically. The existence of discrepancies between biblical prophecies or promises and history is a common feature of typological fulfillment.

Chapters 4 and 5 set out to demonstrate why Daniel 11 should be taken typologically. At first glance, Daniel 11 seems to be a detailed prophecy about some specific events to come. Nevertheless, it will be argued that typology is in view. The characteristics of the kings in Daniel 11 are intended to be set as a type for any ruler or world power that is hostile toward God and his saints. This type will be manifested multiple times throughout history until the end of time. This section is divided into two chapters due to its length. Given the stylistic similarities between Daniel 11 and the so-called “Akkadian Prophecies,” chapter 4 devotes a section to the discussion of similarities and differences between Daniel 11 and the “Akkadian Prophecies” as well as the significance of the similarities and differences. Chapter 5 also gives a summary of common features of typological prophecy. Chapter 6 then summarizes the study as well as its implications. The dissertation ends with a tentative definition of typological prophecy/promise.

CHAPTER 2

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF DANIEL 11

It has been noted in the previous chapter that most scholars, whether critical or conservative, agree that Daniel 11:2–35 fit the history from Cyrus of Persia down to Antiochus IV, and discrepancies between the prophecy and historical accounts of Antiochus IV begin with verse 36. This understanding has led critical scholars to take Daniel 11 as a pseudo-prophecy written shortly before the death of Antiochus IV and led most conservative scholars to argue that the last verses of Daniel 11 are a prophecy about an entity other than Antiochus IV. This chapter revisits the Persian and Greek kings from Cyrus to Antiochus IV, which will allow further assessment of the majority interpretations of Daniel 11.

The Kings of Persia

The prophecy is given in the third year of Cyrus (Dan 10:1). The kings of Persia, however, take only one verse (Dan 11:2), and only four of them are mentioned. There are more than ten kings in the Achaemenid Empire. It is then reasonable to ask which four kings are in view in Daniel 11:2. In order to provide a historical background for answering the question, this section briefly surveys the kings of Persia from Cyrus to the time of Alexander.

Cyrus the Great (558–530 BC)

Cyrus II the Great was the founder of the Persian Achaemenid Empire. He was the son of Cambyses, a Persian ruler, and Mandane, daughter of a Median king

Astyages.¹ Persia was subordinate to Media before the rise of Cyrus. There are competing accounts about the life of Cyrus.² Despite the discrepancies between the accounts of Cyrus in Herodotus,³ Xenophon,⁴ Ctesias,⁵ and Justin,⁶ it is generally agreed that shortly

¹ Mieroop has doubts about the existence of a *unified* Median empire. Marc Van de Mieroop, *A History of the Ancient Near East, ca. 3000–323 BC*, 2nd ed., Blackwell History of the Ancient World (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2007), 274.

² Herodotus knew three versions of the life of Cyrus, and he was offering a fourth one. Herodotus, *Histories* 1.95.1.

³ Herodotus (*Histories* 1.107–130) relates that Astyages ordered his servant Harpagus to kill baby Cyrus, born in Media, because of two ominous dreams about the threat of Cyrus to his kingdom. Harpagus handed Cyrus to a shepherd named Mitrdates to complete the task. Mitrdates instead saved his life and raised him. He exchanged Cyrus with his stillborn son. Astyages found out ten years later, but he finally let Cyrus go back to his parents in Persia, deeming him no longer a threat to his rule. Harpagus incited Cyrus to fight for freedom of the Persians from Astyages, because Astyages killed the son of Harpagus after he found out Cyrus did not die. Astyages sent out Harpagus as the commander of his army. Harpagus defected to the Persians, and Astyages was captured and spent the rest of his life in the palace of Persia. After subduing Media, Cyrus conquered Asia Minor. He then took control of the rest of Asia before finally turning against Babylon, which fell into his hand in 539 BC. The Sippar Cylinder of Nabonidus (*COS* 2.123A:310–13) tells that Cyrus captured Astyages in a battle and took him as captive. Another Babylonian text, the Nabonidus Chronicle, states that Astyages took the initiative against Cyrus, but his army rebelled and handed him over to Cyrus. Albert K. Grayson, *Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2000), 106.

⁴ According to Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*, Cyrus grew up in Persia, visited Astyages when he was at least twelve years old, and until fifteen he stayed with his grandfather who adored him very much. Astyages died within two years of Cyrus's return to Persia and passed his throne to his son Cyaxares II. Cyrus, under the request of Cyaxares, led a Persian army to help the Medes against the Babylonians (called Assyrians in *Cyropaedia*). He subdued Armenia and Scythia. With the Medes and the Hyrcanians who voluntarily followed him, Cyrus then defeated the Babylonian allies, including the Cappadocians and the Arabs. Cyrus then conquered Lydia and Phrygia before taking Babylon. Afterwards, Cyaxares gave her daughter to Cyrus as his wife and promised to bequeath the Median kingdom to Cyrus. Since the discovery of the Babylonian texts which appear to support Herodotus, most scholars have regarded Xenophon less reliable than Herodotus and Cyaxares II as Xenophon's own invention. Recently, Steven Anderson argued that evidence from the ancient texts supports the existence of Cyaxares II. Steven D. Anderson, "Darius the Mede: A Reappraisal" (PhD diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 2014). See also Duane A. Garrett, "Daniel," in *The Problem of the Old Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic), forthcoming.

⁵ Ctesias's work on Cyrus is mainly preserved through Diodorus Siculus (ca. 90–30 BC), Nicolaus of Damascus (ca. 64–4 BC), and Photius of Constantinople (ca. AD 820–900). According to Nicolaus (in *FGH* 66), Cyrus was not related to Astyages at all. He was the son of Atradates, a thief, and Argoste, a goat-herder. Cyrus became a palace cleaner for a living, was transferred to the lamp carriers, and then worked under and was adopted by Astyages's cupbearer Artembares. Cyrus later replaced the old man Artembares and gained great power. Encouraged by his mother's dream and aided by a certain Persian named Oibaras, Cyrus determined to depose Astyages and finally took his throne. The Hyrcanians, the Parthians, Saka, Bactrians, and all other nations submitted to Cyrus. Photius (*Persica* §1) adds that Cyrus honored Astyages as a father and took the latter's daughter Amytis as wife. Interestingly, Diodorus (*Library of History* 9.22.1) affirms that Cyrus was the son of Cambyses and Mandane. Assyriologists and classicists generally regard Ctesias's account of Cyrus unreliable. Robert Drews, "Sargon, Cyrus and Mesopotamian Folk History," *JNES* 33, no. 4 (1974): 391.

⁶ Justin's account (*Epitome* 1.4–6) generally follows Herodotus. Still, a few details differ from it. The shepherd (not named in Justin) did exchange Cyrus for his son, but the text did not mention it was a stillborn son. Cyrus was first deserted in the woods but was fed and protected by a dog before he was brought back to the shepherd's home. Moreover, the defection of Harpagus to Cyrus was not decisive. The Persians were reproached by mothers and wives before they finally went back to battle and defeated the Medes (Nicolaus, in *FGH* 66, has a similar scene). Furthermore, Cyrus made Astyages ruler of the

after subduing Media in 550 BC, Cyrus took Lydia and the rest of Asia Minor. He then led successful campaigns in Central Asia as well as on the Iranian Plateau between 546 and 540 BC.⁷ Finally, he turned to Babylon and took the city strategically without a battle in 539 BC.⁸

After taking control of Babylon, Cyrus issued edicts to restore images of gods to places where they belonged and allowed the exiles to return to their own dwellings. The Cyrus Cylinder lists places such as Nineveh, Ashur, Susa, Agade, Eshnunna, Zamban, Meturnu, Der, Gutium, Sumer, and Akkad.⁹ The Israelites were also permitted to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple (2 Chr 36:22–23; Ezra 1:1–8; 6:2–5). Little is known about the last ten years of Cyrus. He died in 530 BC and was succeeded by his eldest son Cambyses.¹⁰

Cambyses II (530–522 BC)

Cyrus left Babylon for Ecbatana before the end of his accession year. He appointed Cambyses as his representative in Babylon. Upon the death of his father, Cambyses assumed the throne. He launched a campaign against Egypt between 525 and 522 BC. After a siege, he took Memphis and captured the king of Egypt, Psammenitus,

Hyrceanians rather than provided for him in the palace of Persia.

⁷ The sequence of Cyrus's military operations is uncertain. The chronology delineated here is the most widely accepted one. Pierre Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander: A History of the Persian Empire* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2002), 34.

⁸ The Cyrus Cylinder (COS 2.124:314–16) and the Babylonian Chronicle (COS 1.137:467–68) also attest to Cyrus's entering of Babylon without a battle. The latter notes that Cyrus had already defeated the Babylonians at Opis and took Sippar before entering Babylon.

⁹ *Cyrus Cylinder* (COS 2.124:314–16).

¹⁰ There are at least four versions of the death of Cyrus. According to Herodotus (*Histories* 1.214.3), Cyrus was killed at the battle with the Massagetae in 530 BC. See also Justin, *Epitome* 1.8. Ctesias (Photius, *Persica* §§7–8) relates that Cyrus was hit by a javelin when he was fighting the Derbikes. The wound was fatal, but Cyrus was able to appoint his eldest son as king of Persia before death. In Xenophon's account (*Cyropaedia* 8.7), Cyrus died peacefully. Berossus records that Cyrus lived another nine years after conquering Babylon. He then died in a battle in the plain of the Daas. Stanley M. Burstein, *The Babyloniaca of Berossus*, Sources from the Ancient Near East 1 (Malibu, CA: Undena, 1978), 29.

alive.¹¹ Having learned of the fall of Egypt, the Libyans surrendered to Cambyses, as well as the people of Cyrene and Barca.¹² According to Herodotus, Cambyses planned three other expeditions against the Carthaginians, the Ammonians, and the Ethiopians respectively. None of them succeeded.¹³

After taking control of Egypt, Cambyses ordered that the mummified corpus of Amasis, father of Psammenitus, be whipped and then burned. He stabbed the sacred Apis bull. He was also reported to have murdered his younger brother Smerdis as well as his own sister-wife. Besides these, Cambyses added many more outrageous deeds by killing innocent people, opening coffins of the dead, and mocking images of gods.¹⁴ Cambyses earned himself a notorious reputation. The Persians had a saying: Darius is a tradesman, Cambyses a tyrant (δεσπότης), and Cyrus a father because Cambyses was harsh and arrogant.¹⁵ Cambyses was regarded as a mad or half-mad man.¹⁶

The depiction of Cambyses is by no means unanimous. The autobiography of Udjahorresnet, former naval commander of Amasis and Psammetichus, inscribed on his own statue high praises of Cambyses. The inscription tells that Cambyses assigned the Egyptian Udjahorresnet the office of the chief physician. Cambyses assumed the Pharaonic role and honored the gods of Egypt “as every excellent king had done.”¹⁷ Furthermore, Cambyses’s proper burial of the Apis bull was also attested by the epitaph

¹¹ The name of the king of Egypt is Amyrtaios in Ctesias (frag. 13).

¹² Herodotus, *Histories* 3.13.3.

¹³ Herodotus, *Histories* 3.17–26.

¹⁴ Herodotus, *Histories* 3.16–37.

¹⁵ Herodotus, *Histories* 3.89.3.

¹⁶ Herodotus, *Histories* 3.25.2; 3.38.1; 3.61.1; Diodorus, *Library of History* 10.14.1.

¹⁷ Amélie Kuhrt, *The Persian Empire: A Corpus of Sources from the Achaemenid Period* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 1:117–19.

of the Apis bull as well as its sarcophagus, dated to his sixth regnal year.¹⁸ This evidence has led some scholars to re-evaluate Cambyses; some of the incidents recorded in the classical sources may reflect hostile priestly propaganda against Cambyses because the latter applied restrictive fiscal measures to certain Egyptian temples.¹⁹

Perhaps the murder of his siblings should also be examined in its own ancient context.²⁰ Many would not hesitate to kill, including their own families, if they thought that their rule was or would be challenged. Therefore, murdering siblings by no means set Cambyses apart from other rulers. He was not mad; he was behaving just like many other ancient rulers.

In 522 BC, Cambyses received a report of a rebellion in Persia and set out to Persia immediately. Before reaching the destination, he was wounded in the thigh in Syria. The wound was so severe that he died shortly afterward.²¹

Smerdis/Gaumata (522 BC)

Events surrounding the transition from Cambyses to Darius are hotly debated among historians. The classical sources offer similar yet differing accounts. In the Behistun Inscription,²² Darius tells the official story of his accession. Cambyses had his brother Bardiya (= Smerdis) killed secretly before the Egyptian campaign. While

¹⁸ Kuhrt, *The Persian Empire*, 1:122–24.

¹⁹ Alan B. Lloyd, “The Inscription of Udjahorresnet a Collaborator’s Testament,” *JEA* 68 (1982): 173; Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander*, 57–61. Only three temples were exempted from the restrictive measurement. See the *Demonic Chronicle* in Kuhrt, *The Persian Empire*, 1:124–26. A letter dated to 408 BC, from Yedoniah, the Jewish leader at Yeb (Elephantine) to Bigvai, the Persian viceroy of Judea, mentions that during Cambyses’s time in Egypt, all the temples of the Egyptian gods were overthrown, but the Jewish temple at Yeb was untouched. A. E. Cowley, *Aramaic Papyri of the Fifth Century B.C.* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1923), no. 30.

²⁰ This is not the only version of the death of Smerdis. See the next section for more discussion.

²¹ Herodotus, *Histories* 3.64.3; 3.66.2. Perhaps this is the origin of the Apis bull incident related in Herodotus, *Histories* 3.27–29.

²² Kuhrt, *The Persian Empire*, 1:141–51.

Cambyses was in Egypt, a magus named Gaumata proclaimed to be Bardiya, the brother of Cambyses and made himself king of Persia. After that, Cambyses died. While no one dared to stand against Gaumata the usurper, Darius, who claimed to belong to the royal Achaemenid family, managed to kill him and took back the kingship.

Decades later, Herodotus recounts the same story with more details, some of which differ from what is related by Darius. According to Herodotus,²³ disturbed by a dream in which Smerdis would become the king of Persia, Cambyses sent Prexaspes from Egypt to Persia to secretly execute his brother Smerdis. This secrecy was known by a magus, steward of Cambyses. He had a brother, also a magus, whose name was also Smerdis. He closely resembled the brother of Cambyses in appearance, except that he did not have ears. This magus claimed to be the brother of Cambyses and usurped the throne. Cambyses came to know about the usurpation. He set out to Persia but died in the journey in an accident by his own sword. The identity of the usurper was found out seven months later by a royal concubine. He was finally killed by Darius, one of the seven nobles who agreed to overthrow the usurper.

Justin's account resembles the above two. It differs, however, from both in certain details. Alarmed by the ominous dream, Cambyses sent Prexaspes, a magus, to kill Smerdis. In the meantime, however, the king died of the wound in the thigh. Prexaspes dispatched a commission to kill Smerdis before the report of the king's death reached Persia. He then set up his own brother Oropastes, who closely resembled Smerdis in appearance, as king of Persia. Cambyses had cut off his ears. As related by Herodotus, he was found out by a royal concubine and was killed by one of the seven nobles.

²³ Herodotus, *Histories* 3.61–79. See below for other versions of the death of Cambyses.

In Ctesias's work,²⁴ a magus named Sphendadates who resembled Tanyoxarkes,²⁵ the brother of Cambyses, devised the plot from the beginning. He kept slandering Tanyoxarkes before Cambyses, until the secret execution of Tanyoxarkes. Afterward, he assumed Tanyoxarkes's identity, presumably with the approval or even authorization of Cambyses. Five years later, however, Cambyses's mother Amytis discovered the truth through a eunuch. She then uttered a curse and committed suicide. Sometime later, while cutting twigs with a large knife in Babylon, Cambyses (who had ruled for eighteen years) injured himself and died of the wound. Sphendadates assumed the throne after the death of Cambyses. But later, he was exposed and was then killed by the seven nobles in the palace after ruling for only seven months.

Despite the discrepancies, these four accounts appear to affirm the gist of the story: Cambyses had his younger brother killed (either before or during his Egyptian campaign). A magus claimed to be the brother of Cambyses and usurped the throne (either before or after the death of Cambyses). A band of seven nobles killed the usurper and restored the kingship back to the Achaemenid lineage.

Several reasons cast doubt on the credibility of the accounts. Although the latter three accounts contain more details than the official account, they disagree on most of the key issues, such as the time and manner of the death of Smerdis, the time and identity of the usurper, as well as the manner of his death. The physical resemblance between Smerdis and the said usurper has also been dismissed as absurd.²⁶ Furthermore, the reliability of the official account is also questionable. Darius had every reason to justify his rule over the Persians, and possibly attempted to legitimate his kingship by claiming to belong to the Achaemenid royal line. This may be true, but if Smerdis was

²⁴ Ctesias, frag. 13.9–16.

²⁵ In Xenophon, the name of Cyrus's younger son is Tanaoxares.

²⁶ A. T. Olmstead, *History of the Persian Empire* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948), 109. The Behistun Inscription has no mention of it at all.

still alive at the death of Cambyses, Darius would have no claim on the kingship.²⁷ Smerdis was the rightful heir to the throne. Smerdis *has to* die (so that someone else such as Darius was possible to claim the throne) and *cannot* die at the hand of Darius (otherwise Darius would be a usurper), in order to make Darius's accession legitimate. Therefore, the usurper being Smerdis, the brother of Cambyses, is not impossible.²⁸

Darius the Great (522–486 BC)

The first two years of Darius's reign were plagued with unrest. In the *Behistun Inscription*, Darius boasts of putting down several revolts in the kingdom with the help of Ahuramazda. He enumerates nine regions where the rebels arise: Persia, Elam, Media, Assyria, Egypt, Parthia, Margiana, Sattagydia, Scythia.²⁹

Persia under Darius's rule expanded to be one of the largest empires in the ancient Near East. By 513 BC Darius had conquered parts of Northern India. He then marched against the Scythians in Europe. The campaign was not successful. Darius was forced to retreat to Asia.³⁰ In the following years, cities in the Northern Aegean and

²⁷ Cambyses left no children; the next rightful king would be his brother Smerdis. Herodotus (*Histories* 7.2.1) records that according to Persian law, an heir to kingship must be declared before the king goes to war. Since Cambyses did not have son, presumably, his younger brother Smerdis would be the heir. As for Darius, he used to be Cambyses's spear-bearer, and after the death of the claimed usurper, he assumed the kingship not by royal lineage, but by winning a competition among the nobles. Herodotus, *Histories* 3.84–86, 139.

²⁸ Briant states, "It seems nearly certain that the story of the murder of Smerdis is an invention." Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander*, 97. Xenophon appears to support this view when he states, "As soon as Cyrus was dead, his children at once fell into dissension, states and nations began to revolt, and everything began to deteriorate" (*Cyropaedia* 8.8.2). It is even possible that Smerdis was not a usurper at all; he may have assumed the throne after the death of Cambyses. Briant further suggests that Darius has purposefully dated the accession of Smerdis before the death of Cambyses to legitimate his rule. Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander*, 102.

²⁹ Behistun Inscription §21.

³⁰ Herodotus, *Histories* 4.83–142; Ctesias, frag. 13.20–21.

around the Bosphorus were brought under control.³¹ Macedonia became vassal to Persia (512–511 BC).³² A satrapy of Libya was also formed.

The Ionian revolt (499–494 BC) broke out at the beginning of the fifth century BC. It, however, was suppressed, and the engagement of Eretria and Athens in the revolt offered the Persians a pretext for invading these two cities. On the way to Eretria, the Persian army took Naxos and Carystus. They captured Eretria but suffered defeat at Marathon (490 BC).³³ Darius began preparation for war against the Greeks in the following years. Before launching the war, however, he passed away and was succeeded by his son Xerxes (486 BC), born of Atossa the daughter of Cyrus.³⁴

By the time of Darius, the rebuilding of the second temple in Jerusalem had been halted. Haggai and Zechariah prophesied in the second and the fourth years, encouraging the Jews to resume the work (Ezra 5:1; Hag 1:1, 15; 2:1, 10, 20; Zech 1:1, 7; 7:1). Finally, the temple was completed in 516 BC, the sixth year of Darius (Ezra 6:15). A letter was sent to Darius from the enemies of the Jews during these years, attempting to stop the work, but Darius found a copy of the decree of Cyrus in Ecbatana and favored the case of the Jews (Ezra 5–6).

Xerxes I (486–465 BC)

By 484 BC, Xerxes had suppressed the revolt in Egypt which had already begun before his accession, and then the rebellion in Babylon.³⁵ He took another four

³¹ Darius had subjugated some of the Thracians the Getae on his way to fight the Scythians. He commanded Megabazus in Europe to conquer the rest of Thrace. Herodotus, *Histories* 4.93; 5.2. It is possible that the northwestern border of the Persian Empire reached to the Danube. Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander*, 144.

³² Herodotus, *Histories* 6.44.

³³ Herodotus, *Histories* 6.100–117.

³⁴ Herodotus, *Histories* 7.2–4.

³⁵ Herodotus, , *Histories* 7.1.3, 7.7; Caroline Waerzeggers, “The Babylonian Revolts against Xerxes and the ‘End of Archives,’” *AfO* 50 (2003): 152.

years in preparation for invading mainland Greece. In the spring of 480 BC, the Persian army led by Xerxes himself marched from Sardis, through Hellespont, into Greece, accompanied by a large navy sailing along the coast of the Aegean Sea. Many cities surrendered to Xerxes without a fight, and more soldiers were conscripted into the Persian army.³⁶

They managed to take the pass of Thermopylae and then advanced toward Athens which they also captured, and burned the Acropolis.³⁷ In the meantime, the navy suffered a great loss, first due to unexpected storms, and then at the hand of the Greeks.³⁸ In the following battle at the Bay of Salamis, the Persian navy was defeated by the Greek allies.³⁹ Xerxes returned to Sardis, leaving Mardonius to continue the campaign; the latter was slain in the battle of Plataea.⁴⁰ Meanwhile, the Greek allies defeated the Persians in the battle of Mycale, which eventually led to a second revolt of the Ionians.⁴¹ The Greek allies then captured Sestus as well as Byzantine.⁴² In 478 BC, the Delian League was formed to counter-attack the Persians. A few years later, the Persian army was again routed by the Greek allies led by Cimon in the decisive battle of Eurymedon.⁴³ A peace

³⁶ Herodotus, *Histories* 7.32–132, 179–200.

³⁷ Herodotus, *Histories* 7.201–233; 8.51–55.

³⁸ Herodotus, *Histories* 8.6–16.

³⁹ Herodotus, *Histories* 8.70–95; Photius, *Persica* §30.

⁴⁰ Herodotus, *Histories* 8.113–120; 9.63–65.

⁴¹ Herodotus, *Histories* 9.90–104.

⁴² Herodotus, *Histories* 9.114–119; Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War* 1.94.

⁴³ Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War* 1.96–100; Plutarch, *Cimon* 12–14; Diodorus, *Library of History* 60–61. Scholars disagree on the date of the battle. Some (e.g., Cawkwell, Kagan, and Sealey) date it to 469 BC, while others (e.g., Briant, Holland, Fine, and Olmstead) date it to 466 BC. George Cawkwell, *The Greek Wars: The Failure of Persia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 132; Donald Kagan, *The Outbreak of the Peloponnesian War* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991), 47; Raphael Sealey, *A History of the Greek City States: Ca. 700–338 B.C.* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 250; Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander*, 555; John V. A. Fine, *The Ancient Greeks: A Critical History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983), 345; Tom Holland, *Persian Fire: The First World Empire and the Battle for the West* (New York: Doubleday, 2005), 363; Olmstead, *History of the Persian Empire*, 268.

arrangement between the Persians and the Greeks followed.⁴⁴

Xerxes returned to Susa, but very little of the rest of his life is known. Shea suggests that the book of Esther could be situated around this time.⁴⁵ In 465 BC, he was assassinated by Artabanus, a high official, and Mithridates, a eunuch. Artaxerxes, the second oldest son of Xerxes, seized the opportunity to kill his older brother Darius and became king of Persia.⁴⁶

Artaxerxes I (465–424 BC)

Shortly after Artaxerxes's accession, another Artabanus, the satrap of Bactra revolted. The revolt was quickly put down.⁴⁷ In 460 BC, when the Egyptians learned about the disturbance in the eastern Persian kingdom, they decided that time was ripe for their own national independence. Though aided by the Athenians, the Egyptians led by Inarus were eventually defeated by the Persian army led by Megabyzus, satrap of Syria (454 BC).⁴⁸

In 451 BC, Cimon returned to Athens from his ten-year ostracism. In 450 BC, he launched an invasion of Cyprus. He died while besieging Citium, located on the southern coast of Cyprus.⁴⁹ After the death of Cimon, a delegation led by Callias visited Susa in 449 BC and reached a peace treaty with Artaxerxes.⁵⁰ This treaty ended the

⁴⁴ Plutarch, *Cimon* 13.4.

⁴⁵ William H. Shea, "Esther and History," *Concordia Journal* 13, no. 3 (1987): 234–48.

⁴⁶ Justin, *Epitome* 3.1; Diodorus, *Library of History* 11.69; Photius, *Persica* §§33–34. In Aristotle's account, Artabanus hanged Darius before murdering Xerxes. Aristotle, *Politics* 5.1311b.

⁴⁷ Photius, *Persica* §35. Briant suggests that this Artabanus is probably Hystaspes, the younger brother of Artaxerxes. Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander*, 570.

⁴⁸ Diodorus, *Library of History* 11.71.3–6; Photius, *Persica* §§36–37; Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War* 1.104, 109. The Egyptian revolt happened during the First Peloponnesian War (460–445 BC) between the Peloponnesian League led by Sparta and the Delian League led by Athens. When the Athenians were still in Egypt, Artaxerxes attempted to "bribe the Peloponnesians to invade Attica and so draw off the Athenians from Egypt." Diodorus, *Library of History* 11.71.5–6; the plan, however, did not work out

⁴⁹ Plutarch, *Cimon* 18–19.

⁵⁰ Diodorus, *Library of History* 12.4. The authenticity of the treaty has been doubted. Badian,

Greco-Persian War. Sometime after, Artaxerxes also faced revolts in Syria led first by a certain Megabyzus and later by Zopyrus, son of Megabyzus.⁵¹

During the Egyptian revolt, Ezra returned to Jerusalem in 458 BC (Ezra 7:7). Around that time, enemies of the Jews wrote to Artaxerxes to accuse the Jews in Jerusalem of possible revolt.⁵² The king ordered the rebuilding work in Jerusalem to be halted immediately (Ezra 4:7–23). In 444 BC, Nehemiah, the cupbearer of the king, returned to Jerusalem and completed the walls (Neh 2–6). He returned to the king in 432 BC and then went back to Jerusalem after some time (Neh 13:6).⁵³ In 431 BC, the second Peloponnesian War broke out. Artaxerxes did not live to see the end of the war. He passed away in the end of 424 BC and was succeeded by his son Xerxes II.

Xerxes II (424 BC)

According to Ctesias,⁵⁴ Xerxes II was the only legitimate child by Queen Damaspiia. He ruled only forty-five days and, while drunk, was killed by one of Artaxerxes I's illegitimate children Secydianus, with the help of the eunuch Pharnacyas.⁵⁵ Secydianus thus usurped the throne.

however, has convincingly argued for the authenticity of it and reasons that it is a renewal of the earlier peace treaty between Cimon and Artaxerxes. E. Badian, "The Peace of Callias," *JHS* 107 (1987): 1–39.

⁵¹ Megabyzus revolted because the queen mother Amestris, with the permission of king Artaxerxes, killed Inarus along with fifty Greeks, to whom he had given the promise of safety back in 454 BC. He and the king were reconciled after two military encounters. A few years later, Megabyzus was banished for killing a lion before the king (he did it in order to save the king's life). This incident led Zopyrus, the son of Megabyzus, to rebel. Photius, *Persica* §§38–45.

⁵² Scholars have dated the letter of accusation to the time during either the Egyptian revolt or the revolt of Magebyzus. H. G. M. Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, WBC, vol. 16 (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1985), 62–63.

⁵³ Malachi's ministry is more difficult to date. Verhoef has listed eight opinions in his commentary. He opts for the dating of possibly 515–400 BC and most likely 515–458 BC. Pieter A. Verhoef, *The Books of Haggai and Malachi*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2017), 132–37.

⁵⁴ Photius, *Persica* §§47–48.

⁵⁵ Diodorus (*Library of History* 12.64.1) reports that Xerxes II ruled for a year. He also mentions that some others have recorded a reign of two months for Xerxes II (12.71.1). Two months could be a round number used for forty-five days.

Secydianus (424 BC)

In addition to the murder of Xerxes II, Secydianus had another eunuch Bagorazus stoned to death after he returned to the court from escorting the bodies of Artaxerxes I and Xerxes II to Persis, on the pretext that he buried the deceased kings without his permission. This action fueled the military's contempt against Secydianus.⁵⁶

Moreover, Secydianus sent to summon his half-brother Ochus, whom Artaxerxes I had appointed satrap of Hyrcania. Ochus purposefully delayed until he had gathered a large army. Arbarius (commander of the cavalry), Arxanes (satrap of Egypt), and the eunuch Artoxares from Armenia defected to Ochus and claimed him king of Persia. Ochus took "Darius" as his throne name. With the advice of his influential sister-wife Parysatis, Ochus deceived Secydianus; he had him arrested and killed. Secydianus ruled six months and fifteen days.⁵⁷

Darius II (423–404 BC)

At the beginning of the reign of Darius II (Ochus), his full brother Arsites revolted, aided by Artyphius the son of Megabyzus. Darius sent general Artasyras to suppress the revolt. Artasyras lost two battles against Artyphius, but by bribing the Greeks who were with Artyphius, Artasyras won the third battle. He successfully induced Artyphius to surrender by a promise of peace. But after Arsites also surrendered, Darius executed both. Darius also stoned Pharnacyas, who had helped Secydianus slay Xerxes II. Menostanes, who had been promoted by Secydianus as his prime minister and chief of the army, committed suicide in custody before the execution.⁵⁸

Not long after Darius II assumed the throne (ca. 423–421 BC), an Athenian

⁵⁶ Photius, *Persica* §49.

⁵⁷ Photius, *Persica* §§50–51.

⁵⁸ Photius, *Persica* §52. Henceforth, Darius II might present himself as "the legitimate avenger of Xerxes." Olmstead, *History of the Persian Empire*, 357.

embassy lead by Epiycus visited Persia and negotiated a treaty with him.⁵⁹ In 413 BC, Pissuthnes, satrap of Sardis, revolted. Like the fate of Artyphius, he was betrayed by the Greek mercenaries who received bribery from the king's generals. Having received assurance of forgiveness, Pissuthnes surrendered. But Darius ordered his execution.⁶⁰ Amorges, son of Pissuthnes, occupied the Carian coast. The Athenians supported him. Darius then turned to the Lacedemonians who were still in a war against the Athenians. In 411 BC, he made three similar treaties with the Lacedemonians. According to the treaties, all the lands that the king or his ancestors had previously held would belong to the king. The two parties should become allies fighting the Athenians.⁶¹ The Persian support enabled Sparta to defeat Athens in the Peloponnesian War in 404 BC.

In 410 BC, there was a revolt at Elephantine. When Arsames (the satrap of Egypt) was away from Egypt (he went to Darius), the priests of the god Khnub and Waidrang (the governor) demolished the Jewish temple at Elephantine.⁶² In 407 BC, the Medes revolted but were soon subjected.⁶³ Later on, Artoxares, an influential eunuch, plotted for usurpation. He was exposed and killed.⁶⁴ Darius II fell ill and died in 404 BC. He was succeeded by his older son Arsaces. Arsaces took the throne name of Artaxerxes.

Artaxerxes II (404–358 BC)

In Egypt, Amyrtaeus declared himself king after the death of Darius II and severed Egypt from Persia. Artaxerxes II, however, was not able to deal with the revolt in Egypt; his brother Cyrus the Younger kept him busy. Cyrus plotted the assassination of

⁵⁹ Alec Blamire, "Epiycus' Negotiations with Persia," *Phoenix* 29, no. 1 (1975): 21–26.

⁶⁰ Photius, *Persica* §53.

⁶¹ Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War* 8.18.

⁶² Cowley, *Aramaic Papyri of the Fifth Century B.C.*, nos. 27, 30.

⁶³ Xenophon, *Hellenica* 1.2.19.

⁶⁴ Photius, *Persica* §54.

Artaxerxes at his coronation ceremony. The intrigue was divulged by a magus.

Artaxerxes wanted to execute Cyrus, but the queen mother saved her favorite son.⁶⁵

Cyrus was not willing to give up. He returned to his own satrapy Asia Minor (403 BC) and prepared to overthrow his brother. He recruited Greek mercenaries and led the army of thirteen thousand eastward (401 BC). At Cunaxa, Cyrus finally met Artaxerxes II in battle, but he was not able to defeat Artaxerxes II and was killed in the battle.⁶⁶

Tissaphernes, who claimed to have killed Cyrus, was restored as governor of Lydia and returned to Sardis. He demanded the submission of the Ionian cities. The Ionians appealed to Sparta for help.⁶⁷ This led to a decade of conflict between the Spartans and the Persians. The Persians supported the Athenians to cope with the Spartan harassment in Asia Minor, but, alarmed by the Athenian successes during the Corinthian War (395–387 BC) and their support of Evagoras of Cyprus, they switched sides to support Sparta. The strategy was rewarded, in the “King’s Peace” (386 BC) that followed, Asia Minor and Cyprus came under Persian control.⁶⁸

One trouble after another came upon Artaxerxes II in the following years. After the failed Egyptian campaign (373 BC) were revolts of the satraps (372–362 BC).⁶⁹ Briant thus comments on the Persian court during the reign of Artaxerxes II: “Throughout the biography of Artaxerxes, the Persian court appears to be consumed by the hateful and cruel ambitions of the women, by the conspiracies of eunuchs and courtesans, by assassinations and executions that piled horror on horror, by general recriminations, and

⁶⁵ Photius, *Persica* §§58–59; *Artox* 2.3; Xenophon, *Anabasis* 1.1.3.

⁶⁶ Diodorus, *Library of History* 14.19–24; Xenophon, *Anabasis* 1.8.27.

⁶⁷ Diodorus, *Library of History* 14.35.6; Xenophon, *Hellenica* 3.1.3.

⁶⁸ Xenophon, *Hellenica* 5.1.31.

⁶⁹ Diodorus, *Library of History* 14.90–91.

by wearisome amorous intrigues.”⁷⁰ Artaxerxes II died in 368 BC and was succeeded by his son Ochus, who took the throne name Artaxerxes III.

Artaxerxes III (358–338 BC)

The accession of Artaxerxes III (Ochus) was surrounded by much bloodshed. Darius, the crown prince, was executed by Artaxerxes II for a conspiracy to commit patricide. Ochus managed to drive his legitimate brother Ariaspes to commit suicide and murdered another illegitimate brother Arsames.⁷¹ On his accession, Ochus eliminated the possibility of palace intrigues by burying his sister Atossa (also his stepmother) alive and killing all other royal family members.⁷²

Afterward, Artaxerxes III subdued the rebellious Cadusians.⁷³ He then attempted to further consolidate his rule by commanding the satraps in Asia Minor to disband their Greek mercenaries. The command might have triggered the revolt of Artabazus, satrap of Hellespontine Phrygia, who later (352–342 BC) took refuge at the court of Philip II of Macedon.⁷⁴

In 351 BC, Artaxerxes III led a campaign against Egypt which had remained independent since the accession of his father Artaxerxes II. His army was, however, defeated by the Egyptians who had support from the Greek mercenaries.⁷⁵ The Egyptian victory encouraged the Sidonians and the Phoenicians to revolt. Cyprus followed their lead. Tennes, King of Sidon, sold the Sidonians for his own life, but Artaxerxes III still

⁷⁰ Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander*, 613.

⁷¹ Justin, *Epitome* 10.1–2. Plutarch, *Artaxerxes* 26–30.

⁷² Valerius Maximus 9.2.7; Justin, *Epitome* 10.3.

⁷³ Diodorus, *Library of History* 17.6.1; Justin, *Epitome* 10.3.

⁷⁴ Diodorus, *Library of History* 16.22.1, 52.3. Olmstead, *History of the Persian Empire*, 424–25.

⁷⁵ Isocrates, *To Philip* 101.

killed him after destroying Sidon.⁷⁶ The king launched another campaign against Egypt and finally restored it in 343 BC.

By this time, Greece had witnessed the rise of Philip II of Macedon.

Artaxerxes III learned about the successes of Philip and was alarmed. He commanded the satraps of Asia Minor to assist the Perinthians who were besieged by Philip in 341 BC.⁷⁷

Three years later, a eunuch and chiliarch named Bagoas poisoned Artaxerxes III and put the youngest prince Arses (Artaxerxes IV) on the throne. He killed all the brothers of Arses in order to gain sole control over Arses.⁷⁸

Artaxerxes IV (338–336 BC)

Artaxerxes IV ruled for only two years. Philip II requested compensation from Artaxerxes IV for his father's support of Perinthus. When this was rejected, Philip assembled a Greek army to invade Asia. Meanwhile, at the Persian court, Artaxerxes IV attempted to get rid of Bagoas, who put him on the throne, by poison. Unfortunately, he and his children were all killed by Bagoas. Artashata (also called Codomannus by the Greeks) was chosen to be king of Persia.⁷⁹

Darius III (336–330 BC)

Artashata was the grandson of Ostanes, the brother of Artaxerxes II. He took Darius (III) as his throne name. Bagoas soon realized that he was not able to control Darius and attempted to poison him. Darius learned about his plan and forced him to drink his own poison.⁸⁰

⁷⁶ Diodorus, *Library of History* 16.41–45.

⁷⁷ Diodorus, *Library of History* 16.75.1

⁷⁸ Diodorus, *Library of History* 17.5.3. Arrian mentions Bistanes was still alive and later met Alexander the Great. Arrian, *Anabasis of Alexander* 3.19.4–5.

⁷⁹ Diodorus, *Library of History* 17.5.4–5.

⁸⁰ Diodorus, *Library of History* 17.5.6.

Persia became increasingly unstable during this time. Egypt was taken by a rebel called Khababash, and satraps were unloyal to the king. Darius was able to recover Egypt in one year, but in 334 BC, Alexander had set his foot in Asia Minor.⁸¹ In 333 BC, Darius met Alexander in battle near Issus. Though his army was twice the size of Alexander's, Darius was defeated and fled to Babylon.⁸² In the following two years, Darius proposed peace talks three times but was turned down by Alexander. In 331 BC, Darius met Alexander at Gaugamela. He fled again from the battlefield and went to Ecbatana.⁸³

Having captured Babylon, Susa, and burned Persepolis, Alexander went on to pursue Darius (330 BC). Darius decided to retreat to Bactria. Before he could reach there, Nabarzanes, commander of the cavalry, and Bessus, satrap of Bactria, and Barsanetes, satrap of the Arachotians and the Drangians, revolted; they put the king in jail.⁸⁴ When pursued by Alexander, Bessus and Barsanetes wounded Darius and deserted him. Darius died before the arrival of Alexander.⁸⁵

Bessus then claimed himself king of Asia and called himself Artaxerxes V.⁸⁶ In the following year (329 BC), however, he was betrayed by his own soldiers and was handed over to Alexander.⁸⁷ Alexander had him executed.⁸⁸

⁸¹ Diodorus, *Library of History* 17.1; Arrian, *Anabasis of Alexander* 1.11.3–8.

⁸² Diodorus, *Library of History* 17.34.6–7, 39.1; Arrian, *Anabasis of Alexander* 2.11.4, 13.1.

⁸³ Diodorus, *Library of History* 17.60.4; Arrian, *Anabasis of Alexander* 3.14.3.

⁸⁴ Diodorus, *Library of History* 17.73.2; Arrian, *Anabasis of Alexander* 3.21.1–2.

⁸⁵ Arrian, *Anabasis of Alexander* 3.21.10.

⁸⁶ Diodorus, *Library of History* 17.83.7; Arrian, *Anabasis of Alexander* 3.25.3.

⁸⁷ Arrian, *Anabasis of Alexander* 3.29.6–7.

⁸⁸ Ancient historians gave differing accounts of the death of Bessus. According to Diodorus, Alexander turned him over to Darius's brother and his other relatives, who inflicted him and cut his body into pieces and then scattered them. Diodorus, *Library of History* 17.83.9. Curtius records that Alexander ordered to cut off his nose and ears and take him to Ecbatana to be executed. Quintus Curtius Rufus, *History of Alexander* 7.5.43 (cf. Justin, *Epitome* 12.5.10–11). Arrian recounts that Alexander had him whipped and then sent to Bactra for execution. In another place, Alexander is said to have had Bessus's nose and tips of the ears cut off and then sent to Ecbatana for execution. Arrian, *Anabasis of Alexander*

The Hellenistic Kings

Alexander the Great (336–323 BC)

Alexander had been the crown prince since adolescence. In 340, at the age of sixteen, he acted as regent when Philip II was campaigning against Byzantium. He subdued Maedi and made his name known in the battle at Chaeroneia.⁸⁹ In 336 BC, Philip was assassinated; Alexander succeeded him.⁹⁰ Alexander swiftly settled the unrest in Greece,⁹¹ and eliminated those who might threaten his throne.⁹² In 334 BC, he was ready to invade Persia. Within about four years, Alexander had taken Asia Minor, Syria, Egypt, as well as the capitals of the Persian Empire.

In the following years, Alexander led campaigns in Bactria, Sogdiana, and India. As the army's reluctance to go further turned into refusal, Alexander was forced to retreat.⁹³ The crossing of the Gedrosian desert in 325 BC was a grave blow to Alexander's ambition. Though they got out of the desert, about sixty thousand died in the expedition.⁹⁴

As he left the desert, news of revolts and corruption of officials came one after another. Alexander spent months punishing the guilty, among whom were satraps of

3.30.5; 4.7.3.

⁸⁹ Plutarch, *Alexander* 9.1–2. Arrian, *Anabasis of Alexander* 1.1–8.

⁹⁰ Both Plutarch and Justin mention that Olympias, Alexander's mother, was behind the murder. Plutarch, *Alexander* 10.6; Justin, *Epitome* 9.7. Peter Green argues that she was probably covering for Alexander. Peter Green, *Alexander of Macedon, 356–323 B.C.: A Historical Biography* (Harmondsworth, England: Penguin, 1974), 107–9.

⁹¹ Plutarch, *Alexander* 11.1–12; 14.1; *Anabasis of Alexander* 1.8.8. After subjugating the rebellious Thebans, Alexander killed more than six thousand and sold more than thirty thousand into slavery.

⁹² Among them were Attalus, his uncle by Philip's lately married wife Cleopatra Eurydice, his cousin Amyntas, and Caranus, the newborn son of Cleopatra.

⁹³ Alexander offered sacrifice for omen (Arrian, *Anabasis of Alexander* 5.28.3–5), but Green posits that the unfavorable omen was merely "a convenient face-saving device" to cover Alexander's unwilling compromise. Green, *Alexander of Macedon*, 410–11.

⁹⁴ Green, *Alexander of Macedon*, 435.

Carmania, Paropamisus, Persis, the governor of Susiana.⁹⁵ Earlier, he had executed Philotas, the commander of the elite Companion cavalry, on a charge of treason, and then assassinated Philotas's father Parmenion, a commander since the time of Philip II. Milns summarizes Alexander's personality well: "He could be extravagantly generous to his friends and to those who voluntarily submitted themselves to him, but ruthless and brutal in suppressing opposition, real or imagined."⁹⁶

Alexander's attempt of self-deification is noteworthy. Years ago, Philip II had presented himself as a god by placing his own image among the statues of the twelve gods at the festival procession.⁹⁷ Alexander believed himself to be a living god.⁹⁸ It was even recounted that in 324 BC, he requested the Greeks to decree him as a god.⁹⁹ When he heard that the Arabs worshipped two gods, he regarded himself worthy to be their third god.¹⁰⁰ Alexander did not live long to enjoy his status. He fell ill in the end of May, 323 BC and died within two weeks.

The Successors (323–275 BC)

Alexander had a brother Arrhidaeus and an unborn child by the Bactrian princess Roxane. After negotiation, Arrhidaeus (adopted the title Philip III) and Alexander's unborn child (would be called Alexander IV) shared the kingship. However, the land was divided among Alexander's generals. Perdiccas held the king's signet-ring and based himself in Babylon. Seleucus was appointed commander of the Companions.

⁹⁵ Green, *Alexander of Macedon*, 438–44.

⁹⁶ R. D. Milns, "Alexander the Great (Person)," in *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. D. N. Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992).

⁹⁷ Diodorus, *Library of History* 16.92.5.

⁹⁸ Athenaeus, *The Deipnosophists* 12.537E–538b.

⁹⁹ Plutarch, *Moralia* 219e; Aelianus, *Various History* II.19. Some historians have questioned the historicity of the decree. Others, however, argue for the historicity of it. Green, *Alexander of Macedon*, 251–52; Ian Worthington, *Alexander the Great: A Reader* (London: Routledge, 2003), 236.

¹⁰⁰ Arrian, *Anabasis of Alexander* 7.20.1.

Antipater had Macedonia; however, he was to share power with Craterus once the latter returned to Macedonia. Ptolemy was granted Egypt. Antigonus One-Eye had control of Greater Phrygia, Lycia, and Pamphylia. Lysimachus held Thrace. Leonnatus had Hellespontine Phrygia. Eumenes was given Cappadocia.¹⁰¹ Peithon controlled Media.

Leonnatus was killed in the Lamian War (323–322 BC).¹⁰² Craterus and Neoptolemus were killed in battle with Eumenes.¹⁰³ Perdiccas was murdered by Peithon and Seleucus during his Egyptian campaign against Ptolemy (321–320 BC). Antipater took his position, but not for long.¹⁰⁴ He passed away in 319 BC and bequeathed his office to Polyperchon. As Errington puts it, “Events following Antipater’s death show clearly that again in this phase of Macedonian history personal ambitions were more important than any formalized governmental structure.”¹⁰⁵ Antipater’s son Cassander was not willing to accept this arrangement; he declared himself regent (317 BC). In 316 BC, he executed Olympias, Alexander’s queen mother, who had killed Arrhidaeus (317 BC). Alexander IV and Roxane fell into his hands. In Asia, Antigonus defeated Eumenes as well as other satraps in the east and annexed the Asian territories (316 BC). Seleucus fled to Ptolemy and became the latter’s admiral. In 312 BC, while Antigonus was engaged in the west, Ptolemy and Seleucus defeated Demetrius, the son of Antigonus, in a decisive battle near Gaza. After the war, Seleucus recovered Babylon for himself. This year marks the beginning of the Seleucid Dynasty.¹⁰⁶

In 311 BC, a treaty was made. Cassander was recognized as “general in

¹⁰¹ Peter Green, *The Hellenistic Age: A Short History* (New York: Modern Library, 2008), 25.

¹⁰² Diodorus, *Library of History* 18.15.3.

¹⁰³ Diodorus, *Library of History* 18.29–31; Plutarch, *Eumenes* 7.5–13; Justin, *Epitome* 13.8.

¹⁰⁴ Diodorus, *Library of History* 18.36.5; Plutarch, *Eumenes* 8.3; Justin, *Epitome* 13.8.

¹⁰⁵ R. Malcolm Errington, *A History of the Hellenistic World: 323–30 BC*, Blackwell History of the Ancient World (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2008), 22.

¹⁰⁶ Eusebius, *Chronicle* 94.

Europe” until Alexander IV grew up.¹⁰⁷ Lysimachus had Thrace. Ptolemy had Egypt. Antigonus was the “leader in Asia.” But he was not able to recover the eastern territories from Seleucus. By 306 BC, the Successors have eliminated all Argeads of the Macedonian royal house and began to assume kingship one after another, first Antigonus and his son Demetrius, followed by Ptolemy (I Soter), Lysimachus, Seleucus (I Nicator), and Cassander. Antigonus was killed at the battle of Ipsus (301 BC), and his territories were divided up; Lysimachus took Asia Minor; Seleucus received Syria and Mesopotamia. Ptolemy, who was an ally against Antigonus but was not at the battle of Ipsus, however, had already occupied Coele Syria and refused to turn it over to Seleucus.¹⁰⁸

Ptolemy died in 283 BC and was succeeded by his son Ptolemy II Philadelphus, who had been the co-regent since 285 BC. In Asia, Seleucus killed Lysimachus at the Battle of Corupedium (281 BC). However, Ptolemy¹⁰⁹ murdered Seleucus (the last living successor of Alexander the Great) and took what belonged to Lysimachus. Antiochus I Soter, who had already been a co-regent of Seleucus, became the sole ruler of Asia. In Europe, Ptolemy Keraunos’s rule was short-lived; he was killed by the Gauls from the north in 280 BC. Demetrius’s son Antigonus Gonatas defeated the Gauls in the Battle of Lysimachia (277 BC) and subsequently became king of Macedonia.

The Seleucids and the Ptolemies

As long as Ptolemy I and Seleucus I were alive, Egypt and Syria remained at

¹⁰⁷ To secure his position, Cassander had both Roxane and Alexander IV killed in 309 BC.

¹⁰⁸ Diodorus, *Library of History* 21.1.4–5.

¹⁰⁹ Ptolemy Keraunos (son of Eurydice, daughter of Antipater, regent of Macedon), older brother of Ptolemy II Philadelphus (son of Berenice, daughter of a Macedonian nobleman) and originally heir to the throne of Egypt. Later, he was displaced in favor of Ptolemy II Philadelphus and fled to Lysimachus. He was involved in a court intrigue that led to the execution of Agathocles, the original heir of Lysimachus. He then accompanied the widow of Agathocles to Seleucus.

peace. Soon after Seleucus I was dead, Ptolemy II Philadelphus started to take over coastal cities in Asia Minor. While Antiochus I was busy campaigning against the marauding Galatians in Asia Minor, Ptolemy II Philadelphus took the opportunity and invaded Syria (the First Syrian War, 276–271 BC).¹¹⁰ During this time, Arsinoe II, who was the widow of Lysimachus and briefly wife of Ptolemy Keraunus, married her brother Ptolemy II (ca. 275 BC). Antiochus I gave his daughter Apama II to Magas, the half-brother of Ptolemy II and governor of Cyrenaica, as a wife. Magas proclaimed himself to be king and marched toward Alexandria in 274 BC. However, he had to abort the invasion due to a revolt of a Libyan tribe of nomads in his own land.¹¹¹ A peace treaty was reached at the end of the First Syrian War. Ptolemy II was the winner. He took control of Phoenicia and a few coastal cities of Asia Minor.

Antiochus I died in 261 BC and was succeeded by his second-oldest son Antiochus II.¹¹² His accession was shortly followed by the Second Syrian War (260–253 BC), in which the main battlefield was Asia Minor. Antiochus II captured Ephesus, Miletus, and some posts of Cilicia that were held by Ptolemy II.¹¹³ However, he also lost control in some of his territories.¹¹⁴ A peace treaty was made at the end of the Second Syrian War. Antiochus II was to divorce his first wife Laodice and marry Ptolemy II's daughter Berenice. Laodice received compensation from Antiochus II and moved to

¹¹⁰ The First Syrian War had two phases. In the first phase (276 BC), Ptolemy successfully seized Damascus. However, Antiochus I defeated him and recaptured it. Antiochus I then went back to Asia Minor and defeated the Galatians decisively at the Elephant Battle (275 BC), which won him the surname “Soter.” In the second phase, Ptolemy II was victorious. W. W. Tarn, “The First Syrian War,” *JHS* 46 (1926): 155–62. Ptolemy's military successes were flattered by his court poet Theocritus (*Idylls* 17.85–94).

¹¹¹ Pausanias, *Description of Greece* 1.7.2.

¹¹² Before death, Antiochus I had killed his firstborn son Seleucus and appointed his second son Antiochus as his successor. Justin, *Prologus* 26.

¹¹³ Antiochus II was surnamed “Theos” after capturing Miletus. Appian, *The Foreign Wars* 65.

¹¹⁴ The satraps of Bactria and Parthia rebelled. In Asia Minor, Cappadocia, Bithynia, and Pergamon became independent. Arados also became autonomous. John D. Grainger, *The Syrian Wars, History and Archaeology of Classical Antiquity* 320 (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 132.

Ephesus with her children.¹¹⁵

A few years later, Antiochus II died in Ephesus (246 BC),¹¹⁶ and the Third Syrian War (also called the Laodicean War) immediately followed. Laodice declared her son Seleucus (II) as king in Ephesus, and Berenice did the same for her son Antiochus in Antioch. Berenice called her brother Ptolemy III Euergetes for help.¹¹⁷ When Ptolemy arrived at Antioch, however, she and her baby son had been murdered. Ptolemy then took advantage of the moment and invaded Syria. He captured several coastal cities in Thrace and Asia Minor. He even crossed the Euphrates and brought loot back to Egypt.¹¹⁸

Meanwhile, Seleucus II set off to Syria to fight Ptolemy, leaving Asia Minor to his brother Antiochus Hierax, but his fleet was badly damaged by a storm.¹¹⁹ Nevertheless, he was able to recover most of his territories and was even able to invade Coele Syria.¹²⁰ It was reported that he later suffered a defeat and fled to Antioch. When Ptolemy heard that Seleucus had called Antiochus from Asia Minor to aid him, he proposed a ten-year peace treaty (241 BC), thus ended the Third Syrian War.¹²¹

Seleucus II's trouble did not end with the end of the Third Syrian War. In Asia Minor, Antiochus Hierax refused to answer Seleucus's call. This is a sign of either rebelling or declaring independence.¹²² Seleucus thus invaded Asia Minor in 239 BC. But

¹¹⁵ OGIS I, no. 225; John D. Grainger, *A Seleukid Prosopography and Gazetteer* (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 47.

¹¹⁶ Appian (*The Syrian Wars* 65) reports that he was poisoned by Laodice. Eusebius (*Chronicle* bks 1, 95) simply states that he died of illness. The transition from Antiochus II to his son Seleucus was also witnessed by a Babylonian diarist. A. J. Sachs and H. Hunger, eds., *Astronomical Diaries and Related Texts from Babylonia* (Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences Press, 1988), 2: no. –245.

¹¹⁷ Ptolemy III had just succeeded his father Ptolemy II as king of Egypt.

¹¹⁸ Grainger, *The Syrian Wars*, 155–69. He had to return home due to disturbances in Egypt. Justin, *Epitome* 27.1.9.

¹¹⁹ Justin, *Epitome* 27.2.2.

¹²⁰ Grainger, *The Syrian Wars*, 168.

¹²¹ Justin, *Epitome* 27.2.9.

¹²² Justin, *Epitome* 27.2.7; Strabo, *The Geography* 16.2.14; Grainger, *The Syrian Wars*, 176.

he was defeated two years later at the Battle of Ancyra. The trouble went away after Antiochus's defeat by Attalus I of Pergamon, his failed assault against Syria, his confinement by Ptolemy III, and finally his death by the hand of some bandits (227 BC). By that time, Seleucus had stabilized the eastern part of his kingdom. But before he was able to retake Asia Minor from Attalus I, he died unexpectedly by a fall from a horse (225 BC).¹²³ He was succeeded by his eldest son Alexander, who took the throne name Seleucus (III).

Seleucus III sent his brother Antiochus to govern the eastern region, while he himself set out to Asia Minor. He never returned to Syria; three years later, his own officials murdered him.¹²⁴ His younger brother Antiochus (III) was made king of Syria (223–187 BC). At this time, the Seleucid kingdom was falling apart. Asia Minor was already detached. Molon, the governor of Media, and his brother Alexander, the governor of Persia, revolted.¹²⁵

Persuaded by the chief minister Hermeias, Antiochus III sent Xenon and Theodotus against Molon, while he himself invaded Coele Syria, initiating the Fourth Syrian War (221–217 BC).¹²⁶ Both operations were unsuccessful. Antiochus's army was deterred by an Aetolian commander Theodotus, and Molon took Seleucia on the Tigris. Against Hermeias's objection, Antiochus then abandoned his Coele Syria campaign and turned against Molon (220 BC). This turned out to be a successful move. Antiochus suppressed Molon and then subdued Atropatene.¹²⁷ After these two victories, Antiochus and his doctor Apollophanes assassinated Hermeias who had been dominating the

¹²³ Justin, *Epitome* 27.3.1–12.

¹²⁴ Polybius, *Histories* 4.48.8.

¹²⁵ Polybius, *Histories* 5.41.1–4.

¹²⁶ The news of the death of Ptolemy III (reigned from 246 to 222 BC) had just arrived. Grainger, *The Syrian Wars*, 186.

¹²⁷ Polybius, *Histories* 5.54–55.

court.¹²⁸

Achaeus, a cousin of Antiochus III, who had led a successful campaign in Asia Minor, declared himself king.¹²⁹ He, however, did not pose a threat to Antiochus, because his soldiers were unwilling to attack their former king.¹³⁰ Antiochus was thus able to resume the Fourth Syrian War without distraction (219 BC). He first recovered Seleucia-in-Pieria, which had been occupied since the time of Ptolemy III.¹³¹ Aided by the defection of Theodotus and Panaetolus from Egypt to Syria, Antiochus took over Coele Syria. Important cities such as Ptolemais in Phoenicia and Tyre fell into his hand.¹³² In 217 BC, Ptolemy IV gathered his army to confront Antiochus and defeated him at Raphia near Gaza. A peace treaty was reached and Coele Syria returned to Egyptian rule.¹³³

Once the southern border was settled, Antiochus then turned west against Achaeus in Asia Minor. In 213 BC, he had Achaeus captured and executed.¹³⁴ In the following years (212–205 BC), Antiochus subdued the Armenians in the north and the Parthians and the Bactrians in the east.¹³⁵ He gained the title of “the Great” after this campaign.

In 204 BC, Ptolemy IV died and was succeeded by his six-year-old son Ptolemy V Epiphanes. Egypt fell into a state of turmoil. Sosibius and Agathocles murdered all the loyal members who might become regents. They made Ptolemy V the

¹²⁸ Polybius, *Histories* 5.56.

¹²⁹ Achaeus was Antiochus III’s cousin. He was with Seleucus III in Asia Minor when the latter was murdered. Though being offered the kingship, Achaeus declined at that time and supported Antiochus III. Grainger reasons that Achaeus was probably alarmed by the eliminations of Molon of Hermeias because he feared that he might become the next victim. Grainger, *The Syrian Wars*, 193.

¹³⁰ Polybius, *Histories* 5.57.5–7.

¹³¹ Polybius, *Histories* 5.58.1–61.2.

¹³² Polybius, *Histories* 5. 61.3–62.2.

¹³³ Polybius, *Histories* 5.79.1–87.7.

¹³⁴ Polybius, *Histories* 5.87.8; 8.15–21.

¹³⁵ Polybius, *Histories* 8.23.1–5; 10.27–31, 48–49; 11.34; 13.9.

only royal member and themselves the guardians of the young king.¹³⁶ Since the time of Ptolemy IV there had already been insurrections. From 206 to 186 BC, two rival pharaohs ruled successively in Thebes.¹³⁷ Antiochus saw that a new opportunity for the invasion of Egypt had come; he plotted with Philip V of Macedon to divide up Egypt.¹³⁸ The Fifth Syrian War (202–195 BC) broke out as Antiochus invaded Coele Syria. By 198 BC, Antiochus had conquered this region. During this time, the Egyptian army led by Scopas briefly recaptured Jerusalem. Josephus relates that from Ptolemy IV to Ptolemy V, the Jews and the inhabitants of Coele Syria suffered greatly in the wars between the Seleucids and the Ptolemies. They were like “a ship in a storm, which is tossed by the waves on both sides.”¹³⁹ The Jews finally decided to aid Antiochus in taking Jerusalem, and thus they won friendship from the king.¹⁴⁰

From 197 to 196 BC, Antiochus campaigned in Asia Minor and Thrace.¹⁴¹ In 196 BC, a peace treaty between Egypt and Syria was arranged. Antiochus’s daughter Cleopatra was to marry Ptolemy V. The wedding took place a year later.¹⁴² Antiochus’s continued operations in Greece in the following years resulted in military conflicts with

¹³⁶ Polybius, *Histories* 15.25.1–5.

¹³⁷ Günther Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, trans. Tina Saavedra (New York: Routledge, 2001), 154–56.

¹³⁸ Polybius, *Histories* 15.20.2; Livy, *The History of Rome* 31.14.5; Justin, *Epitome* 30.2.6.

¹³⁹ Josephus, *Ant.* 12.130.

¹⁴⁰ Josephus, *Ant.* 12.133–53.

¹⁴¹ Polybius, *Histories* 33.38.1–14.

¹⁴² Livy, *The History of Rome* 35.13.4.

the Romans,¹⁴³ which ultimately led to his defeat at Magnesia in 190 BC.¹⁴⁴ According to the peace terms (the Treaty of Apamea) imposed by the Roman senate, Antiochus III had to give up Europe and Asia Minor, pay the cost of the war, surrender enemies of Rome, as well as send twenty hostages, including his younger son Antiochus (IV).¹⁴⁵

The Roman war also had other political effects on Antiochus's kingdom. In the north, two governors in Armenia would even take royal titles. In the east, Demetrius of Bactria was expanding his kingdom and perhaps had even encroached the Seleucid territory.¹⁴⁶ In response, Antiochus led an army eastward. On his way, he learned that the temple of Bel in Elymais had hoarded much treasure and went there to pillage the temple. However, he was killed by the local people as he left.¹⁴⁷

Seleucus IV Philometor, who had become the co-regent since 189 BC, became the sole ruler (187–175 BC). The defeat of Antiochus III could be felt throughout Seleucus's reign. In 181 or 180 BC, Seleucus IV attempted to lead an army to Asia Minor to support Pharnaces I, king of Pontus, against Pergamum. But the expedition was canceled due to his father's treaty with the Romans.¹⁴⁸ During his reign, officials were sent out to gather money from his land; the prime minister Heliodorus was put in charge

¹⁴³ By this time, Rome had arisen as a superpower and had begun interfering in the east of the Mediterranean world. In 197 BC, the Romans defeated Philip V's army in the Second Macedonian War, and the two nations settled a peace treaty in 196 BC. In the same year, the Roman senate sent a delegation to negotiate with Antiochus III. The ancient historians related that the Roman delegates asked Antiochus III to vacate the lands that once belonged to Philip V and Ptolemy V, which Antiochus III refused. Grainger contends that the meeting was held in a friendly spirit and Rome could not have made these requests. Polybius, *Histories* 18.50.2–52.5; Livy, *The History of Rome* 33.39–41.4; Diodorus, *Library of History* 28.12; Appian, *Syrian Wars* 2–3; John D. Grainger, *The Seleucid Empire of Antiochus III (223–187 BC)* (Barnesley, England: Pen & Sword Military, 2015), chap. 8, Kindle.

¹⁴⁴ Livy, *The History of Rome* 37.37.10–43.11.

¹⁴⁵ Polybius, *Histories* 21.17.3–8; Livy, *The History of Rome* 37.45.14–17; Diodorus, *Library of History* 29.10; Appian, *Syrian Wars* 38–39.

¹⁴⁶ Grainger, *Seleucid Empire of Antiochus III*, chap. 11.

¹⁴⁷ Diodorus, *Library of History* 28.3; 29.15; Strabo, *The Geography* 16.1.18; Justin, *Epitome* 32.2; A. J. Sachs and D. J. Wiseman, "A Babylonian King List of the Hellenistic Period," *Iraq* 16, no. 2 (1954): 207.

¹⁴⁸ Diodorus, *Library of History* 29.24.

of the work.¹⁴⁹ It was Heliodorus that murdered him in 175 BC.¹⁵⁰

In 176 BC, Seleucus IV sent his eldest son Demetrius to Rome, in exchange for his younger brother Antiochus (IV). Antiochus was still in Athens when he heard the news of Seleucus's death. Antiochus managed to take over the kingdom with the help of Eumenes II of Pergamum and his brother Attalus.¹⁵¹ He, however, did not immediately become the sole king of Syria. His nephew, the younger son of Seleucus IV, probably adopted by Antiochus IV, was a co-regent.¹⁵²

In 173 BC, when Antiochus discovered that Egypt was plotting a war against him, he immediately took defensive measures against Egypt.¹⁵³ Afterward, he came to Jerusalem and was welcomed by Jason the high priest as well as other people in Jerusalem.¹⁵⁴ In 170 BC, the sixth Syrian war broke out. Antiochus soon defeated the Egyptian army led by Eulaius and Lenaius, the regents of Ptolemy VI Philometer. He took control of all Egypt except Alexandria. The people in Alexandria made Philometer's younger brother king, whereas Antiochus set up Ptolemy VI as a puppet ruler at Memphis and then left Egypt, probably hoping that this arrangement would put Egypt into a civil

¹⁴⁹ 2 Macc 3; Hannah M. Cotton and Michael Wörrle, "Seleukos IV to Heliodoros. A New Dossier of Royal Correspondence from Israel," *ZPE* 159 (2007): 191–205; Dov Gera, "Olympiodoros, Heliodoros and the Temples of Koilē Syria and Phoinikē," *ZPE* 169 (2009): 125–55; Uriel Rappaport, "Did Heliodoros Try to Rob the Treasures of the Jerusalem Temple? Date and Probability of the Story of II Maccabees, 3," *REJ* 170 (2011): 3–19.

¹⁵⁰ Appian, *The Syrian Wars* 45. Grainger reasons that Antiochus IV possibly made up the story to justify his killing of Heliodorus and his role as regent. John D. Grainger, *The Fall of the Seleukid Empire 187–75 BC* (Barnesley, England: Pen & Sword Military, 2015), chap. 1, Kindle.

¹⁵¹ 1 Macc 1:10; *OGIS* I, no. 248, vv. 10–39.

¹⁵² He had the child killed in 170 BC. Sachs and Wiseman, "Babylonian King List of Hellenistic Period," 208; Otto Mørkholm, *Antiochus IV of Syria* (Oslo, Norway: Gyldendal Norsk Forlag, 1966), 44–49.

¹⁵³ Polybius, *Histories* 27.19; Livy, *The History of Rome* 42.29.5–7.

¹⁵⁴ 2 Macc 4:21–22.

war.¹⁵⁵ On the way back to Antiochus, he entered the temple in Jerusalem and took vessels and hidden treasures from it.¹⁵⁶

While Antiochus was away from Egypt (168 BC), the two Ptolemaic brothers were reconciled and became joint rulers (again) in Alexandria. In reaction, Antiochus promptly returned to Egypt and planned to besiege Alexandria. While Antiochus was marching toward Alexandria, Caius Popilius Laenas heard the tidings of the Roman victory over Macedonia and immediately set out for him, carrying the ultimatum from the Roman senate. The senate ordered Antiochus to vacate Egypt immediately. Daunted by the Roman power, Antiochus obeyed.¹⁵⁷ Thus, the sixth Syrian war ended.

Meanwhile, Jerusalem was in a tumult. Antiochus wrongly thought it to be a revolt against him. He rushed back to Jerusalem. This time, he decided to deal with the Jewish religion for good. He killed thousands of Jews and put many into slavery. He dedicated the temple in Jerusalem to Olympian Zeus and sacrificed swine on its altar.¹⁵⁸ These measurements resulted in a revolt led by Mattathias and his sons.¹⁵⁹ In 165 BC, Antiochus led an army eastward. The next year, he died in Persia of disease.¹⁶⁰

Onias III and the Temple of Leontopolis

Since most scholars take נגיד ברית in Daniel 11:22 to be Onias III.¹⁶¹ It is worth devoting a section here to discuss briefly the history related to Onias III. There are diverging versions about the succession of the high priesthood during this time.

¹⁵⁵ Livy, *The History of Rome* 45.11.1; Grainger, *Fall of the Seleukid Empire*.

¹⁵⁶ 1 Macc 1:16–24; Josephus, *Ant.* 12.246–47.

¹⁵⁷ Polybius, *Histories* 29.27; Livy, *The History of Rome* 45.11.2–12.7.

¹⁵⁸ 1 Macc 1:54–61; 2 Macc 5:11–7:42; Josephus, *Ant.* 12.248–54.

¹⁵⁹ 1 Macc 2–16; 2 Macc 8–15.

¹⁶⁰ Polybius, *Histories* 31.11; 1 Macc 6:1–17; 2 Macc 1:14–16; 9:1–29.

¹⁶¹ John J. Collins, *Daniel: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 382.

According to 2 Maccabees 4–5, when Seleucus IV was still alive, Onias III was the High Priest in Jerusalem. A certain Simon fell out with Onias III. This Simon went to report to Apollonius, the governor of Coele Syria and Phoenicia, that the Jerusalem temple had large funds in the treasury. Apollonius reported it to Seleucus IV, who then sent his prime minister Heliodorus to confiscate the temple treasure. However, Heliodorus's mission failed. As the strife between Simon and Onias III became irreconcilable, Onias III went to Antioch to appeal to Seleucus IV. But the king died in the meantime, and Antiochus IV ascended to the throne. Jason, Onias III's brother, obtained the high priesthood by promising the king a large sum of money. He enthusiastically promoted Hellenism in Jerusalem. Three years later, Jason fell out of favor before Antiochus IV. When Menelaus, a brother of Onias III's opponent Simon, promised more money to the king, he was appointed the high priest. Jason fled to the country of the Ammonites. Later, when Onias III heard that Menelaus took the temple treasure to bribe the king's deputy Andronicus, he voiced his criticism publicly. Andronicus lured Onias III out of his hiding place, the holy asylum at Daphne, and killed him. Antiochus executed Andronicus for his murder of Onias III. When the rumor went around Judea that Antiochus IV died in his second Egyptian campaign, Jason attacked Jerusalem and took the city by surprise.

Josephus (*J. W.* 1.31–33; 7.423–436) gives a different account. In this work, Josephus relates that the Jews were divided as Antiochus IV and Ptolemy VI had disputes over the land of Syria. Onias III drove the sons of Tobias out of the city. The latter fled to Antiochus IV. Antiochus sent a large army to Judea. They killed many pro-Ptolemaic Jews and plundered the temple. Onias III fled to Ptolemy and received from him a place in Heliopolis (Leontopolis). He built a temple there to *compete with* the temple at Jerusalem.¹⁶²

¹⁶² Josephus states that the temple in Egypt resembles the temple at Jerusalem (*Ant.* 1.33); elsewhere, however, the temple is said to resemble a tower rather than the Jerusalem temple (*Ant.* 7.427).

A decade later, Josephus gives another account (*Ant.* 12.237–241; 13.62–73): After the death of Onias III (175 BC), Jason succeeded him as the High Priest, because Onias III’s son Onias IV was still an infant. When Antiochus got angry with Jason, he deposed Jason and appointed his younger brother the high priest. The latter’s name was also Onias, and he was also called Menelaus. Onias IV, the son of Onias III, fled to Egypt (162 BC) and founded the temple of Leontopolis (150 BC). He built the temple because (1) he saw that the Jews were “oppressed by the Macedonians and their kings”; (2) he desired to “purchase to himself a memorial and eternal fame”; and (3) he was encouraged by the prophecy in Isaiah 19:19.

Theodore of Mopsuestia (ca. 350–428) appears to have another tradition. That tradition generally follows the account in 2 Maccabees. It diverges from the latter at the point when Jason founded the gymnasium in Jerusalem. Onias III was deeply grieved by Jason’s deeds. As the evil was increasing, he left Jerusalem for Egypt where he built an altar and a temple.

Rabbinic literature records other traditions about Onias III.¹⁶³ Simon designated his younger son Onias III to be the high priest. According to Rabbi Meir, Shimi, the older son of Simon, became jealous of Onias and tricked him. Shimi dressed Onias in women’s clothing and told Onias’s fellow priests that Onias was to fulfill his vow for his beloved by wearing her clothing. The fellow priests wanted to kill Onias. Onias ran away to Alexandria and built an altar there “for the sake of idol worship.” Rabbi Yehuda, however, claimed that Onias initially gave the position of high priest to Shimi but later became jealous of him. He tricked Shimi into wearing women’s clothing. When the truth was revealed by Shimi, Onias fled to Alexander and built an altar for “the worship of God.” This altar fulfilled Isaiah 19:19 (“In that day there will be an altar to the LORD in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar to the LORD at its border.”).

¹⁶³ *m. Menahot* 109b.

While scholars such as Mørkholm generally follow 2 Maccabees,¹⁶⁴ Parente has convincingly argued that Onias III was the builder of the Jewish temple in Egypt. He reasons, first, that the account in 2 Maccabees is not all reliable. If Onias III was, as 2 Maccabees 3:1–2 implies, scrupulously observant of the Law, he would regard sheltering himself in the holy asylum at Daphne as inappropriate. Had he done so, it would be improbable that he reproached Menelaus for his sacrilegious plunder of the Jerusalem temple. That Antiochus IV was grieved by the death of Onias III and had Andronicus executed is “unlikely in the extreme.” Both Diodorus and John of Antioch said that Andronicus was executed for having killed Antiochus, the youngest son of Seleucus IV.¹⁶⁵ Second, the prevailing opinion in rabbinic literature is that the “House of Onias” has limited legitimacy,¹⁶⁶ but it is not considered idolatrous. In fact, the rabbinic literature justifies the hypothesis that the temple of Onias was built during the period when the Jerusalem temple was defiled by Antiochus IV.¹⁶⁷ Third, there is a gap between 2 Maccabees 4:6 and 7. In 4:5–6, Onias III went to Seleucus IV; in 4:7, Seleucus was already dead. Jason of Cyrene (the source behind 2 Maccabees) should have mentioned the construction of the temple in Egypt. The author of 2 Maccabees probably removed this episode.¹⁶⁸ Fourth, Onias III could have found credence at the court of Alexandria,

¹⁶⁴ Mørkholm, *Antiochus IV of Syria*, 135–43.

¹⁶⁵ Fausto Parente, “Onias III’ Death and the Founding of the Temple of Leontopolis,” in *Josephus and the History of the Greco-Roman Period: Essays in Memory of Morton Smith*, ed. Fausto Parente and Joseph Sievers (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 73–74.

¹⁶⁶ *m. Menohot* 13.10.

¹⁶⁷ Parente, “Onias III’ Death and Founding of Temple of Leontopolis,” 81. Zeitlin reasons that a temple in Egypt was only possible when the Jerusalem temple was defiled. Solomon Zeitlin, “The Tobias Family and the Hasmoneans’: A Historical Study in the Political and Economic Life of the Jews of the Hellenistic Period,” *PAAJR* 4 (1932): 195.

¹⁶⁸ Parente, “Onias III’ Death and Founding of Temple of Leontopolis,” 82. See also Zeitlin, “Tobias Family and the Hasmoneans,” 196.

whereas his son, who had not served as the high priest, would less likely have enjoyed high prestige.¹⁶⁹

Antiochus IV and Daniel 11:21–45

General Observations

A brief survey of the history from Cyrus to Antiochus IV shows that Daniel 11 does not mention many people and events that are important to the history of the ancient Near East and the Balkans. About ten Persian kings are skipped over (at least at surface level). Antiochus I (281–261 BC) has no place in the prophecy either. The prophecy of Daniel 11, therefore, does not seem to intend to predict the history of the ancient Near East as the way in which modern historians would write history (modern historians would not skip important persons and events).

While the prophecy of Daniel 11 appears to focus on the events surrounding the land of Judea, it is, however, not primarily about the Jews and Judea. Prominent figures such as Ezra and Nehemiah are not mentioned, neither are Haggai and Zechariah. Except for the general statements in verses 32–35, most verses of Daniel 11 are about the gentile kings, first the Persian kings, then Alexander, and afterward, the Seleucids and the Ptolemaic kings.

Since both the standard critical interpretation and the majority view among the conservative scholarship regard Daniel 11:21–35 to be fulfilled in Antiochus IV and assert that Daniel 11:36–45 do not fit him, it is worth revisiting the passage to exam this majority interpretation. This section shows that some descriptions in this passage fit Antiochus IV but others do not fit him well; this is true to both verses 21–35 and verses 36–45.

¹⁶⁹ Parente, “Onias III’ Death and Founding of Temple of Leontopolis,” 82–83.

Descriptions That Fit Antiochus IV

Daniel 11:21 describes the rise of Antiochus IV. He is portrayed as a usurper. This is not completely accurate. With the death of his brother Seleucus IV and his elder nephew Demetrius being a hostage in Rome, Antiochus IV is a legitimate regent. Nevertheless, he had his nephew killed and thus did usurp “the direct line.” Antiochus also did set up the abomination that makes desolation (11:31). Daniel 11:40–45 mostly matches the historical accounts of the beginning of the sixth Syrian war to the death of Antiochus IV. Both Polybius (*Histories* 27.19) and 2 Maccabees (4:21) attest that the Seleucid kingdom initiated the war. Antiochus’s campaign was very successful. Livy accounts that after the first invasion Antiochus captured all of Egypt except Alexandria.¹⁷⁰ Therefore, Antiochus IV seems still to be the main subject in view.

Descriptions That Do Not Fit Well with Antiochus IV

Most scholars agree that Daniel 11:21–35 is an accurate description of Antiochus IV. However, some parts are less clearly connected. Other parts even fit better with his father Antiochus III the Great, the king already given much attention in the previous verses (11:10–19).

Daniel 11:22 says, “And the overflowing forces will be flooded away before him and shattered, and also the prince of the covenant.” While Antiochus IV did conquer Egypt, strictly speaking, this is the only foreign force he defeated, and it was only for a very brief time¹⁷¹; and ultimately, he was not able to annex the Ptolemaic empire to his own. If this verse is intended to describe the king’s military prowess, other kings such as Alexander the Great and Antiochus III are more fitting. Scholars also have difficulty in identifying “the prince of the covenant” (נגיד ברית). No less than ten interpretations have

¹⁷⁰ Livy, *The History of Rome* 45.11.1.

¹⁷¹ His settling of the Armenians was a domestic issue. He did not have opportunity to deal with the Parthians who were a threat in the east before he died.

been proposed. Most modern scholars take him to be Onias III the high priest. There will be more discussion on the identity of נגיד ברית in chapter 5. For now, suffice it to simply point out that the language of Daniel 11:22 appears to suggest that this נגיד ברית will die at the hand of the king of the north. As it is shown above, although there are different traditions about Onias III, none of them indicates that Onias III died at the hand of Antiochus IV. Therefore, the majority view that נגיד ברית refers to Onias III is problematic.

Commentators almost unanimously identify the kings in Daniel 11:25–28 as Antiochus IV and Ptolemy VI. Ptolemy VI was advised by Eulaeus and Lenaeus to attack the Seleucid Empire but was captured by Antiochus IV, who then set up Ptolemy as a puppet king. But Ptolemy VI soon betrayed him. This interpretation is also not free from problems. Jerome objects, “Ptolemy was a mere child of tender years and was taken in by Antiochus’ fraud; how then could he have plotted evil against him?”¹⁷² Livy recounts that Philometor only came to be suspicious of Antiochus after seeing the latter left a strong garrison in Pelusium so that he might invade Egypt at any moment in the future.¹⁷³ Moreover, as Garrett points out, although Eulaeus and Lenaeus gave poor advice to Ptolemy VI, they did not betray him in the way that 11:35–46 describes.¹⁷⁴ The passage better fits Antiochus III and Ptolemy V.¹⁷⁵ Antiochus III and Philip V of Macedon plotted to divide up the possessions of Ptolemy V.¹⁷⁶ Antiochus III and Ptolemy V made a temporary alliance.¹⁷⁷ Ptolemy V was assassinated by his own generals.

¹⁷² Jerome, *Jerome’s Commentary on Daniel*, trans. Gleason L. Archer (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1958), 132.

¹⁷³ Livy, *The History of Rome* 45.11.4–5.

¹⁷⁴ Garrett, “Daniel,” forthcoming.

¹⁷⁵ Garrett, “Daniel,” forthcoming.

¹⁷⁶ John P. Mahaffy, *A History of Egypt under the Ptolemaic Dynasty* (London: Methuen, 1899), 149.

¹⁷⁷ Edwyn R. Bevan, *The House of Ptolemy: A History of Egypt under the Ptolemaic Dynasty*

Daniel 11:29–30 is usually understood as referring to Antiochus’s second invasion of Egypt, at the end of which he was bidden by the Roman ambassador Laenas to leave Egypt. This again is not literally true of Antiochus IV. Laenas had only three quinqueremes with him for the mission.¹⁷⁸ Scolnic and Davis comment, “While the quinquereme was the most famous of the Hellenistic warships, three ships were, to state the obvious, not a fleet.”¹⁷⁹ Again, the account seems to fit better with Antiochus III. Antiochus III had direct military conflicts with the Romans and was decisively defeated at the Battle of Magnesia.¹⁸⁰

Daniel 11:37 reads, “He will show no regard for the gods of his ancestors or for the one desired by women, nor will he regard any god, but will exalt himself above them all.” This statement contradicts the account of ancient historians about Antiochus IV. Polybius comments, “In regard to public sacrifices and the honours paid to the gods, he surpassed all his predecessors on the throne.”¹⁸¹ Livy also applauds Antiochus IV for his honorable deeds for the gods.¹⁸² Antiochus IV minted coins that bear a form of Zeus and identified himself with Zeus by calling himself Epiphanes.¹⁸³ Bevan suggests that Antiochus might use this identification as “a pretext for appropriating the funds of the

(London: Methuen, 1914), 269.

¹⁷⁸ Livy, *The History of Rome* 44.29.1.

¹⁷⁹ Benjamin E. Scolnic and Thomas Davis, “How Kittim Became ‘Rome’: Dan 11,30 and the Importance of Cyprus in the Sixth Syrian War,” *ZAW* 127, no. 2 (2015): 312. They further provide evidence that the Roman Senate ordered a fleet of 100 quinqueremes and 20 triremes at the First Punic War with Carthage (264–241). Polybius (*Histories* 1.25.5–29.1) records that the Romans had a fleet of 330 decked ships of war and the Carthaginians had 350 at the Battle of Ecnomus in 256. According to 1 Macc 1:17, Antiochus IV had a large fleet. Scolnic and Davis propose to take Kittim to be Cyprus rather than Rome, and to translate Dan 11:30a as “Cyprian ships ‘came back to him’ or ‘came with him.’” This, however, is not a natural reading of the Hebrew text (neither *שׁוּב*, “to return,” nor *עִם*, “with,” nor *אִתּוֹ*, “with,” is used in the verse).

¹⁸⁰ Grainger, *Seleukid Empire of Antiochus III*.

¹⁸¹ Polybius, *Histories* 26.1.

¹⁸² Livy, *The History of Rome* 41.21.3–6.

¹⁸³ Otto Mørkholm, *Studies in the Coinage of Antiochus IV of Syria* (Copenhagen: Munksgaard, 1963), 50–51.

temples.”¹⁸⁴ This is possible. Nevertheless, attributing Daniel 11:37 to Antiochus IV would still be a stretch. Moreover, Daniel 11:38–39 seems to contradict 11:37. Daniel 11:37 claims that he will not regard any god. But 11:38a states, “he will honor a god of fortresses,” and Daniel 11:39a reads, “he will attack the mightiest fortresses with the help of a foreign god” (NIV).

Last but not least, concerning Daniel 11:41b, “the Libyans and the Cushites [Ethiopians] shall follow in his train,” Jerome argues that Antiochus never held Libya nor Ethiopia.¹⁸⁵ Historians recorded Antiochus’s activities in Memphis, Naucratis, and Alexandria. Though he did gain control over the entirety of Egypt except for Alexandria temporarily, it is doubtful that Antiochus had led his army as far as Libya and Ethiopia.

Conclusion

This chapter briefly surveys the history from Cyrus the Great to Antiochus IV of Syria. It prepares data for further discussion in chapters 4 and 5. It is argued that both sections have verses that fit and verses that do not fit Antiochus IV. The discrepancies between the biblical passage (both sections) and the life of Antiochus IV pose a serious challenge to the consensus of critical scholarship as well as the majority view of the conservative scholars that Daniel 11:21–35 accurately describe Antiochus IV and Daniel 11:36–45 do not fit him.

On the other hand, one does not have to concede too quickly, claiming that either Daniel gets history wrong, or he is not prophesying about Antiochus IV at all. Rather, in light of other biblical texts and of external history, the passage should be read not in a “strictly literal” manner but should be read typologically. In many cases, the

¹⁸⁴ Edwyn R. Bevan, *The House of Seleucus* (London: E. Arnold, 1902), 2:156.

¹⁸⁵ Jerome, *Commentary on Daniel*, 140.

discrepancies between a biblical prophecy and history are signs of typology. A typological reading can explain also why the discrepancies of interpretation exist.

This dissertation argues that although the prophecy of Daniel 11 has its own peculiarities, it has much in common with some other prophecies in the Old Testament. Toward this end, the next chapter first examines a few Old Testament prophecies outside the book of Daniel to demonstrate the characteristics of typology in the Old Testament prophecies.

CHAPTER 3
TYPOLOGY IN OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECIES:
CASE STUDIES

Typology, as commonly defined, is the study of the correspondences among historical persons, events, or institutions in the Bible.¹ According to this definition, the types and antitypes are *historical*, and *real correspondences* must exist between the types and the antitypes.² The characteristic of the historicity of the types often sets the persons, events, or institutions in *the historical narrative framework* as the starting point of scholarly discussions on typology.³ Many contend that typology can only be recognized

¹ For discussion about different opinions on typology, see Richard M. Davidson, *Typology in Scripture: A Study of Hermeneutical Typos Structures*, Andrews University Seminary Doctoral Dissertation Series 2 (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1981), 93–114; Gordon P. Hugenberger, “Introductory Notes on Typology,” in *The Right Doctrine from the Wrong Texts? Essays on the Use of the Old Testament in the New*, ed. G. K. Beale (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994), 331–37; W. Edward Glenny, “Typology: A Summary of the Present Evangelical Discussion,” *JETS* 40, no. 4 (1997): 627–38. For its purpose, this dissertation works with a widely accepted definition of typology.

² Lampe points out that not all correspondences are *real*. For instance, the scarlet cord of Rahab at Jericho and the blood of Christ are not real correspondences. Neither are Melchizedek’s bringing bread and wine and the Eucharist. But the High Priest’s actions on the Day of Atonement and Christ’s high-priestly work have real correspondence. “The theme of redemption and an identical concept of expiation runs continuously through from the ritual provisions of the Old Law to the fulfillment of its intentions and aspirations by Christ’s entry, through the shedding of his blood, into the heavenly sanctuary as man’s representative.” G. W. H. Lampe, “The Reasonableness of Typology,” in *Essays on Typology*, Studies in Biblical Theology 22 (Naperville, IL: A. R. Allenson, 1957), 34–34.

³ Goppelt contends that typology “seek to compare the spirit of *the OT historical narrative* with the spirit of the NT event” [emphasis added]. Leonhard Goppelt, *Typos: The Typological Interpretation of the Old Testament in the New*, trans. Donald H. Madvig (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 10. Scholars are quick to notice that the types are *forward-pointing* toward the antitype, and the antitype is often *escalated* compared to the types. E.g., G. K. Beale, *Handbook on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament: Exegesis and Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012), 14; Samuel Cyrus Emadi, “Covenant, Typology, and the Story of Joseph: A Literary-Canonical Examination of Genesis 37–50” (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2016), 34–35.

retrospectively.⁴ Though others have argued that types are prospective, the discussion is still limited to the historical narrative framework.⁵

Those who argue that retrospection is a characteristic of typology often contrast typology with prophecy. “Typology is not prophecy,” Baker contends, “Prophecy is prospective whereas typology is retrospective.”⁶ Grogan writes, “Perhaps the major difference between typology and prophecy lies in the matter of resemblance and identity. In prophecy, prediction and fulfillment are identical; they relate to the same person, the same event. In type, however, there is similarity, not identity.”⁷ Beale distinguishes prophecy from typology in that the former entails direct fulfillments of events *explicitly predicted* by the words of a prophet; in contrast, the latter involves implicit foreshadowing of *historical events that are narrated*.⁸ Perhaps due to these distinctions between typology and prophecy, Daniel 11 is usually understood as a direct verbal prophecy that has one-time fulfillment and is not read typologically.

Does the contrast between typology and prophecy mean that they are mutually exclusive? Several scholars have said “no” to this question. To be sure, the Bible does

⁴ E.g., Walther Eichrodt, “Is Typological Exegesis an Appropriate Method?,” in *Essays on Old Testament Hermeneutics*, ed. Claus Westermann and James Luther Mays, trans. James Barr (Richmond, VA: John Knox Press, 1963), 229; R. T. France, *Jesus and the Old Testament: His Application of Old Testament Passages to Himself and His Mission* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1971), 30–40; David L. Baker, *Two Testaments, One Bible: The Theological Relationship between the Old and New Testaments*, 3rd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2010), 181; Beale, *Handbook on NT Use of OT*, 14.

⁵ E.g., Emadi, “Covenant, Typology, and Joseph,” 31–34. Recently, James Hamilton has argued for the authorial intention in typology. James M. Hamilton, *Typology: Understanding the Bible’s Promise-Shaped Patterns: How Old Testament Expectations Are Fulfilled in Christ* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2022), 17–28. To be fair, Beale states that “a pointing-forwardness” is an essential characteristic of a type; a type is “of a prophetic nature,” though this prophetic nature is perceived “from a retrospective view.” Beale, *Handbook on NT Use of OT*, 14. Nevertheless, in the same book, Beale quickly adds a qualification that there is evidence for the foreshadowing nature of some OT narratives (Beale, 15). Elsewhere, he states that there are examples when a type “is not purely retrospective from the NT vantage point” (Beale, 64). Emadi, on the other hand, admits, “affirming the prospective nature of OT types does not mean that interpreters before the Pentecost could have discerned all that the OT typologically anticipated.” Emadi, “Covenant, Typology, and Joseph,” 34.

⁶ Baker, *Two Testaments, One Bible*, 181.

⁷ Geoffrey W. Grogan, “The Relationship between Prophecy and Typology,” *SBET* 4, no. 1 (1986): 14.

⁸ Beale, *Handbook on NT Use of OT*, 58.

contain prophecies that are direct predictions about specific future events. When the events take place, the prophecies are completely fulfilled. In other words, there is only a single fulfillment to each of these prophecies.⁹ Nevertheless, not all prophecies work in this way. As a number of scholars have noted, many prophecies involve typology.¹⁰

Unlike most studies in typology, which have persons, events, or institutions as the starting point, studies on prophecy begin with the prophecy itself. The fulfillment is yet to come. When typology is involved in prophecy, multiple fulfillments are expected. The prophecy is about a type. The type has more than one manifestation in human history, and each manifestation is a fulfillment of the prophecy. Frequently, one can notice that discrepancies exist between the prophecy and the initial fulfillment (or a series of earlier fulfillments). The discrepancies indicate that the initial fulfillment has not exhausted the prophecy. A further fulfillment is yet to come.

This chapter revisits two passages: God's promise to David in 2 Samuel 7:12–16 and the so-called “virgin birth prophecy” in Isaiah 7:14. The purpose of the case studies is twofold: (1) To demonstrate typology in prophecy, and (2) to lay the foundations for the interpretation of Daniel 11 in the following chapters.

⁹ For instance, the prophecy about the birth of Isaac was fulfilled a year later (Gen 18:20; 21:1–2). Samuel's prophecy about Saul's future encounters was fulfilled on the same day (1 Sam 10:3–10). In 1 Kgs 11:30–39, Ahijah prophesied to Jeroboam that Solomon's kingdom would be divided, and Jeroboam would reign over ten tribes. The prophecy was fulfilled shortly thereafter in 1 Kgs 12:16–24. In 1 Kgs 13:2, a man of God prophesied that a son named Josiah, born of David's house, would burn human bones on the altar that Jeroboam had built. The prophecy was fulfilled hundreds of years later (2 Kgs 23:15–16). Other examples in the Old Testament include Elijah's prophecy about drought (1 Kgs 17:1; 18:20–46), the flour and oil in the widow's house (1 Kgs 17:8–16), and the death of Jezebel (1 Kgs 21:23; 2 Kgs 9:30–37), etc. Examples in the New Testament include Jesus's prophecy about the betrayal of Judas (Mark 14:18), Peter's denial (Mark 14:30, 43–44), and his death and resurrection (Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:33–34). The prophecy about a coming famine in Acts 11:28 is also a good case.

¹⁰ Patrick Fairbairn, *The Typology of Scripture: Viewed in Connection with the Whole Series of the Divine Dispensations* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1900), 1:106–39; Grogan, “Relationship between Prophecy and Typology,” 14–15; Beale, *Handbook on NT Use of OT*, 58.

2 Samuel 7:12–16

Second Samuel 7 witnesses the heyday of King David. He had replaced Saul as the sole king of both Judah and Israel (2 Sam 5:1–5). Jerusalem was captured and became the capital of the nation (2 Sam 5:6–16). The Philistines, who killed Saul’s sons and caused Saul to commit suicide (1 Sam 31:1–7), were defeated (2 Sam 5:17–25). The Ark was finally brought up to Jerusalem (2 Sam 6). At the beginning of 2 Samuel 7, David lived in his בית (i.e., palace) and saw the Ark of God in the tent. He proposed to Nathan to build a בית (i.e., temple) for God. Nathan gave him a whole-hearted endorsement (vv. 1–3). But that very night, God revealed to Nathan that David would not build a temple for him. Instead, God would build a בית (i.e., dynasty) for David, and his seed would build a temple for God (vv. 4–16). For the purpose of the dissertation, this section focuses on the fulfillment of 2 Samuel 7:12–16, which concerns the seed of David.

Second Samuel 7:12–16 contains the following promises: (1) When David dies, his seed will succeed him as king (v. 12a). (2) This seed will build the temple for God (v. 13). (3) God will be his father, and he will be God’s son (v. 14a). (4) When he sins, God will discipline him, but his steadfast love will not turn away from him (vv. 14b–15). (5) His kingdom will last forever (vv. 12b, 13b, 16).

The promise (also called “Nathan’s Oracle,” “the Dynastic Oracle,” or “the Davidic covenant”) is clear, and the language is straightforward. It is, nevertheless, surrounded by some problems. First, the promise depicts David’s seed as if only one individual is in view, and he is to be David’s immediate successor. But עַד עוֹלָם suggests a duration much longer than the life span of one individual. Second, there is tension between the conditionality and unconditionality of the promise. On the one hand, God’s promise to David in this passage appears to be an unconditional one to him. Ethan the Ezrahite has the same understanding in Psalm 89:31–36 [MT 89:32–37]:

if they violate my decrees and fail to keep my commands, I will punish their sin with the rod, their iniquity with flogging; but I will not take my love from him, nor will I ever betray my faithfulness. I will not violate my covenant or alter what my lips have uttered. Once for all, I have sworn by my holiness—and I will not lie to

David—that his line will continue forever and his throne endure before me like the sun.

Undoubtedly, God has expectations on the behavior of David’s seed and will discipline him if he sins. Nevertheless, God pledged to fulfill the promise regardless of David’s sin. On the other hand, later passages evidently show the conditionality of the promise. For instance, David, on his deathbed, told Solomon that God promised him: “*If* your descendants watch how they live, and *if* they walk faithfully before me with all their heart and soul, you will never fail to have a successor on the throne of Israel” (1 Kgs 2:4). Solomon, in his prayer for the dedication of the temple, repeated David’s words: “Now Lord, the God of Israel, keep for your servant David my father the promises you made to him when you said, ‘You shall never fail to have a successor to sit before me on the throne of Israel, *if only* your descendants are careful in all they do to walk before me faithfully as you have done’” (1 Kgs 8:25). After the dedication, God appeared to Solomon, affirmed the conditionality, and added the consequences of the violation of the conditions:

As for you, *if* you walk before me faithfully with integrity of heart and uprightness, as David your father did, and do all I command and observe my decrees and laws, I will establish your royal throne over Israel forever, as I promised David your father when I said, ‘You shall never fail to have a successor on the throne of Israel.’ But *if* you or your descendants turn away from me and do not observe the commands and decrees I have given you and go off to serve other gods and worship them, then I will cut off Israel from the land I have given them and will reject this temple I have consecrated for my Name. Israel will then become a byword and an object of ridicule among all peoples. (1 Kgs 9:4–7)

Lastly, the fall of both Israel and Judah further complicates the issue. Did God fail to fulfill his promise? Was the Davidic covenant conditional from the beginning? Does the Old Testament contain contradictions? How should 2 Samuel 7:12–16 and the later passages be reconciled? Scholars have offered different answers.

Interpretations of 2 Samuel 7:12–16

Multiple theologies. The standard scholarship is that these passages contain opposing theologies. For instance, Jon Levenson maintains that 2 Samuel 7:14–15 and

Psalm 89:31–36 demonstrate “the indefeasibility of the covenant with David,” namely, “the covenant cannot be annulled or its promise voided even in the face of the worst violations of the present generation of the Davidic dynasty.”¹¹ He concurs with Weinfeld that the Davidic covenant resembles the “grant” (as opposed to the “treaty”) of the ancient Near East; the obligation is on the suzerain and not his vassal.¹² But the Deuteronomist, the redactor of the book of Kings, who witnessed the destruction of Jerusalem and lived in the exile, placed the Davidic covenant under condition (1 Kgs 2:4; 8:25; 9:4–7).¹³ In these later passages, the indefeasibility of the covenant is “explicitly denied.”¹⁴ Gary Knoppers has challenged Weinfeld’s position on the parallels between the covenant of “grant” and the Davidic covenant. Nevertheless, he still maintains that there are “competing notions of the Davidic promises.”¹⁵ Richard Nelson’s list of

¹¹ Jon D. Levenson, “The Davidic Covenant and Its Modern Interpreters,” *CBQ* 41, no. 2 (1979): 205–19.

¹² The distinctions between a “treaty” and a “grant” are as follows: “While the ‘treaty’ constitutes an obligation of the vassal to his master, the suzerain, the ‘grant’ constitutes an obligation of the master to his servant. In the ‘grant’ the curse is directed towards the one who will violate the rights of the king’s vassal, while in the treaty, the curse is directed towards the vassal who will violate the rights of his king. In other words, the ‘grant’ serves mainly to protect the rights of the servant, while the treaty comes to protect the rights of the master. What is more, while the grant is a reward for loyalty and good deeds already performed, the treaty is an inducement to future loyalty.” Moshe Weinfeld, “The Covenant of Grant in the Old Testament and in the Ancient Near East,” *JAOS* 90, no. 2 (1970): 185.

¹³ Since the conditionality appears already in Ps 132:12, Weinfeld qualifies the previous conclusion by stating that the concept of conditionality already existed alongside the unconditionality at an early stage. He adds that the conditionality was “especially developed after the division of the kingdom.” Weinfeld, “Covenant of Grant in OT and ANE,” 195–96. Tsevat holds an opposite view. He contends that 2 Sam 7:13b–16 is a later gloss that is of Solomonic origin. Matitiah Tsevat, “The Steadfast House: What Was David Promised in 2 Sam. 7:11b–16?,” *HUCA* 34 (1963): 80. There is no consensus on the sources behind Nathan’s Oracle. For a survey of the various views, see John L. McKenzie, “The Dynastic Oracle: 2 Samuel 7,” *TS* 8, no. 2 (1947): 188; P. Kyle McCarter, *2 Samuel*, AB, vol. 9 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1984), 209–24; William M. Schniedewind, *Society and the Promise to David: The Reception History of 2 Samuel 7:1–17* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 30–33; Walter Dietrich, *Samuel (2 Sam 5:1–7:29)*, *Biblischer Kommentar Altes Testament VIII/3, Lieferung 7* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2019), 632–40. But Sarna’s argument that Nathan’s Oracle is “an authentic document, contemporaneous with the events it describes” is more convincing. Nahum M. Sarna, “Psalm 89: A Study in Inner Biblical Exegesis,” in *Biblical and Other Studies*, ed. Alexander Altmann, *Studies and Texts* 1 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1963), 39–42.

¹⁴ Levenson, “Davidic Covenant and Modern Interpreters,” 219. Robinson thus comments, “Later writers were apparently not satisfied with that [the unconditionality]; they made the promise conditional.” Gnana Robinson, *Let Us Be Like the Nations: A Commentary on the Books of 1 and 2 Samuel*, ITC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 191.

¹⁵ Differing from Weinfeld, he maintains that the competing notions could have existed in the same era. Gary N. Knoppers, “Ancient Near Eastern Royal Grants and the Davidic Covenant: A Parallel?,”

opposing theologies of the Old Testament also includes the tension between the unconditional promises for a Davidic dynasty and the termination of the dynasty. He asserts that “all attempts to harmonize these tensions have proved unsatisfactory.”¹⁶

With the notion of a plurality of theology in the Old Testament, any attempts to reconcile the contradiction between unconditionality and conditionality of the Davidic covenant become unnecessary. In fact, not only are these attempts wrong but, it would logically follow, those who attempt to do so are mishandling the Old Testament passages.

God reneged his covenant. This is the earlier view of Eslinger. He said that David was the first to “add a strange condition to the unconditional promise of dynasty” (1 Kgs 2:4). Here, the dying king “plays on his son’s insecurity to secure the death of his enemies even after his death.”¹⁷ David deliberately conditionalized the promise to coerce or allure his successor Solomon to carry out his will. Solomon was unfaithful from the beginning (cf. 1 Kgs 3:2, 3b). God then conditionalized his promise to David.¹⁸ In Eslinger’s words, in 1 Kings 3, “we see the beginning of Solomon’s end and the end of the unconditional covenant to David and his descendants.”¹⁹ He continues, “What God does in and through the reign of Solomon is to end the unconditional promises that he made to David.”²⁰

This interpretation essentially has made meaningless the unconditionality of the covenant since God himself is said to have nullified it by adding conditions. A few

JAOS 116, no. 4 (1996): 670–97.

¹⁶ Richard D. Nelson, *The Double Redaction of the Deuteronomistic History*, JSOTSup 18 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1981), 120.

¹⁷ Lyle M. Eslinger, *Into the Hands of the Living God*, JSOTSup 84 (Sheffield: Almond Press, 1989), 126–27.

¹⁸ Eslinger, *Into the Hands of Living God*, 129–40.

¹⁹ Eslinger, *Into the Hands of Living God*, 138.

²⁰ Eslinger, *Into the Hands of Living God*, 147.

years later, Eslinger published another monograph, which contains a radically different view. In this work, he argues that the conditionality was implicit from the beginning.²¹

Implicit conditionality. In his new book, Eslinger approaches Nathan's Oracle from an understanding of the temple constructions in the ancient Near Eastern background. A temple built by a king not only sanctioned the king's reign but also gave him "a form of direct control over the cult and the deity."²² The temple would also "put Yahweh in David's debt."²³ God turned down David's proposal and made a long speech in which he recounted his past favor to David and gave more promises to him. From the rhetorical point of view, Eslinger contends that God, in his rejoinder to David, reminded the king: (1) David owed his position to God's past favor. (2) He was the master, and David was his servant. He had complete freedom and was not to be contained or manipulated by David.²⁴ (3) David would continue to owe God for his future.²⁵

To Eslinger, although passages such as 2 Samuel 23:1–7, Psalm 89, and Psalm 132 appear to be supporting an unconditional Davidic covenant, they do not necessarily endorse the idea. The speech in 2 Samuel 23 is "David's last bid to put a bright face on the personal disaster that his reign has become." The author of Psalm 89 believes that "God has breached the covenant that he made with David."²⁶ As for Psalm 132, the conditionality is explicit in verse 12.

²¹ Lyle M. Eslinger, preface to *House of God or House of David: The Rhetoric of 2 Samuel 7*, JSOTSup 164 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994), xi.

²² Eslinger, *House of God or House of David*, 15.

²³ Eslinger, *House of God or House of David*, 18.

²⁴ God denied David's prerogative to build a temple for him but immediately promised that his seed would build the temple. Eslinger makes a stark distinction between a temple for God and a temple for God's name. The temple God allowed David's seed to build was not for *him* but *his name* (2 Sam 7:13).

²⁵ Eslinger, *House of God or House of David*, 22–46.

²⁶ Eslinger, *House of God or House of David*, 90–93.

Eslinger contends that God uses a “bait and switch” tactic: Although God offered David a long-lasting dynasty, “beneath the guise of the dynastic promise lurks the . . . emphasis on divine freedom and on the requirement of obedience from his human covenantal partners.”²⁷ Conditionality, therefore, is implicit in God’s speech. In the later passages, God was not imposing conditions to an unconditional covenant; he was only “making explicit what was always implicit” in 2 Samuel 7.²⁸

According to this understanding, there is neither contradiction nor tension in these Old Testament passages. The Davidic covenant is conditional from the beginning. The term עַד עוֹלָם in 2 Samuel 7:13, 16 is taken to mean “enduring” rather than “forever.”²⁹ God promised an enduring dynasty to David as long as his seed remains faithful to him.³⁰ The failure of his seed to meet the covenant conditions ultimately led to the fall of the Davidic dynasty.

This interpretation has much to commend it. It is, however, too simplistic. If God’s promise is purely conditional—its fulfillment entirely dependent on the behavior of David’s successors—there would be no difference between David and Saul (1 Sam 13:13).³¹ As several scholars have pointed out, the language in 2 Samuel 7:12–16 suggests that God would carry out his promise regardless of the infidelity of David’s seed.³² Moreover, this interpretation cannot do justice to the Old Testament messianic

²⁷ Eslinger, *House of God or House of David*, 41.

²⁸ Eslinger, *House of God or House of David*, 94–96.

²⁹ Eslinger, *House of God or House of David*, 46–48.

³⁰ Eslinger’s view is similar to that of Polzin who, connecting the promise with God’s judgment against David for his adultery and murder of Uriah the Hittite, writes, “2 Sam. 12:7–14 implies that God’s perpetual love (*hesed*) includes a perpetual sword (*hereb*).” Robert Polzin, *David and the Deuteronomist: 2 Samuel* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), 84.

³¹ Eslinger acknowledges the differences between David and Saul. Nevertheless, in order to uphold the conditionality of God’s promise to David, he has to insist that Samuel’s verdict in 1 Sam 13:13 is his judgment and is not from God. Eslinger, *House of God or House of David*, 61n1.

³² E.g., Walter C. Kaiser Jr., “The Blessing of David: The Charter for Humanity,” in *The Law and the Prophets: Old Testament Studies Prepared in Honor of Oswald Thompson Allis*, ed. John H. Skilton, Milton C. Fisher, and Leslie W. Sloat (Nutley, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1974), 308; Paul R. Williamson, *Sealed with an Oath: Covenant in God’s Unfolding Purpose*, New Studies in Biblical

hope that frequently points back to the Davidic covenant (e.g., Isa 9:6–7 [MT 9:5–6]). It also ignores the data in the New Testament.

Direct prophecy about Christ. Throughout church history, the promise has been taken as a direct prophecy about Jesus Christ. Justin Martyr quotes a part of 2 Samuel 7:14–16 without giving any reason.³³ Tertullian argues that some parts of the promise do not fit Solomon but better fit Jesus Christ: the temple is a “holy manhood” in which God’s Spirit dwells. Christ rather than Solomon is the Son of God. The everlasting throne and kingdom better fit Christ; Solomon is “a mere temporal king.” God’s mercy did not depart Christ, but he was angry toward Solomon for his luxury and idolatry. Therefore, this is a prediction about Christ.³⁴ The argument of Lactantius (ca. AD 250–ca. 325) is like that of Tertullian.³⁵ Augustine adds another reason against Solomon being a fulfillment: God promised to raise David’s seed *after* his death, but Solomon began to reign while he was still alive.³⁶ Martin Luther also applies the promise to Jesus only.³⁷

This interpretation has evident problems. First, the promise is taken out of its immediate context. As Steinmann points out, the temple in 2 Samuel 7:13 is “a clear reference to the temple David wished to build (7:1–3) and which Solomon actually built.”³⁸ Second, while the arguments against the Solomonic fulfillment have some

Theology 32 (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2007), 127; Jeffrey J. Niehaus, *Biblical Theology: The Special Grace Covenants (Old Testament)* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2018), 415.

³³ Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho* 118.

³⁴ Tertullian, *The Five Books against Marcion* 3.20 (ANF 3:339).

³⁵ Lactantius, *The Divine Institutes* 4.13 (ANF 7:113).

³⁶ Augustine, *The City of God* 17.8.3 (NPNF¹).

³⁷ Martin Luther, *Luther’s Works*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan et al. (St. Louis: Concordia, 1955), 3:27. His reason is outlined as such: “You must always strive to arrive at one sure and simple meaning of an account; and if you change it or depart from it, you should realize that you have departed from Scripture and, in addition, are following an uncertain and doubtful interpretation.”

³⁸ Andrew E. Steinmann, *2 Samuel*, ConcC (St. Louis: Concordia, 2020), 136.

merits, the interpreters tend to intentionally ignore other passages that are difficult to be directly applied to Jesus Christ. For instance, when David died, how could Jesus Christ, who was born hundreds of years later, succeed him (2 Sam 7: 12)? Moreover, verse 14b (“When he does wrong, I will punish him with a rod wielded by men, with floggings inflicted by human hands”) is almost never dealt with by the early church fathers.

Other texts also contradict the reading. Solomon explicitly stated that both his accession and the temple project had fulfilled God’s promise to David (2 Kgs 2:24; 5:5; 8:17–21). He did not put an alien meaning into the promise; David’s speech recorded in 1 Chronicles 28:2–7 reveals that he also understood the promise to have found partial fulfillment in Solomon. Here David is quoting God’s words, and Solomon’s name is mentioned. The temple that David himself was not allowed to build would be built by Solomon. God had chosen Solomon to be his son and he would be Solomon’s father (1 Chr 28:6).

A Typological Interpretation

In addition to the interpretations mentioned above, there are still others that have been proposed. Some see only Solomon and Jesus Christ in the Davidic covenant.³⁹ Others also see the successors of Solomon in this promise.⁴⁰ These treatments, however, are often inadequate, as they do not specify in what way the promise is fulfilled in the multiple individuals. Is it double-fulfillment, multiple-fulfillment, *sensus plenior*,

³⁹ Hans W. Hertzberg, *1 and 2 Samuel: A Commentary*, OTL (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1964), 286–87; Steinmann, *2 Samuel*, 134–38; Robert D. Bergen, *1, 2 Samuel*, NAC, vol. 7 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1996), 339–41; David T. Tsumura, *The Second Book of Samuel*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2019), 99.

⁴⁰ Carl F. Keil and Franz Delitzsch, *The Books of Samuel*, trans. James Martin, Commentary on the Old Testament, vol. 2 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2011), 599–601; A. A. Anderson, *2 Samuel*, WBC, vol. 11 (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1989), 123; Donald Guthrie, J. A. Motyer, and D. F. Payne, eds., “1 and 2 Samuel,” in *New Bible Commentary*, 3rd ed. (London: IVP, 1970), 324; Bill T. Arnold, *1 and 2 Samuel*, NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), 474–76, 486–87; David G. Firth, *1 and 2 Samuel*, ApOTC, vol. 8 (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2009), 387; Tony W. Cartledge, *1 and 2 Samuel*, SHBC (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2001), 453–54.

midrashic, typological, or other ways?⁴¹ I argue that the best approach is to read the promise typologically.⁴²

Solomon as fulfillment. Solomon's awareness of himself being a partial fulfillment of the promise (1 Kgs 2:24; 5:5; 8:17–21) is confirmed by David's speech in 1 Chronicles 22:8–10 and 28:6:

But this word of the Lord came to me: 'You have shed much blood and have fought many wars. You are not to build a house for my Name, because you have shed much blood on the earth in my sight. But you will have a son who will be a man of peace and rest, and I will give him rest from all his enemies on every side. His name will be Solomon, and I will grant Israel peace and quiet during his reign. He is the one who will build a house for my Name. He will be my son, and I will be his father. And I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel forever.' (1 Chr 22:8–10)

He [the Lord] said to me: 'Solomon your son is the one who will build my house and my courts, for I have chosen him to be my son, and I will be his father.' (1 Chr 28:6)

Solomon is David's seed. He succeeded David as king of Israel and built a temple for God. God chose him to be his son, and he will be a father to Solomon. Solomon broke God's commands for the Israelite kings in Deuteronomy 17:6–7 (cf. 1 Kgs 3:1–3; 10:14–11:8). God was angry with Solomon on account of his idolatry (1 Kgs 11:9–10). He disciplined Solomon by giving ten tribes to Jeroboam and raising enemies against him (1 Kgs 11:11, 14–25). But unlike Saul, who lost the entire kingdom when he sinned (1 Sam 13:13–14), Solomon was shown mercy: God reserved one tribe to him and postponed the punishment until after his death (1 Kgs 11:12–13). Like any mortal, Solomon would die of age; thus, a long-lasting dynasty could not be fulfilled in him. The enduring nature of

⁴¹ Kaiser employs "corporate solidarity" to explain the multiple fulfillments. But there are difficulties when it is applied to Jesus Christ. For instance, the kingdom that Jesus Christ rules is no longer the historical kingdom of Judah. Jesus Christ as the Son of God is not in the same sense as Solomon and other kings of Judah as the son of God. Kaiser, "The Blessing of David," 299–300.

⁴² Some mention only two levels of fulfillment: Solomon and Jesus Christ. E.g., H. D. M. Spence-Jones, *2 Samuel*, Pulpit Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1961), 185. It will be argued that three levels of fulfillment exist.

the kingdom is realized through his descendants, who sat on his throne one after another. This leads to the second dimension of the fulfillment of the Davidic covenant.

The kings of Judah as fulfillments. After the division of the kingdom, all the kings of Judah also partially fulfill the promise. Since the long-lasting kingdom in the promise requires David's descendants to continue to sit on his throne, each king of Judah—as *David's seed*, sitting on the throne of David—could be said to have partially fulfilled the promise. As James Smith has observed, the language of sonship may be “applied properly to any ruler from the line of David.”⁴³

Furthermore, God's dealing with the individual kings of Judah also reminds readers of his covenant with David. When God promised to leave one tribe to Solomon's son and successor, he gave the reason: “for the sake of David my servant and for the sake of Jerusalem” (1 Kgs 11:13, 32). Here, one might arguably object that this expression is not necessarily an allusion to the Davidic covenant, as in Ahijah's address to Jeroboam, God said that it was “for the sake of David my servant, whom I chose and who *obeyed my commands and decrees*” (1 Kgs 11:34). Elsewhere, however, the narrator connects God's mercy to extend the Davidic dynasty with his promise to David. Jehoram was said to have “followed the ways of the kings of Israel, *as the house of Ahab had done*, for he married a daughter of Ahab. He did evil in the eyes of the Lord” (2 Kgs 8:18). But God did not judge Jehoram in the same way as he judged Ahab's house (1 Kgs 21:21–23). Instead, “the LORD was not willing to destroy Judah for the sake of his servant David, because he had promised him to give him a lamp to his descendants all the days” (2 Kgs 8:19).

In Jehoram's days, Edom rebelled against Judah and set up its own king (2 Kgs 8:20). This event parallels the events that happened during Solomon's reign. As a

⁴³ James E. Smith, *1 and 2 Samuel*, College Press NIV Commentary (Joplin, MO: College Press, 2000), 395.

mitigated punishment against Solomon, God raised Hadad the Edomite, Rezon son of Eliada, and Jeroboam as his adversaries (1 Kgs 11:14–40). Likewise, as a mitigated punishment against Jehoram, God allowed Edom to become independent from Judah. He did not choose to put an end to the Davidic dynasty, as he did to that of Ahab.⁴⁴

The incident in 2 Chronicles 21 is illuminating. God roused Philistines and Arabs to attack Jehoram. They plundered the palace and killed all Jehoram’s sons and wives, “not a son was left to him except Jehoahaz (Ahaziah), his youngest son” (2 Chr 21:17). It is not difficult to imagine that the enemies would have easily killed Jehoram’s youngest son as well. God’s dealing with Jehoram reminds readers of his promise to David in 2 Samuel 7:14–15. The language, “for the sake of David,” appears frequently enough (1 Kgs 11:13, 32; 2 Kgs 8:19; 19:34) that one may safely conclude that this was God’s *typical* way of dealing with David’s seed who sat on his throne.

Tension arises as conditionality is brought into the promise in passages after Nathan’s Oracle (1 Kgs 2:4; 8:25; 9:4–7). It is heightened at the fall of Jerusalem—even the author of Psalm 89 could feel it (vv. 38–49). There seems to be discrepancies between the promise and the historical events when the psalm was written. The standard critical view is that competing theologies are present in these passages. Critical scholars resort to source criticism to explain the “contradictory theologies,” but no consensus regarding the sources exists. Eslinger first thought that God breached his own promise but later changed his view, arguing that the conditionality was already implicit in the Davidic covenant. It is, however, argued that the Old Testament does not have the complete picture. Isaiah prophesies that a future king will reign on David’s throne forever (Isa 9:7 [MT 9:6]). Therefore, a further fulfillment is to be expected.

⁴⁴ This is not to say that God had no mercy for Ahab. When Ahab humbled himself, God also extended his dynasty for another generation (1 Kgs 21:27–29). The Davidic dynasty, however, lasted much longer. As Walter Dietrich notes, “There are hardly any other ruling houses with such longevity [the almost half-millennium rule of the Davidic dynasty].” Dietrich, *Samuel (2 Sam 5:1–7:29)*, 625. When compared with the northern kingdom, which had eight dynasties in about 210 years (from Jeroboam to Hoshea), the stability of the Davidic dynasty is more striking.

Jesus Christ as the ultimate fulfillment of the promise. The Old Testament contains many indications that Solomon and the subsequent kings of Judah did not exhaust God's promise to David. When the author of Psalm 89 saw the nation's crisis, he appealed to God, reminding of his covenant with David (Ps 89:49). In other words, although the situation did not look bright, he did not believe that the Davidic covenant had been nullified. He looked into the future, asking God to act according to his promise to David (Ps 89:46, 49–50).⁴⁵ The hope is more explicit in the Prophets (Isa 9:6–7; Jer 23:5; 33:14–26). Passages in Jeremiah are suggestive. On the one hand, God declared through Jeremiah that his promise to David was still firmly established (Jer 33:14–26). On the other hand, after Jehoiakim burned the scroll that Jeremiah wrote, God announced, “He will have no one to sit on the throne of David” (Jer 36:30). After the fall of Jerusalem, no descendants of Jehoiakim could sit on the throne of David. How, then, could God's promise to David be held intact? The answer lies in Jesus Christ.

The two genealogies of Jesus Christ in Matthew 1 and Luke 3 have puzzled many scholars. The best solution is this: Matthew traces the royal line from David, through Jeconiah (Jehoiachin), son of Jehoiakim, to Joseph. Jesus inherits the Davidic kingship from the line of rightful heirs to the throne, but biologically, he is not the descendant of Jehoiakim. Therefore, God's verdict about Jehoiakim in Jeremiah 36:30 is not violated. Luke traces the biological genealogy of Jesus through Nathan, who is another son of David. Thus, Jesus is truly David's seed.⁴⁶

New Testament evidence shows that Jesus fulfills God's promise to David. He fulfills the promise at a higher level than Solomon and the kings of Judah did. He is descended from David according to flesh (Rom 1:3); hence, he is David's seed. In Luke 1:32–33, Gabriel tells Mary that God will give the throne of David to Jesus, and he will

⁴⁵ Williamson, *Sealed with an Oath*, 136.

⁴⁶ William H. Bates, “A Study in the Genealogy of Jesus,” *BSac* 74, no. 294 (1917): 321–29.

reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom, there will be no end (cf. Matt 2:2; Rev 11:15). Gabriel's words indicate that the promise is ultimately fulfilled in Jesus Christ (cf. 2 Sam 7:12; Acts 2:30). It has been argued that עַד עוֹלָם (2 Sam 7:13, 16) does not necessarily mean "until eternity."⁴⁷ While this understanding is not incorrect, in this prophecy, the term is at least ambiguous. Historically, the Israelite kingdom did not last forever. Therefore, the sense of a long-lasting dynasty is appropriate. However, Psalm 89:29–37 suggests that David's dynasty will last much longer. The New Testament attests that Jesus, the eschatological fulfillment, will sit on David's throne forever. He fulfills the Davidic covenant at a higher level.⁴⁸

The tension between the unconditionality and conditionality of the Davidic covenant is resolved once Jesus Christ comes into the picture. On the one hand, there is indeed a "conditional" aspect in the Davidic covenant. To understand this aspect, it is crucial to recognize that the Mosaic covenant continued to operate even after the cutting of the Davidic covenant. The Israelite kings must obey the law in order that "he and his descendants will reign a long time over his kingdom in Israel" (Deut 17:20).⁴⁹ The curses of the Mosaic covenant include the defeat and exile by Israel's enemies because of its disobedience (Deut 28:25, 32, 36–37, 63–68). When the historical kingdom of Israel ceases to exist, kingship also ceases to exist. Therefore, inasmuch as the Mosaic covenant is still in force, the "if" clause (1 Kgs 2:4; 8:25; 9:4–7) is to be expected. God would discipline the seed of David on account of his sins (2 Sam 7:14).

On the other hand, the discipline of David's seed on account of his sins in 2 Samuel 7:14 is immediately qualified by the next verse, where the emphasis of the promise lies: "But my love will never be taken away from him, as I took it away from

⁴⁷ Eslinger, *House of God or House of David*, 46–48.

⁴⁸ Niehaus also observes the ambiguity of the term as well as its two levels of fulfillment. Niehaus, *Biblical Theology*, 422–24.

⁴⁹ See also Niehaus, *Biblical Theology*, 413–14.

Saul, whom I removed from before you.” Therefore, the requirement of obedience does not make the entire promise conditional. The infidelity of David’s seed cannot nullify the promise.⁵⁰ Kingship will not be taken away from the house of David forever, as it was from the house of Saul (v. 15).

Does the “*if*” clause contradict the promise to David? The answer is no. The “*if*” clause worked out in the historical kingdom of Israel and eventually led to the fall of Jerusalem. But the Davidic covenant was not nullified on account of the sins of David’s descendants. The promise finds its ultimate fulfillment in Jesus Christ. He is the son of David and the Son of God. He is sinless (Heb 4:15) and perfectly obedient (John 8:28; Phil 2:6–8; Heb 10:7).⁵¹ Solomon and the kings of Judah are all David’s seed and are fulfillments of 2 Samuel 7:12–14. But they have not exhausted the promise. They failed to meet the expectations of the promise; only Jesus Christ fulfilled the promise ideally. The New Testament makes it clear that Jesus Christ came from God (Matt 1:20). God indeed fulfilled his promise regardless of the failure of David’s other seed.

Second Samuel 7:13a is often taken as a later interpolation because both the verses before and after it concerns the Davidic dynasty and not the building of the temple.⁵² This conclusion is problematic. First, it ignores the immediate context. God’s promise to David was a response to David’s desire to build a temple for him. Since God had disallowed David to build the temple, immediately adding that his son will build it is not intruding to the context. It is *necessary* to do so. Otherwise, David would have no

⁵⁰ Williamson, *Sealed with an Oath*, 127.

⁵¹ See also Grogan, “Relationship between Prophecy and Typology,” 15. Grogan writes, “In 2 Samuel 7, it is made clear that God would regard David’s son as his son. Was this fulfilled in Solomon and his successors? Yes, in terms of the Divine attitude, for God looked after them, loved them and, of course, because they were sinners, chastised them, but Christ, as the New Testament shows (Hebrews 1:5), fulfills the promise of a son of David who would also be Son of God in the most perfect way.”

⁵² Henry P. Smith, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Books of Samuel*, ICC (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1899), 300.

reason to prepare the materials for Solomon (1 Chr 22), and Solomon would have no right to build the temple either.⁵³

Critical scholarship often claims that 2 Samuel 7 contains contradictory attitudes toward the temple project: one approves (vv. 1–3), and the other rejects (vv. 4–6).⁵⁴ In light of both the immediate and broader context, it appears that although David’s initial motivation was good (2 Chr 6:8),⁵⁵ it was not what God desired. The contrast between his palace of cedar and the tent of the Ark motivated David to propose a temple project for God (v. 2). However, when God commanded Moses to build the tabernacle, his desire was to dwell among the Israelites (Exod 25:8; cf. 2 Sam 7:6–7), not to have a grandeur construction.⁵⁶

If God was unwilling to let David build the temple, why, then, did he promise that his seed would build the temple? First, long ago, God had revealed that he would choose a place to put his name there (Deut 12:5, 11, 14; 14:23–25; 16:2, 6, 15–16, etc.). According to 2 Samuel 7:6–7, up to this point, a place has not been chosen yet. Verse 13a reveals that God was going to choose a place, that is, Jerusalem (cf. 2 Chr 6:6, 20). Second, verses 7:10–11a suggest that the temple would be built during times of peace. In other words, a king of peace would build it (cf. 1 Chr 28:3). This would strike an ancient reader as surprising, as it was customary for a king to build a new temple or renovate an existing temple after successful military campaigns. As Niehaus writes, “Any other ancient near eastern king would build a temple for his god precisely *because*—he

⁵³ Sarna points out, there is “a consistent tradition linking Nathan’s oracle to David’s Temple project.” Sarna, “Psalm 89,” 42.

⁵⁴ Dietrich, *Samuel (2 Sam 5:1–7:29)*, 633.

⁵⁵ Unlike other ancient kings, who boast of their temple projects, David’s motivation seems to be simply honoring God. Cf. Henri Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods: A Study of Ancient Near Eastern Religion as the Integration of Society and Nature*, An Oriental Institute Essay (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948), 267–69.

⁵⁶ This is not to say that God categorically forbids such a building. The blueprint of the Solomonic temple was God’s revelation to David (1 Chr 28:11–19).

thought—he had shed much enemy blood in holy warfare for his god.”⁵⁷ Third, God can grant a request that is not what he desires and turn it into a blessing (kingship itself is a good example). The significance of a temple is not in its building materials (cedar vs. curtain). The presence of God gives meaning to the temple (1 Kgs 9:3, 6–7; cf. Jer 7:4–8). Solomon and the temple he built point to a more profound truth: the ultimate fulfillment of the promise, a true Son of David, the Prince of Peace (Isa 9:6–7 [MT 9:5–6]), would tabernacle among the people (John 1:14). David’s seed being a king of peace and a temple builder is not only pertinent to the immediate context, but it is also pivotal in the typology.

Jesus as a temple builder also fulfills the promise at a higher level. A temple signifies God’s presence among his people. It is a place where people can meet God and pray to him (Exod 33:9; Num 7:89; 1 Kgs 8:28–53; Isa 56:7).⁵⁸ Solomon was perfectly aware that a temple built by human hands cannot contain God (1 Kgs 8:27). The temple he built was merely an expedient measurement. Jesus Christ was God incarnate. He tabernacled among the people of God (John 1:14).⁵⁹ He refers to his body as a temple (John 2:19–21; cf. Rev 21:22).

God chose Solomon to be his son, but Jesus *is* the Son of God (see e.g., Matt 3:17; 17:5; Heb 1:5). God disciplined Solomon and the kings of Judah when they sinned. Jesus never sinned (Heb 4:15; 1 Pet 2:22), and thus 2 Samuel 7:14b does not apply to him

⁵⁷ Niehaus, *Biblical Theology*, 421.

⁵⁸ Keil and Delitzsch have a similar comment: “For it is not merely in its earthly form, as a building of wood and stone, that the temple is referred to, but also and chiefly in its essential characteristic, as the place of the manifestation and presence of God in the midst of His people.” Keil and Delitzsch, *The Books of Samuel*, 600.

⁵⁹ God’s emphasis on his freedom to move among his people in 2 Sam 7:6 is observed by many scholars. Cartledge, *1 and 2 Samuel*, 451. In this aspect, the movable tabernacle is better than a stationary temple. Jesus Christ as a “walking tabernacle” thus better fulfills the ideal of a temple of God.

in a strictly literal way. Nevertheless, he bore the sins of others and, for that reason, suffered the wrath of God (1 Pet 2:24; cf. Isa 53:4–12).⁶⁰

Summary

Issues surrounding God’s promise to David have aroused much discussion, and a variety of solutions have been proposed. However, many problems are superficial, and others may be resolved by a typological reading of the promise. God’s promise in 2 Samuel 7:12–14 is about the seed of David. He will be a temple builder, he will be God’s son, and his kingdom will endure forever. Solomon, the kings of Judah, and Jesus Christ are all types of David’s seed. They all fulfill the promise, though not all in the same manner. The typological interpretation not only makes sense of God’s promise to David, but it also shows the profundity of the promise.

Isaiah 7:14

Isaiah gave the prophecy during the Syro–Ephraimite crisis. In about 734 BC, Pekah, king of Israel, and Rezin, king of Syria (Aram), joined together to face a threat posed by Assyria. To the two allied kings, Judah in the south might become a threat when they went out to fight the Assyrians. Therefore, they plotted to subdue Judah, eliminating the threat before engaging in a full-fledged war with the Assyrian army. Had this plan succeeded, they would have an ally instead of a potential enemy in the south (Isa 7:1, 5–6).

When Ahaz, king of Judah, and his people heard the news about the alliance between Israel and Syria, they were terrified (Isa 7:2). God sent Isaiah and his son Shear-Jashub to meet Ahaz at the end of the conduit of the Upper Pool, on the road to the

⁶⁰ Smith, *1 and 2 Samuel*, 396–97. John Calvin also notes that 2 Sam 7:14b cannot be directly applied to Jesus Christ. He applies it to the believers who are “members of his [Christ’s] body.” John Calvin, *Sermons on 2 Samuel, Chapters 1–13*, trans. Douglas Kelly (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1992), 331.

Lauderer's Field. Ahaz was probably examining the water source in preparation for a possible siege by the allies. Isaiah told Ahaz that Pekah and Rezin would not carry out their scheme and Israel would cease as a nation in sixty-five years (Isa 7:7–8). Isaiah urged Ahaz to stand firm and to ask God for a sign. But Ahaz already had his plan and did not even bother to ask God for a sign (Isa 7:10–12). In response to Ahaz's stubbornness,⁶¹ Isaiah gave a prophecy (Isa 7:13–25).

Interpretations of Isaiah 7:14

Isaiah 7:14 is one of the most debated verses in the Old Testament. It has been said to be the “most controversial verse”⁶² and that “almost every word of the sign given in vv. 14ff. is controversial.”⁶³ Throughout the centuries, a variety of interpretations have been proposed. For the purpose of this dissertation, the following section focuses on how the prophecy about the son is fulfilled.

Son(s) of any woman. Some contend that this prophecy could be fulfilled in any son born of a woman during that time. For instance, Bernhard Duhm thus reasons: (1) The sign is not the pregnancy and giving birth of a woman but the naming of “Immanuel.” (2) Since Isaiah did not refer to a specific woman, he did not mean a specific woman. (3) When the Syrians had to withdraw, the women giving birth at that moment will cry out “God with us” and name their children “Immanuel.”⁶⁴ Ahaz will meet many children who bear the name of “Immanuel,” which is a reminder of his past

⁶¹ Cf. 2 Kgs 16:7; James B. Pritchard, ed., *Ancient Near Eastern Texts: Relating to the Old Testament*, 3rd ed. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969), 282.

⁶² Martin Buber, *The Prophetic Faith* (New York: Harper & Row, 1949), 139.

⁶³ Brevard S. Childs, *Isaiah*, OTL (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001), 65.

⁶⁴ Another example commonly cited is 1 Sam 4:19–22. In this passage, Eli's daughter-in-law names her newborn son “Ichabod” (meaning, “the glory has departed from Israel”) because the Philistines captured the Ark of God.

unbelief.⁶⁵

Others see only one son with an unknown mother. For instance, John Goldingay writes, “Isaiah doesn’t need to have a particular girl in mind.” By the time she gives birth to her baby, the Syro-Ephraimite crisis will be over, and she will be able to call her son “Immanuel.”⁶⁶ Gerhard Delling contends that he is the first-born son of an unknown woman.⁶⁷

This view has several problems.⁶⁸ First, there is no indication that many women named their children “Immanuel” during the years of national crisis—first under the threat of the Syro-Ephraimite league, then the suffering by the hand of the Assyrians. No person in the Bible is called by the name “Immanuel.” It is probably a descriptive title. Second, both the mother and the son in Isaiah 7:14–16 are singular; therefore, the prophecy refers to a mother with a son.

To the scholars who hold this view, since the son is named “Immanuel” when the mother perceives the Syro-Ephraimite crisis has gone or is about to disappear, the entire prophecy of Isaiah 7:14–25 is read positively. As Smith points out, “this approach tends to downplay the terrible negative results of Ahaz’s refusal to trust God.”⁶⁹ For

⁶⁵ Bernhard Duhm, *Das Buch Jesaja* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1902), 50–51. For others who hold a similar view, see John Skinner, *The Book of the Prophet Isaiah, Chapters 1–39*, Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1896), 56; Karl Marti, *Das Buch Jesaja* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1900), 76; George B. Gray, *Isaiah 1–27*, ICC (London: T & T Clark, 1912), 124; Georg Fohrer, *Das Buch Jesaja*, ZBK 19 (Zürich: Zwingli, 1966), 102–3; William McKane, “Interpretation of Isaiah 7:14–25,” *VT* 17, no. 2 (1967): 213; Dieter Schneider, *Der Prophet Jesaja* (Wuppertal: R. Brockhaus, 1988), 167.

⁶⁶ John Goldingay, *Isaiah for Everyone*, Old Testament for Everyone (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2015), 34. In an earlier published work, Goldingay states that the woman might be someone who was not yet married, Isaiah’s wife, or Ahaz’s wife. Matthew reapplies the words of the prophecy on Jesus Christ. John Goldingay, *Isaiah* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012), 67.

⁶⁷ Gerhard Delling, “Παρθένος,” in *TDNT*, ed. G. Kittel and G. Friedrich, trans. G. W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964–1976), 5:832, Accordance Bible Software.

⁶⁸ These arguments follow the ones presented in Gary V. Smith, *Isaiah 1–39*, NAC, vol. 15a (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2007), 202; and Paul D. Wegner, *An Examination of Kingship and Messianic Expectation in Isaiah 1–35* (Lewiston, NY: Mellen Biblical Press, 1992), 116.

⁶⁹ Smith, *Isaiah 1–39*, 202.

instance, Emil Kraeling maintains that Isaiah 7:17 is just a warning.⁷⁰ William McKane does not believe Isaiah 7:21–25 is from Isaiah the prophet.⁷¹

Son of a specific woman. The definite article attached to עלמה in Isaiah 7:14 leads scholars to argue for a particular woman rather than any woman in the prophecy. The woman was either present so that Isaiah could point to her or she was not present but was well-known so that Ahaz knew whom Isaiah was talking about.⁷² For instance, Willis writes, “‘The young woman’ . . . most naturally refers to a specific young married woman known to Isaiah and the court of Ahaz, whom they had discussed on prior occasions or to whom Isaiah pointed as he uttered this word.”⁷³ This view differs from the following two views in that this woman is neither a wife of Ahaz nor that of Isaiah. The difficulty for this view is that nothing in the context implies that Isaiah was pointing toward or referring to a specific woman.⁷⁴

Son of Ahaz. One of the most popular interpretations of Isaiah 7:14 is that the son prophesied is Ahaz’s son Hezekiah, who is to become the successor to the king. This view is recorded as early as in Justin’s dialogue with Trypho,⁷⁵ and is endorsed by many modern scholars. Arguments for this interpretation are as follows: (1) Since Ahaz has been proved unfaithful, the hope for the future now rests on the king’s son.⁷⁶ (2) The

⁷⁰ He also regards Isa 7:1–17 in its general character as a *legend*. Emil G. H. Kraeling, “The Immanuel Prophecy,” *JBL* 50, no. 4 (1931): 293.

⁷¹ McKane, “Interpretation of Isaiah 7,” 218.

⁷² See works cited in Paul D. Wegner, *An Examination of Kingship and Messianic Expectation in Isaiah 1–35* (Lewiston, NY: Mellen Biblical Press, 1992), 116–17.

⁷³ John T. Willis, “The Meaning of Isaiah 7:14 and Its Application in Matthew 1:23,” *RestQ* 21, no. 1 (1978): 14.

⁷⁴ Wegner, *Examination of Kingship and Messianic Expectation*, 116–17.

⁷⁵ Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho* 67.

⁷⁶ Erling Hammershaimb, “Immanuel Sign,” *ST* 3 (1951): 124–42. He argues that a king’s cult existed in Jerusalem that was akin to the king’s cults in the surrounding nations. The cult was very much interested in the continuance of the dynasty. Isaiah was strongly influenced by the cult. After the breach

young woman is “apparently present or contemporary,” and “the most likely woman to have been present with the king would have been the queen.”⁷⁷ (3) The context requires that the prophecy be fulfilled in the near future.⁷⁸ (4) The name “Immanuel” (עִמָּנוּ אֵל), connects the prophecy with God’s promise to David.⁷⁹

A problem with this view is that Hezekiah ascended to the throne in 716 BC at the age of twenty-five (2 Kgs 18:1–2).⁸⁰ This means he was born in 741 BC and was a seven-year-old boy in 734 BC. As has been pointed out, the chronology during this period is somewhat problematic.⁸¹ Otto Procksch suggests that the number twenty-five in 2 Kings 18:2 should be emended to fifteen; Hezekiah then would have been born in 734/3 BC.⁸² But no textual evidence supports this emendation. Moreover, in the books of Samuel and Kings, the number “fifteen” is always written as חֲמֵשׁ עָשָׂר or עֶשְׂרֵה עָשָׂר

with Ahaz, he put his hope in the coming prince.

⁷⁷ John D. W. Watts, *Isaiah 1–33*, rev. ed., WBC, vol. 24 (Nashville: Nelson, 2004), 135, 139.

⁷⁸ Watts, *Isaiah 1–33*, 136.

⁷⁹ Wildberger cites two verses that show similarities in vocabulary between them and עִמָּנוּ אֵל. In 2 Sam 23:5, David attests, “my house is with El” (בֵּיתִי עִם אֵל). In 1 Kgs 11:38, God promises Jeroboam through the prophet Ahijah: “if you will listen to all that I command you, and will walk in my ways, and do what is right in my eyes by keeping my statutes and my commandments, as David my servant did, I will be with you (עִמָּךְ) and will build you a sure house (בֵּית נֶאֱמָן), as I built for David.” Hans Wildberger, *Isaiah 1–12: A Commentary* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 311–12.

⁸⁰ William F. Albright, “The Chronology of the Divided Monarchy of Israel,” *BASOR* 100 (1945): 22n28; Wildberger, *Isaiah*, 310; Edwin R. Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, new rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 135.

⁸¹ In 2 Kgs 16:2, Ahaz is said to become king at 20 years of age, and he was king for 16 years. This means he died at 36 and was succeeded by Hezekiah. If Hezekiah was 20 years old when he took the throne, as 2 Kgs 18:2 states, his father Ahaz would be only 11 years old at that time. Hammershaimb, “Immanuel Sign,” 141; C. R. North, “Immanuel,” in *Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible*, ed. George Arthur Buttrick (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990); Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1–39: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB, vol. 19 (New York: Doubleday, 2000), 234.

⁸² Otto Procksch, *Geschichtsbetrachtung und geschichtliche Überlieferung bei den vorexilischen Propheten* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1902), 26, cited in Hammershaimb, “Immanuel Sign,” 141. Hammershaimb takes the LXX’s reading *καλέσεις* as a support, because in Isaiah’s words, Ahaz was going to name the child.

(“five” comes before “ten”),⁸³ whereas the number “twenty-five” is always written as עשרים וחמש (“twenty” followed by *waw* and “five”).⁸⁴

Some other scholars agree that the son cannot be Hezekiah but still insist that he was another son of Ahaz.⁸⁵ Arguments for this view include: the prophecy was addressed to the house of David (Isa 7:13), and the house of David was threatened.⁸⁶ The woman was already pregnant. The article denotes that she is known to Ahaz. Song of Solomon 6:8 indicates עלמות is among the king’s harems. Isaiah here is verifying that the עלמה of Ahaz’s harem who is pregnant will give birth to a son.⁸⁷ Lindblom even surmises that Isaiah knew the queen was pregnant and gave a prophecy about the son to be born.⁸⁸

For conservative scholars who hold this view, the New Testament poses a problem because Matthew claims that the birth of Jesus Christ has fulfilled this prophecy (Matt 1:23). Attempts have been made to make sense of Matthew’s claim. For instance, John Walton explains that Isaiah did not intend to prophesy about the birth of Jesus Christ, but the inspired Matthew applied the prophecy to Jesus.⁸⁹ Walter Kaiser, holding a single-meaning hermeneutic, argues that the prophecy is fulfilled in Hezekiah and Matthew applies it to Jesus Christ by way of “generic extension.”⁹⁰

⁸³ 2 Sam 9:10; 19:18; 1 Kgs 7:3; 2 Kgs 14:17; 20:6. In the 16 occurrences of “fifteen” in the Old Testament, with one exception (Ezek 45:12), “five” always comes before “ten.”

⁸⁴ 1 Kgs 22:42; 2 Kgs 14:2; 15:33; 18:2; 23:36. In the 23 occurrences of “twenty-five” in the Old Testament, “twenty” usually comes before “five,” with one exception in Num 8:24 and six exceptions in Ezekiel (40:21, 25, 30, 33, 36; 45:12). Ezekiel is the only book that has inconsistent writing for “twenty-five.” In 8:16; 11:1; 40:3, 29, “twenty” stands before “five.”

⁸⁵ David Kimchi, *Commentarii in Jesaiam Prophetam* (Florence, 1774), 64, cited in John E. Steinmueller, “Etymology and Biblical Usage of ’Almah,” *CBQ* 2, no. 1 (1940): 41.

⁸⁶ John J. Scullion, “Approach to the Understanding of Isaiah 7:10–17,” *JBL* 87, no. 3 (1968): 288–89.

⁸⁷ John H. Walton, “Isa 7:14: What’s in a Name?,” *JETS* 30, no. 3 (1987): 296.

⁸⁸ Johannes Lindblom, *A Study on the Immanuel Section in Isaiah: Isaiah 7–9:6* (Lund, Sweden: CWK Gleerup, 1958), 19.

⁸⁹ Walton, “Isa 7:14,” 297–300.

⁹⁰ Walter C. Kaiser Jr., “The Promise of Isaiah 7:14 and the Single-Meaning Hermeneutic,”

This view suffers from similar difficulties as the Hezekiah view. Nothing in the context suggests that the son is from the royal house. It is unlikely that Ahaz, who has turned down God's invitation, was to name his son "Immanuel." The adjective הרה does not necessarily imply that the woman was already pregnant, as some scholars have understood.⁹¹ הרה plus הנה can also refer to a woman who is not yet pregnant at the time of conversation, as it is the case in the wife of Manoah (Judg 13:5, 7).⁹² The expression in Judges 13:7, הנה העלמה הרה וילדת בן, parallels that in Isaiah 7:14, הנה העלמה הרה וילדת בן.

Son of a mythical woman. Some have resorted to the Canaanite religion, in which a mythical woman gives birth to a son.⁹³ S. Mowinckel argues that Isaiah adopts the concept of this kind of myth and gives the prophecy of Immanuel.⁹⁴ He even suggests that Isaiah believes in the existence of such a mythical woman!⁹⁵ This view is least likely. One of the major themes in Isaiah is the polemic against the false gods. It is unthinkable that Isaiah would adopt the concept of Canaanite myth in his giving prophecies.⁹⁶

Evangelical Journal 6 (1988): 55–70.

⁹¹ E.g., William C. Graham, "Isaiah's Part in the Syro-Ephraimitic Crisis," *AJSLL* 50, no. 4 (1934): 207; Hans W. Wolff, *Immanuel, das Zeichen, dem widersprochen wird: eine Auslegung von Jesaja 7,1–17* (Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1959), 35; Walton, "Isa 7:14," 296. Zahn builds on this point and claims that the mother remains a virgin while being pregnant. He is followed by Gundry. Theodor Zahn, *Das Evangelium des Matthäus* (Leipzig: Deichert, 1922), 85; Robert Horton Gundry, *Commentary on the New Testament: Verse-by-Verse Explanations with a Literal Translation* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2010), 226–27.

⁹² Herbert M. Wolf, "A Solution to the Immanuel Prophecy in Isaiah 7:14–8:22," *JBL* 91, no. 4 (1972): 456; James M. Hamilton Jr., "The Virgin Will Conceive: Typological Fulfillment in Matthew 1:18–23," in *Built upon the Rock: Studies in the Gospel of Matthew*, ed. Daniel M. Gurtner and John Nolland (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 237. Keil and Delitzsch point out that "*hinnēh* is always used by Isaiah to introduce a future occurrence." Keil and Delitzsch, *Isaiah*, 140.

⁹³ Rudolf Kittel, "Die Hellenistische Mysterienreligion Und Das Alte Testament," *ZDMG* 78, nos. 3/4 (1924): 88–101.

⁹⁴ Sigmund Mowinckel, *He That Cometh: The Messiah Concept in the Old Testament and Later Judaism*, trans. G. W. Anderson, Biblical Resource (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 113–16.

⁹⁵ Mowinckel, *He That Cometh*, 116.

⁹⁶ As Delling writes, "That Is. [Isaiah] should have set a goddess alongside Yahweh is, however, quite incompatible with his view of God. It is equally incredible that he should have expected the birth of the Saviour from a pagan goddess." Delling, "Ἰαρηένος."

Son of the collective Lady Zion: the faithful people. Johan Lust maintains that עֲלְמָה should be identified with Lady Zion, a collective entity rather than an individual. His reasoning is as follows: (1) παρθένος in earlier Greek had a broader range of meaning and was closer in meaning to the Hebrew word עֲלְמָה. It evolved over time and became to mean “virgin” in later Greek. (2) In Isaiah 37:22 and 47:1, the LXX uses παρθένος to render בתולה, which refers to a collective entity, Zion and Babylon respectively. (3) Outside Isaiah בתולה is frequently used as a title for Lady Zion, representing Israel or Judah.⁹⁷ (4) Both Isaiah 7:14 and 37:22 have a similar context; Jerusalem was under threat, but “God promised assistance to his people and a ‘remnant’ returns.” (5) “The plural form of the personal pronoun in the name of the child (“Immanuel, God with us”) in 7,14 also calls for a collective interpretation.”⁹⁸

This view has not gained wide acceptance either. As R. F. De Sousa points out, this interpretation has an inherent problem, namely, a “simple equation of the contexts of Isa 7 and 37.”⁹⁹ The context of Isaiah 37 is different from that of Isaiah 7. The former is the affliction of Judah being compared to the suffering of a woman in labor without the strength for delivery (Isa 37:3; cf. Isa 26:17), whereas Isaiah 7 is about the birth of a son that serves as a sign for Judah’s salvation.¹⁰⁰ Also, one should be cautious about drawing conclusions based on the use of παρθένος in the LXX because it is a translation.¹⁰¹

⁹⁷ Lust cites the following passages: 2 Kgs 19:21; Jer 18:13; 31:4, 21; Lam 1:15; 2:13.

⁹⁸ Johan Lust, “A Septuagint Christ Preceding Jesus Christ? Messianism in the Septuagint Exemplified in Isa 7,10–17,” in *Messianism and the Septuagint: Collected Essays*, ed. Katrin Hauspie, Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium 178 (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2004), 221–22. See also Barry G. Webb, *The Message of Isaiah: On Eagles’ Wings*, The Bible Speaks Today (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1996), 62–63. See also Arie van der Kooij, “Die Septuaginta Jesajas als Document jüdischer Exegese. Einige Notize zu LXX-Jes 7,” in *Übersetzung und Deutung: Studien zu dem Alten Testament und seiner Umwelt, Alexander Reinard Hulst gewidmet von Freunden und Kollegen*, ed. A. R. Hulst (Nijkerk: Callenbach, 1977), 91–102.

⁹⁹ Rodrigo F. De Sousa, *Eschatology and Messianism in LXX Isaiah 1–12* (New York: T & T Clark, 2010), 73.

¹⁰⁰ Ronald L. Troxel, “Isaiah 7,14–16 through the Eyes of the Septuagint,” *ETL* 79, no. 1 (2003): 18.

¹⁰¹ De Sousa, *Eschatology and Messianism in LXX Isaiah 1–12*, 73.

Son of Isaiah. Another view is that the prophesied son is a son of Isaiah, either Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz or another one. Stamm, based on the parallelism between Isaiah 7:10–17 and 8:1–4, argues that Immanuel is also Isaiah’s son. He is, however, not Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz, because the events in 8:1–4 happened earlier than those prophesied in 7:10–17. The names of all his three sons are used to convey messages.¹⁰² Gottwald follows the same line of argument: In 8:18, Isaiah said that God gave him children and set them as signs in Israel. The immediate context suggests that Immanuel should be regarded as one of his sons.¹⁰³ He further comments that the son is expected to be born in a natural way; the name “Immanuel” is symbolic.¹⁰⁴

Jesus Christ. Many scholars have argued that Jesus Christ alone is the fulfillment of the prophecy.¹⁰⁵ This interpretation is based on the following reasons: (1) עלמה does not just mean “young woman”; it means “virgin.”¹⁰⁶ (2) The “sign” demands a virgin birth for it to be a “sign.”¹⁰⁷ (3) The mother giving a name to the son indicates that he does not have a father on earth.¹⁰⁸ (4) The name “Immanuel” cannot apply to a man

¹⁰² Johann Jakob Stamm, “La Prophétie d’Emmanuel,” *Revue de Théologie et de Philosophie* 32, no. 132 (1944): 117; Stamm, “Die Immanuel-Weissagung: Ein Gespräch Mit E Hammershaimb,” *VT* 4, no. 1 (1954): 33.

¹⁰³ Norman K. Gottwald, “Immanuel as the Prophet’s Son,” *VT* 8, no. 1 (1958): 37. See also Ferdinand Hitzig, *Der Prophet Jesaja* (Heidelberg: C. F. Winter, 1833), 85.

¹⁰⁴ Gottwald, “Immanuel as the Prophet’s Son,” 38–40.

¹⁰⁵ R. Dick Wilson, “The Meaning of ‘Alma in Isaiah 7:1,” *PTR* 24, no. 2 (1926): 308–316; Gerard Owens, “Our Lady’s Virginité in the Birth of Jesus,” *Marian Studies* 7, no. 1 (1956): 53; Charles L. Feinberg, “The Virgin Birth and Isaiah 7:14,” *MSJ* 22, no. 1 (2011): 11–17.

¹⁰⁶ E.g., J. A. Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah: An Introduction and Commentary* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1993), 84–85.

¹⁰⁷ John Chrysostom reasons that עלמה must be a virgin. “If she were not a virgin, it would hardly be a sign.” Duane A. Garrett, *An Analysis of the Hermeneutics of John Chrysostom’s Commentary on Isaiah 1–8 with an English Translation*, *Studies in the Bible and Early Christianity* 12 (Lewiston, NY: E. Mellen Press, 1992), 146. John Calvin offers the same argument. John Calvin, *Isaiah*, *Crossway Classic Commentaries* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2000), 73.

¹⁰⁸ Calvin, *Isaiah*, 73–74.

but can only apply to Christ.¹⁰⁹ (5) Later Isaiah passages reveal that this son is a Davidic king.¹¹⁰ (6) The article prefixed to the word indicates that only one individual is in view.¹¹¹ (7) The speech in Isaiah 7:13–16a is addressed to “*the entire dynasty of David*: past, present, and future”; it is, therefore, “not at all tied to the time of Ahaz.” Beginning with Isaiah 7:16b the addressee is switched back to Ahaz.¹¹² (8) Matthew explicitly states that Jesus Christ has fulfilled the prophecy (Matt 1:22–23).

The first argument is much debated and deserves more detailed discussion. The general consensus on the meaning of *עלמה* and *בתולה* has been that *עלמה* refers to a “young, marriageable woman” who may be—but not necessarily—a virgin, whereas *בתולה* denotes virginity.¹¹³ It has also been argued that *עלמה* may refer to a married woman who has not given birth to a child yet.¹¹⁴

Others, however, hold the very opposite view. They contend that *בתולה* does not always refer to a virgin, but *עלמה* does. Wenham, after a study of the cognates of *בתולה* in other Semitic languages and the occurrences of the term in the Hebrew Syntax,

¹⁰⁹ Calvin, *Isaiah*, 74.

¹¹⁰ Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah*, 86. Motyer argues that “your land” in Isa 8:8 implies that the son is a kingly figure. Isa 9:6–7, in particular, indicates that the son is a Davidic king.

¹¹¹ This is the view of Chrysostom. Garrett, *An Analysis of the Hermeneutics of John Chrysostom’s Commentary on Isaiah 1–8 With an English Translation*, 146. Other scholars have made the same remark on the article: e.g., Edward J. Young, “The Immanuel Prophecy: Isaiah 7:14–16,” *WTJ* 16, no. 1 (1953): 23–50; Feinberg, “The Virgin Birth and Isaiah 7:14,” 14.

¹¹² Peter J. Gentry, “Isaiah 7:12–16—A Direct Prediction of a Distant Future Relative to Isaiah’s Time?,” in *The Mother of the Infant King, Isaiah 7:14: Alma and Parthenos in the World of the Bible: A Linguistic Perspective*, by Christophe Rico and Peter J. Gentry (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2020), 188. John Chrysostom has also observed the plural form of the addressee. Garrett, *Analysis of Hermeneutics of Chrysostom’s Commentary on Isa 1–8*, 146.

¹¹³ Steinmueller, “Etymology and Biblical Usage of ’Almah,” 28–43; Cyrus H. Gordon, “Almah in Isaiah 7:14,” *JBR* 21, no. 2 (1953): 106; Ludwig Koehler, Walter Baumgartner, and Johann J. Stamm, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, trans. and ed. Mervyn E. J. Richardson (Leiden: Brill, 1994–1999), s.v. “עַלְמָה,” Accordance Bible Software.

¹¹⁴ John H. Walton, *NIDOTTE*, ed. Willem A. VanGemeren (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997), s.v. “עַלְמָה, עַלְמָה, עַלְמָה,” Accordance Bible Software. Similarly, BDB defines *עלמה* as “young woman (ripe sexually; maid or newly married).” Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House, 1994), s.v. “עַלְמָה.”

concludes that the word is best understood as “a girl of marriageable age.”¹¹⁵ One of the common arguments is that in the context where בתולה is used, it needs qualification, such as “no man had had relations with her” (Gen 24:16), “who is not betrothed and lies with her” (Exod 22:16 [MT 22:15]), and “who had not known a man by lying with him” (Judg 21:12). In contrast, עלמה does not need any qualification.¹¹⁶ Another common argument is that since in Joel 1:8, a בתולה is said to lament for her husband, the term should not be translated as “virgin.”¹¹⁷

Most recently, Christophe Rico, after a survey of the usage and the history of interpretation of עלמה, concludes that the term has gone through a semantic evolution over the centuries: In Ancient Biblical Hebrew, the word simply means “virgin adolescent.” In Late Biblical Hebrew, it is also used to refer to “soprano tone characteristic of virgin adolescent.” In the second century BC, there was a false etymological connection between ‘*almâ* (/ʾl/) and ‘*lm* “to be hidden” (/ʕ/), due to a phonological change of the letter Ayin. עלמה was then often understood as “hidden virgin.” From the second century AD to the fourteenth century, the application of Isaiah 7:14 to Jesus Christ led the majority of Jewish commentators to emphasize the meaning of “female youth.”¹¹⁸ Nevertheless, a small number of Jewish scholars still took the word to mean “virgin adolescent.” From the fourteenth century to the end of the nineteenth century, all Jews took the word to mean “young girl” or “young woman.” Afterward, in modern Hebrew, the term simply means “unmarried lady.”¹¹⁹

¹¹⁵ Gordon J. Wenham, “*Betûlâh*, a Girl of Marriageable Age,” *VT* 22, no. 3 (1972): 326–48.

¹¹⁶ Edward E. Hindson, “Isaiah’s Immanuel,” *Grace Journal* 10 (1969): 7–8; Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah*, 85; R. Bruce Compton, “The Immanuel Prophecy in Isaiah 7:14–16 and Its Use in Matthew 1:23: Harmonizing Historical Context and Single Meaning,” *Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal* 12 (2007): 8.

¹¹⁷ Wenham, “*Betûlâh*, a Girl of Marriageable Age,” 345.

¹¹⁸ On this point, see also Henry B. Swete, *An Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1914), 30.

¹¹⁹ Rico and Gentry, *Mother of the Infant King*, 22–168.

There are problems with this interpretation. First, Wenham's argument about the meaning of בתולה is problematic. In many cases of בתולה that he analyses, "virgin" is a more natural reading and better fits the context (see especially Deut 22:13–21). The argument that בתולה needs qualification denote "virginity" is not at all convincing. An אשר clause can be explanatory. For instance, Genesis 17:14 contains the relative clause: וערל זכר אשר לא ימול את בשר ערלתו ("any uncircumcised male, who has not been circumcised in the flesh"). The explanatory relative clause does not indicate that ערל cannot by itself denote "uncircumcision." In other places, ערל is used without the "qualification" (e.g., Exod 12:48; Josh 5:7; Judg 14:3; 1 Sam 14:6; 17:26). Another example is Psalm 38:13 [MT 38:14]: ואני כחרש לא אשמע וכאלם לא יפתח פיו ("I am like the deaf, who cannot hear, like the mute, who cannot speak"). As for Joel 1:8, בתולה can refer to a young woman who has engaged but has not consummated her marriage.¹²⁰ Moreover, בתולה is sometimes used as an adjective to indicate "virginity."¹²¹

Rico's chronological study is not very convincing. עלמה occurs less than ten times in the Old Testament.¹²² Any reconstruction of a semantic evolution of the term should be regarded as tentative. On the other hand, it is not reasonable to say that עלמה implies "virginity."¹²³ This, however, does not necessitate the young woman being pregnant while remaining a virgin. As has been argued above, הרה plus הנה can also refer to a woman who is not yet pregnant at the time of conversation. Isaiah could refer to a young woman who was still a virgin but would soon bear a son.

¹²⁰ Hans W. Wolff, *Joel and Amos: A Commentary on the Books of the Prophets Joel and Amos*, ed. S. Dean McBride, trans. Waldemar Janzen, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977), 30.

¹²¹ Deut 22:23, 28; Esth 2:2, 3; Judg 21:12; 1 Kgs 1:2. Rico and Gentry, *Mother of Infant King, Isa 7:14*, 89–90.

¹²² Gen 24:43; Exod 2:8; Isa 7:14; Pss 46:0 [MT 1]; 68:25 [MT 26]; Prov 30:19; Song 1:3; 6:8; 1 Chr 15:20. Rico himself suggests that the word עלמה in Prov 30:19 be emended to 'למנח ("in his adolescence"). Rico and Gentry, *Mother of the Infant King*, 31–42.

¹²³ As Steinmueller has noted, the term "refers to a marriageable girl, with virginity implicitly included." Steinmueller, "Etymology and Biblical Usage of 'Almah," 28–43.

The argument that the word “sign” demands a virgin birth does not have support from the immediate context. Isaiah explicitly states that his children are “signs” (Isa 8:18). His statement by no means suggests that his children are born of a virgin.¹²⁴

The biggest problem with this interpretation is perhaps the immediate context of Isaiah 7:14. There is no evidence that when Jesus Christ grew up, he ate curds and honey (Isa 7:15). Furthermore, Isaiah 7:16–25 appears to describe the events in the near future from the time of the conversation. Several attempts have been made to solve the problem. One approach is to take the child in 7:15 as referring not to Immanuel. Calvin claims that “the boy” in Isaiah 7:16 refers to children in general. Thus, he applies the verse to the time of Ahaz.¹²⁵ Smith maintains that 7:14 is about Christ, but 7:15 is about another child, possibly Shear-Jashub, because Isaiah “does not refer to this ‘young lad’ as a ‘son’ or ‘Immanuel.’”¹²⁶ Gromacki sees Jesus Christ in 7:14 and Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz as the child in 7:15–16.¹²⁷ The difficulty with the two-son view is evident: the subject of the verbs in 7:15 is masculine, singular. The antecedent can only be the child in verse 14. The article that is attached to נֶעֱרַר (“the child”) points back to verse 15, indicating that the same child is in view.”¹²⁸

Others attribute the entire prophecy to Jesus Christ. Justin reads Isaiah 7:15 as “before the child knows how to call father or mother, he shall take the power of Damascus and spoils of Samaria.”¹²⁹ He understands the second half of the verse being fulfilled in King Herod, who is metaphorically called the king of Assyria. Irenaeus takes

¹²⁴ Willis, “Meaning of Isa 7:14 and Application in Matt 1:23,” 6.

¹²⁵ Calvin, *Isaiah*, 74.

¹²⁶ Smith, *Isaiah 1–39*, 215.

¹²⁷ Robert G. Gromacki, *The Virgin Birth: A Biblical Study of the Deity of Jesus Christ*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2002), 172.

¹²⁸ Compton, “Immanuel Prophecy in Isa 7:14–16 and Use in Matt 1:23,” 10.

¹²⁹ Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho* 77.

Isaiah 7:15 as speaking of Christ's human nature.¹³⁰ Origen maintains that the "house of David" refers to the church of God, and "butter and honey" refers to the "sweet works" of Christians that Christ eats.¹³¹ Jerome contends that although Immanuel would be born hundreds of years later, he was able to deliver the people in Isaiah's time when his name was invoked.¹³² Compton suggests that Isaiah saw the virgin birth in a vision. He hypothesizes an assumption that "*were the child born in the immediate future, the child would certainly experience what verses 15–16 describe.*"¹³³ Gentry interprets the child's eating curds and honey in Isaiah 7:15a as being fulfilled from the exile until Jesus's time. During this time, Judea was dominated by foreign overlords.¹³⁴

Against Compton, nothing in 7:15–16a implies that it is hypothetical. Contra others, the verses mention only the Assyrians who were the enemies during that time. By the time of Jesus Christ, the Assyrians were long gone. Watts summarizes the criticism well: "This kind of interpretation is subject to the criticism that it ignores the rightful demands of contextual and historical exegesis, which call for a meaning related to the end of the Syro-Ephraimite War in terms of v 16."¹³⁵

Other views. There are still other views besides those mentioned above.

Naegelsbach suggests that he is the son of the immoral daughter of the king.¹³⁶ Some

¹³⁰ Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies* 3.21.4.

¹³¹ Jerome, *Commentary on Isaiah: Including St. Jerome's Translation of Origen's Homilies 1–9 on Isaiah*, trans. Thomas P. Scheck, ACW 68 (New York: The Newman Press, 2015), 892–93.

¹³² Jerome, *Commentary on Isaiah*, 171.

¹³³ Compton, "Immanuel Prophecy in Isa 7:14–16 and Use in Matt 1:23," 13; Edward J. Young, *The Book of Isaiah* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965), 293–94; Allan A. MacRae, *Studies in Isaiah* (Hatfield, PA: Interdisciplinary Biblical Research Institute, 1995), 28–29.

¹³⁴ Gentry, "Isaiah 7:12–16," 215.

¹³⁵ Watts, *Isaiah 1–33*, 141.

¹³⁶ Iosephus Knabenbauer, *Commentarius in Isaiam Prophetam*, 2nd ed., *Cursus Scripturae Sacrae* (Paris: P. Lethielleux, 1922), 202, cited in Steinmueller, "Etymology and Biblical Usage of 'Almah," 41.

scholars changed the order of the text by moving the prophecy to other places.¹³⁷ Childs states, “[the prophecy] was understood messianically by the traditions of the Isaianic tradition, and shaped in such a way both to clarify and expand the messianic hope for every successive generation of the people of God.”¹³⁸ Stuhlmüller holds a similar view. He contends that the verse is fulfilled in Hezekiah, but the prophecy is merged into the future by a process of “prophetic compenetration.”¹³⁹ In the following section, I argue that the prophecy should be read typologically.¹⁴⁰

A Typological Interpretation of Isaiah 7:14

A satisfying interpretation must account for: (1) the immediate context of Isaiah 7:14, the imminent delivery from the hand of Syro-Ephraimite league, as well as the devastation of the Assyrians; (2) the indications of the fulfillment of the prophecy; (3) the connection between the prophecy and Isaiah 8–9. (4) Matthew’s statement about the fulfillment in Jesus Christ.

Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz as an initial fulfillment. First, the birth of Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz is an initial fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14. Both the historical and literary context of the prophecy is the Syro-Ephraimite crisis. God promised to deliver Judah from the scheme of its enemies (7:7). Nevertheless, the promise came with a requirement. Ahaz was asked to remain faithful to God; failure to trust God has consequences (7:9).

¹³⁷ E.g., A. Feuillet, “Le Signe Proposé À Achaz Et L’emmanuel,” *RSR* 30, no. 1 (1940): 129–51. There is no textual basis for doing it. See M. McNamara, “The Emmanuel Prophecy and Its Context,” *Scripture* 14 (1962): 124–25.

¹³⁸ Childs, *Isaiah*, 69.

¹³⁹ Carroll Stuhlmüller, “The Mother of Emmanuel (Is. 7: 14),” *Marian Studies* 12, no. 1 (1961): 193.

¹⁴⁰ There are also variations of the typological interpretation of the prophecy. Ridderbos holds a typological view, but he does not equate Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz with the initial fulfillment of the prophecy. It will, however, be argued that the initial fulfillment of the prophecy is Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz. Jan Ridderbos, *Isaiah*, trans. John Vriend, BSC (Grand Rapids: Regency Reference Library, 1985), 85–94.

Ahaz was immediately proved unfaithful when Isaiah invited him to ask for a sign for the upcoming delivery (7:12). Isaiah gave the sign anyway. The two enemies would not stand (7:16). The prophecy, however, also shows the consequences of Ahaz's unbelief. The delivery would be short-lived. The Assyrians, in whom Ahaz put his trust, would come to devastate the land of Judah (7:17–25). Ironically, the message of deliverance (7:14–16) is overshadowed by a lengthy statement of threat (7:17–25).

Isaiah 8 shows an initial fulfillment of the prophecy. God told Isaiah to write down “Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz” and summoned Uriah, the priest, and Zechariah, the son of Jeberechiah, as witnesses (8:1–2). Then Isaiah approached the prophetess, and she conceived and bore a son (8:3a). God told Isaiah to name the son “Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz” and gave such message: (1) Damascus and Samaria would be plundered before the king of Assyria (8:4); (2) the land of Judah would be ravaged by the king of Assyria (8:5–8). A few verses later, Isaiah states that he and his children are “signs and portents in Israel from the Lord of hosts” (8:18).

As J. Oswalt writes, “The similarity of 8:1–4 to 7:10–17 is too close to be coincidental.”¹⁴¹ Likewise, Duane Garrett concludes, “One cannot deny that Maher-shalal-hash-baz fulfilled the promise of a sign to Ahaz. . . . The parallel between Isaiah 7:16 and Isaiah 8:4 is too obvious and too strong to avoid.”¹⁴² The sign of Isaiah 7:14 is against the background of the Syro-Ephraimite crisis, and the birth of Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz—which means “quickly [comes] the plunder, hastily [comes] the spoil”—conveys the imminent nature of prophesied events. This makes perfect sense to the context because by the time Isaiah's son was born, at least about one year had passed. The son of 7:14 cannot be another son of Isaiah, as some scholars have proposed. If there

¹⁴¹ John Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 1–39*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), 220.

¹⁴² Duane A. Garrett, *The Problem of the Old Testament: Hermeneutical, Schematic and Theological Approaches* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2020), 359–60.

were another son of Isaiah (or of Ahaz) that fulfilled the prophecy of 7:14, there would be no need for Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz to serve as a sign for the same events.¹⁴³ Since the birth of Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz addresses the same crisis mentioned in 7:1, there is no need to search for another son in Isaiah and Ahaz's time.¹⁴⁴

A son greater than Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz. On the other hand, some indications in the book of Isaiah suggest that Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz has not exhausted the prophecy. Admittedly, in Isaiah 7–8, the indications are not as obvious as one would want them to be. The first indication is the term “the house of David.” Gentry argues the prophecy of Isaiah 7:13–16 is addressed to “*the entire dynasty of David: past, present, and future*” and not Ahaz alone because the addressee is “the house of David” (7:13).¹⁴⁵ However, “the house of David” already appears in 7:2: “When *the house of David* was told” One would be hard-pressed to conclude that 7:2 means “When *the house of David—past, present and future—*was told” Nevertheless, the term does imply that the crisis is not of Ahaz *alone*. When Rezin and Pekah devised to dethrone Ahaz and install Tabeel's son as king of Judah, the house (i.e., the dynasty) of David was in danger. Ahaz represented the house of David at that time.

¹⁴³ Walton opines the son of 7:14 is not Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz because knowing to call “father” and “mother” comes long before knowing to reject evil and choose good. Walton, “Isa 7:14,” 296. Brueggemann, on the other hand, writes, “It is conventionally reckoned that a child knows the difference between ‘good and evil,’ right and wrong, by two years of age.” Walter Brueggemann, *Isaiah 1–39*, Westminster Bible Companion (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1998), 71. Even if Walton's understanding of the child's age is accepted, it cannot disprove that Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz fulfills the prophecy. First, Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz was born sometime later than the time of Isaiah's conversation with Ahaz. Second, the plunder of Damascus and Samaria would surely happen before the land of the two kings was abandoned.

¹⁴⁴ Chisholm makes a similar remark: “A more likely option is that Immanuel and Maher-shalal-hash-baz (whose birth is recorded in chapter 8) were one and the same. The birth account in 8:3 could easily be interpreted as the fulfillment of the prophecy of 7:14. The presence of a formal record and witnesses (8:1–2) suggests a sign function for the child (see 7:14). As in 7:14–16, the removal of Judah's enemies would take place before the child reached a specified age (see 8:4). Both 7:17–25 and 8:7–8 speak of an Assyrian invasion of Judah following the defeat of the Syrian-Israelite alliance. The direct address to Immanuel at the end of 8:8 would make sense if his birth has been recorded in the previous verses.” Robert B. Chisholm, *Handbook on the Prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Minor Prophets* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 33.

¹⁴⁵ Gentry, “Isaiah 7:12–16,” 188.

The term “the house of David” alludes to God’s covenant with David. W. F. Albright contends that the son of Tabeel was “presumably son of Uzziah or Jotham by a princess of Ṭāb’el,” which is located in the north of Ammon and Gilead.¹⁴⁶ However, as Dearman points out, “why a *Judean* prince would be called by his mother’s homeland?”¹⁴⁷ The contrast between the house of David and the sons of others (Isa 7:1, 4, 6, 9) strongly suggests that the son of Tabeel is not of the house of David. The implication is that if Rezin and Pekah’s plan worked out, the one who sat on the throne of David would not be a son of David but a son of Tabeel.¹⁴⁸

Isaiah’s prophecy ensured that the two neighboring kings’ plots would fail, and the future king of Judah would still be a son of David. In this sense, it is understandable that many have taken a son of Ahaz to be the fulfillment of the prophecy. Nevertheless, as has been argued above, there is no need to search for another son apart from Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz. Moreover, in Isaiah 7:14, the son had a passive role; he was merely a sign. His presence was enough.

The second indication is the word עלמה. Most scholarly discussions on עלמה focus on the issue of whether the term semantically indicates “virginity.” The word usually refers to a young, marriageable woman, thus when one sees עלמה, he or she may safely assume that the young woman is sexually inexperienced. However, since הנה plus הרה can also refer to a woman who is not yet pregnant at the time of conversation, the “virginity” of the עלמה here no longer demands that the woman is pregnant but remains a virgin. It could refer to a young woman who was still a virgin at the time of Isaiah’s

¹⁴⁶ William F. Albright, “The Son of Tabeel (Isaiah 7:6),” *BASOR* 140 (1955): 34–35.

¹⁴⁷ J. Andrew Dearman, “The Son of Tabeel (Isaiah 7.6),” in *Prophets and Paradigms: Essays in Honor of Gene M. Tucker*, ed. Stephen B. Reid, JSOTSup (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 38. Dearman has a thorough survey on the proposals for the identity of Tabeel.

¹⁴⁸ Ahaz’s word to Tiglath-Pileser in 2 Kgs 16:7 is ironic: he is a son of David, but he calls himself a son of Tiglath-Pileser.

prophecy but would become pregnant and bear a son.¹⁴⁹ The fact that Isaiah 8:3 refers to the mother of Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz as “the prophetess” and not as “my wife” implies that she was probably not Isaiah’s wife yet. Therefore, even if one proves that עלמה here refers to a virgin, the birth of Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz still cannot be excluded as a fulfillment.

A perhaps equally significant aspect of עלמה is the lack of clear referent. Efforts to identify the young woman as one of Ahaz’s harems, or a bystander who happened to be present, or someone Ahaz and Isaiah had mentioned in their previous conversation miss the point. The article indicates that she is a certain woman, not any woman. But her identity was not disclosed. Interestingly, in Isaiah 8:3, the prophetess is not identified, just as the “young woman” in 7:14 is not. The article is attached to נביאה, but there is no antecedent to it, just as the article is attached to עלמה, but no antecedent is found. This parallel further supports the contention that 8:3 is a fulfillment of 7:14.¹⁵⁰ Nevertheless, the vagueness of reference leaves the prophecy open to further fulfillments. In arguing against a son contemporary to Isaiah as a fulfillment of the prophecy, Rico writes, “If the word ‘almâ had designated only an ordinary adolescent (not necessarily

¹⁴⁹ Garrett, *Problem of the Old Testament*, 362. The Ugaritic text, the Wedding of Nikkal and the Moon, has a similar expression to Isa 7:14. The Ugaritic text states, “A virgin will give birth . . . a maid will bear a son.” Cyrus H. Gordon, *Ugaritic Literature: A Comprehensive Translation of the Poetic and Prose Texts*, SPIB 98 (Roma: Pontificium Institutum Biblicum, 1949), 63–64. Wolf correctly observes that this is a blessing for a marriage, not a prophecy about a woman who gives birth to a son yet remains a virgin: “In its context the phrase means that a particular virgin would soon be engaged and that after her marriage she would become the mother of a son. At the time of the prediction, she was a virgin. This kind of announcement was a blessing on the upcoming marriage.” Herbert M. Wolf, *Interpreting Isaiah: The Suffering and Glory of the Messiah* (Grand Rapids: Academie Books, 1985), 91.

¹⁵⁰ Arguing against Isaiah’s wife as a possible fulfillment of the prophecy, Smith writes, “The enigmatic nature of this sign, the avoidance of naming this woman, and the absence of modifiers like ‘your wife, your young woman, this young woman’ argues against this being either Ahaz’s or Isaiah’s wife. Suggestions that identify this as a new wife of Isaiah or Ahaz are just guesses that try to pinpoint a specific woman based on interpreting the definite article ‘the/this,’ yet the text refuses to identify her.” Smith, *Isaiah 1–39*, 213. Smith’s point is immediately undone by the context. All of his arguments, “the avoidance of naming this woman, and the absence of modifiers like ‘your wife, your young woman, this young woman,’ and “the text refuses to identify her” can equally apply to הנביאה in Isa 8:3. One has to admit that the identity of the prophetess is also somewhat enigmatic. The evidence Smith lays out *supports* that the prophetess fulfills the prophecy and that she is probably not the mother of Shear-jashub.

virgin), then we would be confronted with an obscure verse.”¹⁵¹ This is precisely the point of the prophecy! The language is precise enough so that when it is fulfilled, people know it has been fulfilled. On the other hand, a certain degree of obscurity allows one to anticipate further fulfillment.

The third indication is the title “Immanuel.” עִמָּנוּ אֵל as a proper noun occurs only in Isaiah 7:14 and 8:8 in the Old Testament and Matthew 1:23 in the New Testament. As mentioned before, no one in the Bible is called by this name, including Jesus Christ. The term is probably used as a title. The person bearing the title of עִמָּנוּ אֵל would live up to “God with us.”¹⁵² This reading is further buttressed by Isaiah 8:10. Here, עִמָּנוּ אֵל appears in a causal clause. The device of the nations would be thwarted, and their plan would not stand, because “God is with us.” As a title, עִמָּנוּ אֵל may be applied to another person.

In 8:8, the king of Assyria is said to sweep into Judah, and (like an eagle) its wings would fill the breadth of the land of Immanuel. Some have argued that the expression “your [Immanuel’s] land” indicates that Immanuel must be from a royal house. This is possible, but it is not necessarily so. The pronoun can also refer to a person who is “merely a native of a particular land.”¹⁵³ All that is to say, the expression is vague.

In 8:9, however, Isaiah begins to address, עַמִּים, “peoples.” The addressee appears to be not limited to the Assyrians. Isaiah’s tone is also changed; Isaiah looked toward a future hope. As Oswalt writes, “the tone shifts dramatically. . . . [Isaiah] comes with that penetrating vision which can see beyond near disaster and judgment to ultimate victory and hope.”¹⁵⁴ Hence, in 8:10, the significance of עִמָּנוּ אֵל is extended to situations

¹⁵¹ Rico and Gentry, *Mother of the Infant King*, 152.

¹⁵² Garrett, *Problem of the Old Testament*, 362–63.

¹⁵³ Chisholm, *Handbook on the Prophets*, 33. Chisholm offers these other references: Gen 12:1; 32:9; Jonah 1:8; 13:14.

¹⁵⁴ Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah*, 227–28.

beyond the historical circumstance of the Syro-Ephraimite crisis and the invasion of the Assyrians.

Probably the strongest indication that Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz has not exhausted the prophecy is that the prophecy invokes a theme that is immediately picked up in Isaiah 9: the miraculous birth of a son that brings deliverance for the people of God.¹⁵⁵ Isaiah 9:6–7 also speaks of a son that is born. This son takes a more active role than the son in Isaiah 7: “The government will be on his shoulders” (9:6a). He will fulfill the Davidic covenant: “Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David’s throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever” (9:7). He will be called “Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace” (9:6b). Titles such as “Might God” and “Everlasting Father” can be applied neither to Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz nor to any of Ahaz’s sons. Only Jesus Christ can fulfill this role.

Summary

A typological interpretation can best make sense of the prophecy of Isaiah 7:14. It can account for both the historical and literary context of the verse and the statement of Matthew 1:23. Both Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz and Jesus Christ fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah 7:14. Jesus Christ fulfilled the prophecy at a higher level. Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz was born of a young woman who was presumably a virgin at the time of the prophecy. Jesus Christ was born of a virgin. The birth of Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz was miraculous in that his birth was announced beforehand. The birth of Jesus Christ was miraculous in that not only was his birth predicted but he was also conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin.¹⁵⁶ The birth of Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz was a sign pointing to

¹⁵⁵ Garrett, *Problem of the Old Testament*, 363–65.

¹⁵⁶ Wolf’s contention that “those who heard the prophet would not have anticipated a miracle. Those who read Matthew cannot escape a miraculous birth” is an overstatement. Wolf, “Solution to Immanuel Prophecy in Isa 7:14–8:22,” 456. Likewise, Alexander maintains that the birth of Jesus Christ is

God's deliverance of Judah from the hand of the Syro-Ephraimite league. The deliverance was short-lived. The birth of Jesus Christ was not only a sign. Christ himself brought salvation to the nations (Matt 1:21; cf. Isa 11:1). The deliverance was eternal.

A typological reading does not require that all fulfillments fit all details of the prophecy. The prophecy can have more than one fulfillment. Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz is the historical fulfillment. Jesus Christ is the eschatological fulfillment. Jesus Christ does not need to fulfill the verses of Isaiah 7:15–25, just as Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz does not need to fulfill the verses of Isaiah 9:1–7 and Isaiah 11. Trying to make a single fulfillment to fit the prophecy will not produce a satisfying interpretation.¹⁵⁷ This is probably the main cause behind so many different interpretations.

Conclusion

Second Samuel 7:12–16 and Isaiah 7:14 are two examples of prophetic typology. Both have more than one fulfillment. Typological fulfillment does not require that all fulfillments fulfill the prophecies in the same way and in all details of the prophecy. Nevertheless, they all fulfill the type that is prophesied. The prophetic typology, therefore, has the commonality that all biblical typologies have. David Baker describes typology as such: “[Typology] is not interested in parallels of detail, but only in agreement of fundamental principles and structure.”¹⁵⁸ This agreement is the type in the prophecies. In 2 Samuel 7:12–16, the type is the Davidic king who is a temple builder and a son of God. In Isaiah 7:14, the type is the birth of a son that signifies God's

miraculous, but Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz is not. Joseph A. Alexander and John Eadie, *Commentary on the Prophecies of Isaiah* (Edinburgh: Andrew Elliot & James Thin, 1865), 1:170. However, as Graham maintains, the fact that Isaiah foreknows the birth of the child as well as the sex of the child is miraculous. Graham, “Isaiah's Part in Syro-Ephraimite Crisis,” 207; see also Garrett, *Problem of the Old Testament*, 359.

¹⁵⁷ Even those who hold a typological interpretation are affected by this tendency. For instance, Grogan contends that a son of Ahaz is the historical fulfillment and Jesus Christ is the eschatological fulfillment. Geoffrey W. Grogan, *Isaiah*, in *Expositor's Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, *Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986), 63–65.

¹⁵⁸ Baker, *Two Testaments, One Bible*, 180.

deliverance. The type is manifested multiple times in the course of human history. Frequently, at least one manifestation occurs in the near future from the time of the prophecy and at least one manifestation in the distant future.¹⁵⁹

Since typological fulfillments do not require all fulfillments to fulfill a prophecy in the same way and in all details of the prophecy, it is not surprising that there are often discrepancies between a prophecy and its initial fulfillment. The discrepancies do not mean that the prophecy has failed, nor does it exclude the initial fulfillment as a valid fulfillment. Rather, they signify that the prophecy has not been exhausted. Thus, they also point toward further fulfillment(s).

As a prophecy, Daniel 11 has its own distinctive characteristics. Nevertheless, it will be shown in the following chapters that the prophecy bears some essential similarities to the prophecies that are found in other Old Testament prophecies such as 2 Samuel 7:12–16 and Isaiah 7:14. These similarities are indications that Daniel 11 should also be read typologically.

¹⁵⁹ Although the typological interpretation proposed here involves two or multiple fulfillments, “double-fulfillment” or “multiple-fulfillment” are not used here. As Garrett points out, they do not explain why these multiple fulfillments are put together in the prophecy. Duane A. Garrett, “Type, Typology,” in *BEDBT* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1996), 785. David Jeremiah gives these reasons for “double fulfillment”: (1) the unchronological character of the Old Testament prophecy; (2) the limited perspective of the prophet; (3) the Christological orientation of the Scripture; and (4) the necessity of future assurance. David Jeremiah, “Principle of Double Fulfillment in Interpreting Prophecy,” *Grace Journal* 13 (1972): 19–23. But they do not really explain the “why.” The most fundamental reason is that all the fulfillments are the manifestations of the type being prophesied.

CHAPTER 4
A TYPOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION
OF DANIEL 11: PART 1

The following two chapters attempt to interpret the prophecy of Daniel 11. Each chapter begins with a verse-by-verse interpretation, followed by an analysis. This chapter compares the prophecy of Daniel with the “Akkadian prophecies.” It shows that while there are similarities between Daniel 11 and the Akkadian prophecies—which indicates that the author was familiar with the Akkadian literature—there are also significant differences, which sets Daniel 11 apart.

Verse-by-Verse Commentary

The following section is a verse-by-verse commentary on Daniel 11:2–20.

Daniel 11:2

“And now, I will tell you the truth: Look, three more kings are going to arise in Persia, and the fourth will be far richer than all. When he becomes powerful by his wealth, he will stir up everyone against the kingdom of Greece.” Although all scholars agree that Daniel 11:2b is about the Persian kings, there is no consensus on the identity of the kings mentioned in this verse. Several schemes have been proposed.

Darius (the Great), Artaxerxes (I?), Xerxes (I?), Darius (II or III?).

Hippolytus of Rome takes the three kings after Cyrus to be Darius (the Great), Artaxerxes (I?), and Xerxes.¹ Nevertheless, he offers no defense for the view. For instance, he does not explain why Cambyses is excluded from the list. It is also unclear to which Xerxes

¹ Hippolytus, *Commentary on Daniel* 4.41.4.

Hippolytus is referring. Xerxes I ruled before Artaxerxes I, and Xerxes II ruled after Artaxerxes I. Presumably, Xerxes I is meant since Xerxes II ruled for only forty-five days. Hippolytus understands Darius to be the fourth king because Darius, “after reigning and being glorious, became wealthy and rose against all the kingdoms of the Greeks.”² It is, however, also unclear to which Darius he is referring, whether Darius II or Darius III.

Darius the Mede, Cyrus, Ahasuerus, Darius. Seder Olam Rabbah (AD ca. 160) takes the three kings to be “Cyrus, Ahasuerus, and Darius who built the Temple.” The fourth—presumably, is also Darius—counting from Darius the Mede.³ Rashi (AD 1040–1105) quotes Seder Olam Rabbah in his commentary. He then adds, “In the book of Joseph Ben Gorion, however, it is written that Cyrus had a son who succeeded him before the reign of Ahasuerus, named Cambyses.”⁴ Nevertheless, he seems to follow Seder Olam Rabbah in the following, identifying the fourth king as Darius. According to Joseph ibn Yahya (AD 16th century), the four kings are Darius the Mede, Cyrus, Artaxerxes (also named) Ahasuerus, and Darius, the son of Esther.⁵ David Altschuler (AD 18th century) lists the same four kings as those in Seder Olam Rabbah. He identifies the fourth king Darius with the son of Ahasuerus.⁶ The rabbis appear to have been limited by their knowledge of Persian history in interpreting the verse.

Cyrus, Darius the Great, Artaxerxes I, Xerxes I. A. A. Bevan contends that the three kings after Cyrus are Darius the Great, Artaxerxes (I), and Xerxes (I). Xerxes is

² Hippolytus, *Commentary on Daniel* 4.41.5.

³ Seder Olam Rabbah, chap. 28.

⁴ Rashi and A. J. Rosenberg, *Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah: A New English Translation*, Judaica Books of the Hagiographa: The Holy Writings (New York: Judaica Press, 1991), 96.

⁵ Joseph Ibn Yahya, *Perush Chamesh Megillot U-Ketuvim* (Bologna, 1538), accessed February 21, 2022, https://www.sefaria.org/Joseph_ibn_Yahya_on_Daniel.11.2.

⁶ David Altschuler, *Metzudat David*, accessed February 21, 2022, https://www.sefaria.org/Metzudat_David_on_Daniel.11.2.

also the fourth king, counting Cyrus as the first. To him, the fact that more than four kings ruled in Persia is not a valid objection to this interpretation because the biblical author knew only these four names of the Persian kings⁷; neither is the fact that Artaxerxes reigned after Xerxes problematic because the order of the two kings is not explicitly stated in the Old Testament.⁸ He further notes that “the Darius mentioned in Neh. xii. 22 is a different person from the Darius mentioned elsewhere, may easily have escaped the notice of readers in the 2nd century B.C.”⁹ Bevan is followed by Marti and Charles, who state that the biblical author has inaccurate knowledge of Persian history.¹⁰

Artaxerxes I, Darius II, Artaxerxes II, and Artaxerxes III. Plöger

understands the four kings to be Artaxerxes I, Darius II, Artaxerxes II, and Artaxerxes III. He eliminates Darius the Great and Xerxes I from the list because they are “Median” kings.¹¹ He chooses the four Persian kings above because the first three have contacts with the Jews,¹² and Artaxerxes III, the fourth king, endeavored to restore Persian power and for a short time subdued Egypt.¹³

Cyrus, Xerxes I, Artaxerxes I, Darius III. Montgomery maintains that the

three Persian kings after Cyrus should be Xerxes (I), Artaxerxes (I), and Darius III

⁷ A. A. Bevan, *A Short Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1892), 171–72.

⁸ Bevan, *Short Commentary on Book of Daniel*, 172.

⁹ Bevan, *Short Commentary on Book of Daniel*, 172.

¹⁰ Karl Marti, *Das Buch Daniel* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1901), 77–78; R. H. Charles, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1929), 273.

¹¹ Otto Plöger, *Das Buch Daniel*, Kommentar zum Alten Testament 18 (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus Gerd Mohn, 1965), 157–58.

¹² Nehemiah served under Artaxerxes I. Darius II intervened between the Jewish community in Elephantine and its opponents. Plöger believes that the return led by Ezra happened during the reign of Artaxerxes III.

¹³ Plöger, *Das Buch Daniel*, 158.

Codomannus. Darius III is also the fourth king when Cyrus is included in the list.¹⁴ He appears to equate Darius the Mede in Daniel 5:31 [MT 6:1] with Darius the Great. Thus, he excludes him from the list because the book of Daniel treats Darius as a Median and not a Persian king.¹⁵ Accordingly, Cambyses, who comes before Darius the Great, is also excluded. Unfortunately, this interpretation is faulty. First, there is no evidence that the book of Daniel identifies Darius the Mede as Darius the Great. Second, since Cyrus is explicitly referred to as a Persian king (Dan 1:21; 10:1), there is no reason to regard his son Cambyses as a Median king.

Those who identify the fourth king with Darius III translate יעיר הכל את מלכות יון in different ways: Montgomery, “he shall arouse the whole, the Kingdom of Greece”; Di Lella, “he will stir up the whole kingdom of Greece”; and Collins, “he will stir up everything, even the kingdom of Greece.”¹⁶ All of them interpret it to mean that the wealth of the king aroused the greed of Alexander.¹⁷ This interpretation is indefensible. The Peshitta, the OG, and Theodotion appear to support the translations of Di Lella and Montgomery.¹⁸ The Peshitta reads, *ܢܝܘܟܘܠ ܡܠܟܘܬܗܘܢ ܕܗܘܢ* (*n'yr kwl mlkwhwn dywny*). However, it is vague; the meaning of “stirring up” still needs to be clarified. The

¹⁴ John Collins also takes the fourth king to be Darius III. John J. Collins, *Daniel: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 377.

¹⁵ James A. Montgomery, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, ICC (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1959), 423.

¹⁶ Collins’s insertion of “even” is difficult to justify. Di Lella emends the text to be “*yā'ir 'et-kol-malkūt yāwān*.” Montgomery takes “את מלכות יון” to be in apposition to “הכל.” Montgomery, *Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Daniel*, 423; Louis F. Hartman and Alexander A. Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel*, AB (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1978), 257; Collins, *Daniel*, 363. Lacocque is an exception. He translates the clause as “he will rouse everything against the kingdom of Greece.” André Lacocque, *The Book of Daniel* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1979), 250.

¹⁷ Montgomery, *Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Daniel*, 424; Hartman and Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel*, 288; Collins, *Daniel*, 377.

¹⁸ Syntactically, one may take “את מלכות יון” to be in apposition to “הכל.” However, the following noun standing in apposition to הכל does not occur elsewhere in the Old Testament. Mercer cites BDB (s.v. כל) for examples of such construction. Those, however, are examples of כל with a pronominal suffix following a noun and standing in apposition to it; these are not examples of a noun following כל and standing in apposition to it. Mark K. Mercer, “An Historical, Exegetical, and Theological Study of Daniel 11: 2b–12: 4” (ThD diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 1987), 109–10n21.

OG has ἐπαναστήσεται παντὶ βασιλείῃ Ἑλλήνων, and Theodotion ἐπαναστήσεται πάσαις βασιλείαις Ἑλλήνων. However, in the LXX, “ἐπανίστημι + a dative noun/pronoun” is frequently used to translate the Hebrew “קם + an object”, expressing the sense of “rising up *against* someone” (Deut 33:11; Judg 9:43; Ps 27:12; Job 19:19; 20:27; Isa 14:22). The “stirring up” occurs when the fourth king *becomes powerful* by his wealth, it is more likely that the Persian king, rather than the kingdom of Greece, is the assailant. This understanding is supported by Symmachus, which reads, διεγερεῖ πάντας πρὸς τὴν βασιλείαν τῆς τῶν Ἑλλήνων.¹⁹

Cyrus, Cambyses, Darius the Great, Xerxes. John Calvin’s list of four Persian kings begins with Cyrus, followed by Cambyses, Darius, and Xerxes. Calvin skips over Smerdis because he is an imposter and was king for only seven months.²⁰ S. R. Driver holds the same view. Though acknowledging that the fourth king could be the king that follows the former three kings, he is inclined to take the fourth as the last king of the three. By counting Cyrus as the first, the last of the three kings after Cyrus becomes the fourth. Gaumata (Pseudo-Smerdis) is excluded. Xerxes then becomes the fourth king.²¹

Non-literal four kings. A few scholars are open to other possibilities of interpretation; for instance, E. J. Young maintains that although four kings are probably intended, “it may be that the author wished merely to lay stress upon four historical epochs” after Cyrus.²² Nevertheless, Young does not explain the four historical epochs,

¹⁹ Aquila takes πᾶς to be the preposition “with”: “διεγερεῖ πάντας σὺν τοῖς τὴν βασιλευσί τῶν Ἑλλήνων.” Most commentators have followed Symmachus.

²⁰ John Calvin, *Daniel 7–12*, trans. Thomas Myers, *Calvin’s Commentaries* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996), 269–70. Robert Gurney holds the same view. He writes, “[Smerdis was] merely a short-lived imposter.” Robert J. M. Gurney, “A Note on Daniel 11:40–45,” *TSF Bulletin* 47 (1967): 10.

²¹ S. R. Driver, *The Book of Daniel*, Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1900), 163.

²² Edward J. Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans,

nor does he offer any support for this claim. Joyce Baldwin reasons that “prophecy usually highlights only certain significant features and passes over much that the historian would feel obliged to include.”²³ She further suggests that Daniel might have employed the “three . . . and a fourth” formula, also found in Proverbs 30:15, 18, 21, 29, as well as Amos 1:3, 6, etc. She then concludes that the author could be “deliberately vague in that case about the number of Persian kings to be expected.”²⁴ C. L. Seow also notes a possible connection between “three . . . and a fourth” style and the “numerical sayings” found elsewhere in the Old Testament as well as in the Canaanite and Aramaic inscriptions.²⁵ To him, it could also be that “a simplified oral history merely included the four prominent names, possibly the only four names of Persian kings known in the Bible, without any distinction made for the names that are shared by more than one king.”²⁶ As one who holds the Maccabean dating of the book, Seow concludes, “the generalization and imprecision are indicative of the distance between the historical setting of the story, its stage, and the actual historical context of the narrator, its provenance.”²⁷ John Goldingay writes, “the figure ‘four’ may need not to be pressed, nor the kings specifically identified; the phrase may denote the Achemenids as a whole.”²⁸ Last but not least,

1949), 232.

²³ Joyce G. Baldwin, *Daniel: An Introduction and Commentary*, TOTC, vol. 23 (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 1978), 206. Baldwin’s comment echoes that of Jerome, who writes, “The Spirit of prophecy was not concerned about preserving historical detail but in summarizing only the most important matters.” Jerome, *Jerome’s Commentary on Daniel*, trans. Gleason L. Archer (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1958), 119.

²⁴ Baldwin, *Daniel*, 206.

²⁵ C. L. Seow, *Daniel*, Westminster Bible Companion (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2003), 169–70.

²⁶ Seow, *Daniel*, 170.

²⁷ Seow, *Daniel*, 170.

²⁸ John Goldingay, *Daniel*, WBC, vol. 30 (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1989), 295.

Newsom asserts that “the reference to four Persian kings is simply the use of a round number.”²⁹

Cambyses, Pseudo-Smerdis, Darius, and Xerxes. Jerome is the first recorded person to propose a list of the four Persian kings as Cambyses, Smerdis, Darius, and Xerxes.³⁰ This interpretation seems to make the best sense of the prophecy for the following reasons. First, the prophecy dates to the third year of Cyrus (Dan 10:1), and **ווד** suggest that the three kings who will arise do not include Cyrus.

Second, whether the ruler between Cyrus and Darius is Smerdis, the brother of Cyrus, or Pseudo-Smerdis, the magus,³¹ one cannot simply exclude him from the king list. Usurpation and brief duration are not uncommon in ancient times. For example, out of the nineteen kings in Israel from 930–722 BC, about a third seized the throne by assassination. In the history of Persia, Xerxes II was king for only forty-five days because one of his half-brothers, Secydianus (an illegitimate child of Artaxerxes I), killed him. Secydianus ruled six months and fifteen days and was killed by his half-brother Ochus (Darius II). According to Jerome, Smerdis is married to Pantaptes, the daughter of Cambyses.³² Even if he is not related to Cambyses, since he ruled for seven months,³³ he should be counted.

²⁹ Carol A. Newsom, *Daniel: A Commentary*, OTL (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2014), 339.

³⁰ Jerome, *Commentary on Daniel*, 119. See also William Coit Stevens, *The Book of Daniel: A Composite Revelation of the Last Days of Israel's Subjugation to Gentile Powers*, rev. ed., Scripture Primers (London: Fleming H. Revell, 1918), 185; Rousas John Rushdoony, *Thy Kingdom Come: Studies in Daniel and Revelation* (Fairfax, VA: Thoburn Press, 1978), 71.

³¹ See chap. 2 for the discussion on the identity of the usurper.

³² Jerome, *Commentary on Daniel*, 119.

³³ For the duration of the reign of Smerdis, see Arno Poebel, “The Duration of the Reign of Smerdis, the Magian, and the Reigns of Nebuchadnezzar III and Nebuchadnezzar IV,” *AJSL* 56, no. 2 (1939): 121–31.

Third, it is uncertain whether the “three . . . and the fourth” expression in Daniel 11:2b is formulaic. Even if it is, it does not necessarily mean individual kings are not intended. Proverbs and Amos appear to employ the “N . . . N+1” formula in different ways. Amos states, “for three sins . . . , and for four,” but in the following, the oracles list neither three nor four sins. On the contrary, Proverbs always enumerates N+1 items (Prov 6:16; 30:15–33).³⁴ Since Daniel 11:2b gives a detailed description of the fourth king, its usage is closer to the expressions of Proverbs. On the other hand, the numerical saying formula suggests that the list is not limited to the enumerated items; it also suggests that the intensification and climax are reached at the last item.³⁵

Fourth, the description of the fourth king matches Xerxes I well. His father Darius the Great prepared to invade the mainland of Greece, but he died during the preparation, leaving the task to his son. Xerxes spent four years preparing for the campaign against Greece. Thus Herodotus writes of the expedition: “This was by far the greatest of all expeditions that we know of. . . . All these expeditions and whatever others have happened in addition could not together be compared with this single one. For what nation did Xerxes not lead from Asia against Hellas? What water did not fail when being drunk up, except only the greatest rivers?”³⁶

Daniel 11:3–4

“₃ And a mighty king will arise, and he will rule with great dominion and act as he pleases. ₄ But as soon as he arises, his kingdom will be broken up and divided to the four winds of heaven. It will not be for his descendants, neither will it be like his rule

³⁴ Duane A. Garrett, *Amos: A Handbook on the Hebrew Text*, Baylor Handbook on the Hebrew Bible (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2008), 24.

³⁵ Jacques Doukhan, *Daniel 11 Decoded: An Exegetical, Historical, and Theological Study* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2019), 77.

³⁶ Herodotus, *Histories* 7.20.2–21.1. See 7.60–99 for the people groups enlisted in the army of Xerxes.

which he has ruled, because his kingdom will be uprooted and belong to others besides these.” It is universally recognized that the mighty king in this verse is Alexander the Great. He became king in 336 BC. As a young king of twenty years old, he quickly secured his throne and then swept through the kingdom of Persia in about four years (334–330 BC). From 329–326 BC, he continued the campaigns in Bactria, Sogdiana, and India. He always fought at the front line and was victorious. His ambition to conquer the entire known world was only frustrated by his homesick army. Ironically, Alexander’s fall was quicker than his rise. He fell ill and died in 323 BC at the age of thirty-three.

Alexander left a half-witted brother Arrhidaeus and an unborn son (the future Alexander IV). They were declared as joint kings, but neither had real power. Olympias, Alexander’s mother, had Arrhidaeus executed in 317 BC. Cassander had Roxane and Alexander IV killed in 309 BC. Alexander’s kingdom was then divided among his commanders.

Some commentators take “the four winds of heaven” to refer to four of Alexander’s successors. For instance, James Boice maintains that the four are Antipater, Lysimachus, Ptolemy, and Seleucus.³⁷ Most, however, contend that they are Cassander (Greece and Macedonia), Lysimachus (Thrace and Asia Minor), Seleucus (Syria and Mesopotamia), and Ptolemy (Egypt, Palestine, and Phoenicia).³⁸ Gaston reasons that “it is only following the defeat of Antigonus at Ipsus (301) that the idea of a unified empire is abandoned and the fourfold division of the empire is formerly recognized. The four ruled over independent kingdoms and none laid claim to the empire of Alexander as Antigonus had done.”³⁹

³⁷ James Montgomery Boice, *Daniel: An Expository Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2003), 112.

³⁸ E.g., John C. Jeske, *Daniel*, People’s Bible Commentary (St. Louis: Concordia, 1992), 188–89; Rodney Stortz, *Daniel: The Triumph of God’s Kingdom*, Preaching the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2004), 194; William Nelson, *Daniel*, Understanding the Bible Commentary (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013), 272.

³⁹ Thomas E. Gaston, *Historical Issues in the Book of Daniel* (Oxford: TaanathShiloh, 2009),

This interpretation is not convincing. The political circumstance around this time was volatile. The most powerful men were but fleeting mortals. One could hardly find a commander who died of natural cause.⁴⁰ When Alexander died in 323 BC, Perdiccas became “Regent of the Empire.” However, Peithon and Seleucus murdered him in 321/320 BC. Then, Antipater became the regent. Nevertheless, he did not hold this position for long either; he passed away in 319 BC. Antipater bequeathed his office to Polyperchon. Against Boice, it is difficult to understand why Antipater is listed among the four.

Gaston’s view is more appealing than the others. However, the four kingdoms cannot fit the four directions literally in the context. With the four-fold division of Alexander’s kingdom after the battle of Ipsus, the best way one can make is to take Cassander as the king of the western kingdom, Lysimachus the northern, Ptolemy the southern, and Seleucus the eastern.⁴¹ However, according to the following verses of Daniel 11, Syria is the northern kingdom.⁴²

“The four winds of heaven” means the four directions (north, south, east, and west) and not a four-fold division of a political entity.⁴³ The phrase is an expression for “all directions” or “everywhere” (cf. Jer 49:36; Zech 2:6).⁴⁴ Daniel 11:4a probably simply means that Alexander’s kingdom will be divided up by those other than his descendants.

147.

⁴⁰ Antipater and Ptolemy I were the only two successors who died of natural causes. Peter Green, *The Hellenistic Age: A Short History* (New York: Modern Library, 2008), 39.

⁴¹ Jerome maintains that the four winds are four regions: south (Egypt) by Ptolemy the son of Lagos, west (Macedonia) by Arrhidaeus, Alexander’s half-brother, east (Syria and Babylon) by Seleucus Nicanor, and north (Asia Minor and Pontus and the other provinces in that area) by Antigonus. He reads “the others besides these” as “Perdiccas and Craterus and Lysimachus.” Jerome, *Commentary on Daniel*, 119–20.

⁴² Jerome notices the potential conflicts and explains that this four-fold division is *not* from the standpoint of Judea, but the later references to Syria and Egypt are from the standpoint of Judea. Jerome, *Commentary on Daniel*, 120.

⁴³ Hartman and Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel*, 288.

⁴⁴ See also René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS

Daniel 11:5

“The king of the South will become strong, along with one of his commanders. But⁴⁵ he will become stronger than him and will rule his kingdom with great dominion.”

Beginning with this verse, the scope of the prophecy narrows down to Syria and Egypt because the Jews are the focus of the prophecy (Dan 10:14). For the same reason, Persia and Alexander are mentioned. The Jews first belonged to the kingdom of Persia and then to that of Alexander. After Alexander’s empire was divided, Palestine became the disputed territory between Egypt and Syria.

The king of the South in this verse is Ptolemy I, and the commander is Seleucus (v. 5a). Through the partition of Babylon after the death of Alexander, Ptolemy was appointed satrap of Egypt. He intercepted Alexander’s body while it was on its way to Macedon and buried him in Egypt. In response, Perdikkas came to attack Ptolemy. However, Seleucus and others betrayed Perdikkas and murdered him. Afterward, a new settlement was reached at Triparadisus: Seleucus was appointed Satrap of Babylon. When Antigonus the One-Eyed attacked Babylon, Seleucus fled to Ptolemy and became “one of his commanders.” In 312 BC, when Ptolemy defeated Antigonus’s son Demetrius, Seleucus took the opportunity and regained Babylon. His territory was larger than that of Ptolemy (v. 5b).

Daniel 11:6

“After some years, they will become allies. The daughter of the king of the South will come to the king of the North to make an equitable agreement, but she will not

Handbook (New York: United Bible Societies, 1993), 282.

⁴⁵ See also Mercer, “Historical, Exegetical, and Theological Study of Daniel 11,” 116–17n43. The presence of Waw poses a challenge to the syntax. Most commentators and modern translations appear to omit it. The Hebrew Bible contains other cases where Waw exists between the subject and the verb. Ezek 47:11 (בצאתיו וגבאי ולא ירפאו) and Zech 9:5 (תרא אשקלון ותירא ועזה ותחיל מאד) have a similar structure to that of Dan 11:5. In other cases, the subject is usually immediately followed by a standard clause. E.g., Gen 44:9; Exod 9:21; 30:33, 38; Lev 12:2; 13:58; 15:11, 16, 17; 17:15; 22:6, 27; 23:29; Num 5:30; 9:10; 14:22; 19:11; 1 Sam 14:19; 2 Kgs 11:1; 1 Chr 13:9; 2 Chr 25:13.

retain her power. He and his power will not last. She will be betrayed, together with those who brought her, and he who fathered her, and he who supported her.” Although no indication of transition is given except for the implicit pass of the years, Ptolemy I Soter and Seleucus I Nicator of verse 5 are no longer in view. Antiochus I, the son and successor of Seleucus I, is also skipped over. The alliance between the two kings is the peace treaty made between Antiochus II Theos and Ptolemy II Philadelphus at the end of the second Syrian war (265–253 BC). Ptolemy II (“*the king of the South*”) gave his daughter Berenice to Antiochus II (“*the king of the North*”) as wife, on the condition that Antiochus II would divorce his wife Laodice, a measurement to ensure that Berenice’s son would be the next Seleucid king.

Ironically, this peace arrangement brought much bloodshed. A few years later, Antiochus II died in Ephesus (246 BC), where Laodice and her children were residing. Laodice immediately declared her son king (Seleucus II Callinicus). Berenice did likewise to her son Antiochus in Antioch. However, supporters of Laodice killed both Berenice and Antiochus. Justin records that Berenice “was surprised by treachery . . . and killed.”⁴⁶

Daniel 11:7–9

7 A branch from her roots will arise in her place, and he will come against the army and enter the stronghold of the king of the North; he will fight against them and be victorious. 8 He will also carry their gods with their metal images, with their precious vessels of silver and gold in captivity to Egypt. For years he will keep away from the king of the North. 9 Then he will come against the kingdom of the king of the South, but he will return to his own land.

In Egypt, Ptolemy II passed away and was succeeded by his son Ptolemy III Euergetes. To support his sister Berenice, Ptolemy III (“*a branch from her roots*”) led an army to Antioch, but it was too late. Ptolemy III concealed the death of Berenice and

⁴⁶ Justin, *Epitome* 27.1.7.

gained time to build up an army, with which he then launched an expedition against Syria; he marched as far as the Euphrates River (v. 7).⁴⁷ An inscription recounts that Ptolemy III “sought out all the sacred objects removed from Egypt by the Persians” and “brought them back to Egypt together with the rest of the treasure from the provinces.”⁴⁸ According to Jerome’s source, Ptolemy III took 4,000 talents of silver and 2,500 vessels and images of the gods (v. 8a).⁴⁹ Ptolemy III could have carried his victories further. However, due to political unrest in his homeland, he had to return to Egypt (v. 8b).⁵⁰

While Ptolemy was occupied with a domestic disturbance, Seleucus II recovered most of the lost territories. Eusebius mentions that he marched toward Damascus and forced the Ptolemaic force to give up the siege of the city (242 BC).⁵¹ He waged war against Ptolemy but was defeated and fled back to Antioch (v. 9).⁵²

Daniel 11:10–12

10 His sons will prepare for war and gather a great army. It will keep coming and sweep through. It will again wage war as far as his fortress. 11 The king of the South will be enraged. He will go out and fight with the king of the North. He will raise a large army, but the army will be given into his hand. 12 When the army is carried away, his heart will be exalted. He will cause tens of thousands to fall, but he will not prevail.

Daniel 11:10 refers to the two sons of Seleucus II, who died unexpectedly in 225 BC. Seleucus III Ceraunus assumed the throne. He never campaigned in Syria. His

⁴⁷ John D. Grainger, *The Syrian Wars, History and Archaeology of Classical Antiquity* 320 (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 160.

⁴⁸ M. M. Austin, *The Hellenistic World from Alexander to the Roman Conquest: A Selection of Ancient Sources in Translation*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 268 [p. 466].

⁴⁹ Jerome, *Commentary on Daniel*, 123. The Canopus Decree (238 BC) also praises Ptolemy III, who “on a campaign abroad brought back to Egypt the sacred statues that had been taken out of the country by the Persians and restored them to the temples from which they had initially been taken.” Austin, *Hellenistic World from Alexander to Roman Conquest*, 271 [p. 471]. Driver notes that it was customary in the ancient Near East for a conqueror to carry off the gods of a conquered nation. Driver, *The Book of Daniel*, 168.

⁵⁰ Justin, *Epitome* 27.1.9.

⁵¹ Eusebius, *Chronicle* 1.251.

⁵² Justin, *Epitome* 27.2.4–5.

attention was directed to Asia Minor, against his maternal uncle Attalus. The campaign was unsuccessful, and he was murdered by his own officials (223 BC).⁵³

Ptolemy III was not directly involved in Seleucus III's campaign. Seleucus first sent his uncle Andromachus against Attalus. Andromachus was captured and delivered to Ptolemy III in Alexandria.⁵⁴ Grainger hypothesizes that it was probably Attalus's attempt to gain Ptolemaic support or involve Ptolemy in the affairs.⁵⁵ Therefore, if Daniel 11:10 is taken to mean that the two sons of Seleucus II waged war against Ptolemy III, it can hardly make the case. Seleucus III sent his younger brother Antiochus III to Babylon before moving to Asia Minor.⁵⁶ Until his murder, Seleucus III never returned to Syria. When he died, Antiochus III succeeded him as king of Syria.

In Egypt, Ptolemy III fell ill and died in 222/221 BC. When the news reached Syria, Antiochus III invaded Coele Syria, initiating the fourth Syrian war (221–217). His initial attempt was unsuccessful; Theodotus, the governor of Coele Syria, effectively resisted the assault.⁵⁷ Antiochus temporarily abandoned the campaign and motioned to the east to deal with the revolt of Molon, the governor of Media, and his brother Alexander, the governor of Persia. In 219 BC, he returned to Syria and resumed the attack against Ptolemy. Antiochus III first recovered Seleucia-in-Pieria and then took Coele Syria, Ptolemais in Phoenicia, as well as Tyre.

The king of the South in Daniel 11:11 is now Ptolemy IV Philopator. In reaction to Antiochus III's successful military operation in Palestine, Ptolemy marched

⁵³ Polybius, *Histories* 4.48.7–8.

⁵⁴ Grainger, *The Syrian Wars*, 181. Cf. Polybius, *Histories* 4.51.1–5.

⁵⁵ Grainger, *The Syrian Wars*, 181.

⁵⁶ Grainger notes, "It is possible to interpret the history of the Seleukid Kingdom as a multiple monarchy, with one king in the west and one in the east, and where rule by a single king was the exception." Grainger, *The Syrian Wars*, 181. In this sense, one might arguably treat the two sons of Seleucus II as one unit.

⁵⁷ Polybius, *Histories* 5.40.2.

from Alexander with 70,000 soldiers, 5,000 horses, and 73 elephants and came to Raphia near Gaza (217 BC).⁵⁸ Antiochus also advanced toward Ptolemy, with 62,000 soldiers, 6,000 horses, and 102 elephants.⁵⁹ Antiochus was decisively checked. About 10,000 footmen and more than 300 horsemen were killed; more than 4,000 were taken prisoners.⁶⁰ His army was thus “given into his [the king of the South] hands.”

This unexpected victory brought Ptolemy great honor. Polybius comments, “There was no extravagance of adulation to which they did not proceed, honoring Ptolemy with crowns, sacrifices, altars dedicated to him and every distinction of the kind.”⁶¹ After the battle, Antiochus returned to Antioch and immediately sent ambassadors to negotiate for a peace treaty. However, Ptolemy IV did not take advantage of the victory to pursue further; he was content with the regaining of Coele Syria and accepted the terms of peace.

Daniel 11:13

“The king of the North will again raise an army larger than the first. And at the end of times, he will surely come with a great army and abundant supplies.” After the peace treaty with Ptolemy IV, Antiochus III turned to other directions. He dealt with Achaeus in Asia Minor (216–213 BC) and then subdued Armenia, Parthia, and Bactria (212–205 BC). The death of Ptolemy IV (204 BC) in Egypt was followed by a long period of instability. The new king, Ptolemy V Epiphanes, was merely a six-year-old

⁵⁸ Polybius (*Histories* 5.80.3) notes that Raphia is “the first city of Coele-Syria on the Egyptian side after Rhinocolura.”

⁵⁹ Polybius, *Histories* 5.79.13. In Antiochus’s time, the usual army size for a campaign was about 30,000 to 35,000 men. Grainger, *The Syrian Wars*, 207.

⁶⁰ Polybius, *Histories* 5.86.5.

⁶¹ Polybius, *Histories* 5.86.11.

child. Antiochus III did not waste this opportunity. He returned to Coele Syria and initiated the fifth Syrian war (202–195 BC).⁶²

Antiochus III first captured Damascus to secure his communications back to Syria.⁶³ He then marched directly to Gaza. Polybius commends the residents of Gaza for their courage to stand against the Persian invasion, first Alexander’s attack, and again with the Seleucid’s siege.⁶⁴ However, he does not mention whether Gaza fell into the hand of Antiochus III or not. Bar-Kochva assumes the success of Gaza in the defense,⁶⁵ but Grainger thinks the city did fall to Antiochus.⁶⁶

The size of Antiochus’s army at this time is not documented. Nevertheless, it is not difficult to deduce that he must have a sizable force during the fifth Syrian war. He had very successful campaigns in the past decade. He pillaged the temple of Aene in Media and produced nearly 4,000 talents of coins.⁶⁷ He procured more elephants from Bactria and India; the number of war elephants amounted to 150, larger than what he had at the battle of Raphia.⁶⁸ The decisive battle of the fifth Syrian war was fought at Panium, where the Ptolemaic army led by Scopas met the Seleucids and was defeated. It is estimated that the battle of Panium was “on a scale similar to that of Raphia and Magnesia.”⁶⁹

⁶² Unfortunately, there are not many extant witnesses in ancient writings about this war. Bevan notes, “Whilst we have comparatively full information as to the campaigns of 219–217, we are left almost entirely in the dark as to the campaigns which really did lead to the transference of Coele-Syria from Ptolemy to the Seleucid.” Edwyn R. Bevan, *The House of Seleucus* (London: E. Arnold, 1902), 2:36.

⁶³ Grainger, *The Syrian Wars*, 247–49.

⁶⁴ Polybius, *Histories* 16.22a.

⁶⁵ Bezalel Bar-Kochva, *The Seleucid Army: Organization and Tactics in the Great Campaigns*, Cambridge Classical Studies (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 146.

⁶⁶ Grainger, *The Syrian Wars*, 212, 250.

⁶⁷ Polybius, *Histories* 10.27.12–13.

⁶⁸ Polybius, *Histories* 11.10–12.

⁶⁹ Bar-Kochva, *The Seleucid Army*, 153.

Daniel 11:14

“In those times, many will rise against the king of the South. The lawless ones among your people will lift themselves up to confirm the vision, but they will fail.” Egypt during the fifth Syrian war was in a dire situation. As mentioned above, Ptolemy V Epiphanes was crowned king at the age of six (204 BC). Sosibius and Agathocles murdered the other royal members who might be able to influence the boy king. Furthermore, they forged a will of Ptolemy IV to set themselves as guardians of Ptolemy V.⁷⁰ In Thebes, south of Egypt, a rival pharaoh named Herwennefer had been ruling since 206 BC. After him, Ankhwennefer ruled from 200 until 186 BC.⁷¹ Philip V of Macedon captured the Ptolemaic possessions in Thrace, Asia Minor, and the Aegean islands.⁷²

It is unclear to what vision the anarthrous חזון in verse 14b refers. Does it mean that the lawless men claim to have visionary support,⁷³ or that the deeds of the lawless men fulfill a specific vision?⁷⁴ The context suggests that the latter is more probable; these lawless men are also among the “many” in verse 14a. If so, חזון probably refers to the very vision that Daniel was seeing (i.e., the prophecy of Dan 11).⁷⁵ As part of Coele Syria, Judea was allocated to Seleucus I after the battle of Ipsus (301 BC). However, Ptolemy I occupied it and refused to hand it over to Seleucus I. During the fourth Syrian war, Antiochus III temporarily conquered Coele Syria. At the battle of Raphia (217 BC),

⁷⁰ Polybius, *Histories* 15.25.1–5.

⁷¹ Günther Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, trans. Tina Saavedra (New York: Routledge, 2001), 155.

⁷² Bevan, *The House of Seleucus*, 2:32.

⁷³ Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel*, 239; Hartman and Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel*, 292; Collins, *Daniel*, 380; Péter-Contesse and Ellington, *Handbook on Book of Daniel*, 294–95; Paul R. House, *Daniel: An Introduction and Commentary*, TOTC, vol. 23 (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2018), 173.

⁷⁴ Mercer, “Historical, Exegetical, and Theological Study of Daniel 11,” 135n116.

⁷⁵ See also Gleason L. Archer Jr., *Daniel*, in *Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, *Daniel and the Minor Prophets*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1985), 132; Stephen R. Miller, *Daniel*, NAC, vol. 18 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1994), 295. Jerome believes that the vision refers to the prophecy of Isa 19:19. Onias fled to Egypt and built a temple there for the Jews. Jerome, *Commentary on Daniel*, 125–26. However, the Onias incident occurred during the time of Antiochus IV, and no evidence indicates that “חזון” in this verse refers to Isa 19:19.

Ptolemy IV took it back. Antiochus III then again took control of most of the region during the fifth Syrian war. Naturally, the citizens were divided into pro-Seleucid and pro-Ptolemaic factions.⁷⁶ The pro-Seleucid partisans believed they would thrive under the Seleucid regime, but the Egyptian army led by Scopas again recaptured Jerusalem.⁷⁷

Daniel 11:15

“Then the king of the North will come and throw up siegeworks and will capture a fortified city. The forces of the South will not stand, not even his choice troop. There will be no strength to resist.” Most commentators take this verse as a reference to the siege of Sidon.⁷⁸ After the battle of Panium, Scopas retreated to Sidon. Antiochus III laid siege against Sidon and forced Scopas to surrender.⁷⁹

Daniel 11:16

“The one who comes against him will act as he pleases, and no one will be able to stand before him. He will stand in the Beautiful Land, and destruction will be in his hand.” This verse continues to refer to Antiochus III. At this point, he was at the height of his career. “כרצונו + עשה” was used for Alexander (Dan 11:3), and it will appear again in Daniel 11:36 to describe another figure. As a conqueror, Antiochus III was not as successful as Alexander. Nevertheless, the two do bear similarities. Thus, Grainger says of Antiochus III: “Antiochus was a warrior; there is scarcely a year during his reign when

⁷⁶ Jerome, *Commentary on Daniel*, 125.

⁷⁷ Josephus, *Ant.* 12.131–32; cf. Polybius, *Histories* 16.39.1. See also Archer, *Daniel*, 132.

⁷⁸ Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel*, 239; Seow, *Daniel*, 174; Hartman and Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel*, 292.

⁷⁹ E.g., Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel*, 239; Seow, *Daniel*, 174; Hartman and Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel*, 292; Archer, *Daniel*, 132; Miller, *Daniel*, 295–96; Collins, *Daniel*, 380; Nelson, *Daniel*, 276. Keil and Delitzsch, however, contend that the anarthrous עיר refers collectively to “the fortresses of the kingdom of the south generally.” Carl F. Keil and Franz Delitzsch, *Daniel*, trans. M. G. Easton, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, vol. 9 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2011), 787.

he was not on campaign.”⁸⁰ Though to a lesser extent than Alexander, Antiochus III had successful campaigns in the northwest (Asia Minor), north (Armenia), east (Parthia and Bactria), and south (Coele Syria)—all these territories were conquered by Alexander. Furthermore, he was the first to win the title of “the Great” after Alexander.

It is unanimously recognized that ארץ הצבי refers to the land of Israel (cf. Dan 8:9).⁸¹ Antiochus III did come to Jerusalem. The phrase וכלה בידו has been variously understood. Di Lella emends וכלה of the MT to read *w^ekullāh*, thus, he translates the phrase as “and all of it will be in his power” (cf. NRSV).⁸² However, this emendation has no support from any ancient texts,⁸³ neither is it necessary.

Ewald appears to have taken כלה adverbially and translates the phrase as “and it will be entirely in his hand” (cf. YNG).⁸⁴ The adverbial usage is attested in Exodus 11:1. This usage, however, is not attested in verbless clauses.⁸⁵ כלה basically means “finishing,” “completion,” etc., mostly connoting “destruction.”⁸⁶ However, no records show that Antiochus III devastated the Holy Land. On the contrary, Josephus records that Antiochus III commended the Jews for assisting him during the campaign against Egypt; he even rewarded them.⁸⁷ This phrase does not necessitate that Antiochus III would bring

⁸⁰ Grainger, *The Syrian Wars*, 226.

⁸¹ Montgomery notes that the phrase is based upon Jer 3:19, ארץ חמדה נחלת צבי צבאות גוים (“a pleasant land, the most beautiful of the nations”) as well as Ezek 20:6, 15 עבי היא לכל הארצות (“it is the most beautiful of all lands”). Montgomery, *Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Daniel*, 439.

⁸² Hartman and Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel*, 258; see also Collins, *Daniel*, 381; Seow, *Daniel*, 164.

⁸³ One may arguably take the OG πάντα as support. However, the presence of the verb “ἐπιτελεσθήσεται” is against such understanding.

⁸⁴ “und es fällt ganz in seine hand.” Heinrich Ewald, “Daniel,” in *Die Propheten des Alten Bundes*, 2nd ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1868), 445. See also H. C. Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1969), 489.

⁸⁵ Mercer, “Historical, Exegetical, and Theological Study of Daniel 11,” 139n135.

⁸⁶ Keil and Delitzsch, *Daniel*, 787.

⁸⁷ Josephus, *Ant.* 12.134–153.

destruction to Judea; as noted by several commentators, it probably means Antiochus III would have control of the land and would have the power to destroy it.⁸⁸ Although the expression probably does not indicate the destruction of the land, it is, however, portentous.

Daniel 11:17

“He will set his face (i.e., is determined) to come with the power of whole kingdom and will make terms with him. He will give him the daughter of women⁸⁹ in order to destroy it. But it will not stand; it will not be for him (i.e. to his advantage).”

This verse is ambiguous. לבוא בתקף כל מלכותו may be taken in various ways. Mercer lists three possibilities⁹⁰: (1) “to come with the strength of his [Antiochus III’s] whole kingdom”; (2) “to come against the strength of his [Ptolemy V’s] whole kingdom”; or (3) “to enter with strength his [Ptolemy V’s] whole kingdom.” The issue is further complicated because of the third, feminine, singular suffix in להשחיתה. Most translations choose the first option and take the pronominal suffix to refer to Ptolemy V’s kingdom (e.g., ESV, NIV, CSB, NASB, NRSV).⁹¹ John Collins takes the pronominal suffix to be third, masculine, singular, basing the emendation on 4QDan^c and Papyrus 967.⁹² However, the word is badly corrupted after the letter *h* in 4QDan^c, and all other ancient witnesses overwhelmingly support the feminine, singular reading. Some take it to refer to

⁸⁸ E.g., Péter-Contesse and Ellington, *Handbook on Book of Daniel*, 295; Archer, *Daniel*, 132; Miller, *Daniel*, 296; Tremper Longman III, *Daniel*, NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999), 253; Mercer, “Historical, Exegetical, and Theological Study of Daniel 11,” 139n135.

⁸⁹ בת הנשים does not occur elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible. Dan 11:6 explicitly uses בת מלך to refer to the king’s daughter. Young notes that the phrase here “gives somewhat of a superlative force, i.e. to indicate her youth or possibly beauty.” Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel*, 240. Seow surmises that the phrase is probably an idiomatic expression for “an exceptional woman.” Seow, *Daniel*, 174.

⁹⁰ Mercer, “Historical, Exegetical, and Theological Study of Daniel 11,” 141n137.

⁹¹ Also Seow, *Daniel*, 164; Goldingay, *Daniel*, 273; Longman, *Daniel*, 253; Miller, *Daniel*, 293.

⁹² Collins, *Daniel*, 365.

בת הנשים.⁹³ However, as other commentators have pointed out, it does not make much sense.⁹⁴ Contextually speaking, it is best to take it as referring to the kingdom of the South; but this reading will require an antecedent to the pronominal suffix. For this reason, Mercer opts for the third option above for לבוא בתקף כל מלכותו.⁹⁵ Nevertheless, the majority view is not necessarily wrong; as Driver puts it, the pronominal suffix could *by sense* refer to Egypt.⁹⁶

This verse probably refers to the peace treaty between Antiochus III and Ptolemy V. As part of the treaty, Antiochus III gave his daughter Cleopatra to Ptolemy V as wife. Presumably, he intended to exert influence over Ptolemy. The plan, however, would not work out. Cleopatra turned out to be more faithful to her husband than to her father.⁹⁷

Daniel 11:18

“He will set his face toward the coastlands and will take many. But a commander will put a stop to his insolence and will turn his insolence back on him.” This verse appears to refer to Antiochus III’s campaign against the islands in the Aegean area.⁹⁸ The campaign began in 197 BC,⁹⁹ earlier than the peace negotiation with Egypt.

⁹³ E.g., Keil and Delitzsch, *Daniel*, 788; Archer, *Daniel*, 132; John Phillips, *Exploring the Book of Daniel: An Expository Commentary*, John Phillips Commentary (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2004), 199.

⁹⁴ Driver, *The Book of Daniel*, 174; Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel*, 240. Rashi takes the “daughter of women” as the nation of Israel, citing Song 1:8 as support. He takes the king in this verse to be Antiochus IV, who sought to destroy the nation of Israel. “*It will not be for him*” then refers to the independence of the Jews achieved under the leadership of Mattathias. Rashi and Rosenberg, *Daniel, Ezra and Nehemiah*, 103.

⁹⁵ Mercer, “Historical, Exegetical, and Theological Study of Daniel 11,” 141n137.

⁹⁶ Driver, *The Book of Daniel*, 174; Nelson, *Daniel*, 104.

⁹⁷ Jerome, *Commentary on Daniel*, 127.

⁹⁸ Livy, *The History of Rome* 33.20.4; Jerome, *Commentary on Daniel*, 127.

⁹⁹ John D. Grainger, *The Roman War of Antiochos the Great*, Mnemosyne Supplements 239 (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 36.

Therefore, verse 18a does not chronologically follow verse 17. The negotiation took place in Lysimachia of Thrace. Antiochus III was there to restore the city. Decades ago, Seleucus I was murdered by Ptolemy Keraunus near the city (281 BC). Therefore, the city's restoration was a symbolic act that Antiochus III had recovered what used to belong to the founder of the Seleucid dynasty.

Antiochus III continued his campaign into Greece. However, his military success alarmed the Romans, and the Senate declared war on him in 192 BC.¹⁰⁰ At the Battle of Magnesia (190 BC), Antiochus was decisively defeated. The commander in verse 18b probably refers to Lucius Cornelius Scipio, who was the supreme commander of the Roman army.¹⁰¹

Daniel 11:19

“Then he will turn his face to the fortresses of his country, but he will stumble, fall, and will not be found.” This verse refers to the end of Antiochus III. After the Battle of Magnesia, the Treaty of Apamea was ratified. Antiochus was demanded to relinquish not only Greece but also Asia Minor. Antiochus III had to pay for the expenses of the war as well—15,000 Euboean talents, of which 500 were paid immediately, 2,500 were delivered at the confirmation of the peace treaty, and 1,000 were paid annually for the next twelve years. His younger son Antiochus was sent to Rome as a hostage.¹⁰² As a ramification of the defeat, two governors in Armenia assumed independence. Bactria was also expanding its territory.¹⁰³ Antiochus led an army to the east of his kingdom. It was

¹⁰⁰ Livy, *The History of Rome* 36.1.4–36.2.2. Grainger, *Roman War of Antiochos the Great*, 209.

¹⁰¹ Driver, *The Book of Daniel*, 175; Miller, *Daniel*, 296; Collins, *Daniel*, 381; Longman, *Daniel*, 262; Seow, *Daniel*, 175; Hartman and Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel*, 293.

¹⁰² Livy, *The History of Rome* 37.45.14.

¹⁰³ John D. Grainger, *The Seleukid Empire of Antiochus III (223–187 BC)*, chap. 11, Kindle.

reported to him that the temple of Bel at Elymais had amassed a large amount of silver and gold. He attempted to pillage the temple but was unexpectedly killed.

Daniel 11:20

“And there will arise in his place one who will cause an oppressor to pass through [his kingdom] for royal splendor, but in a few days, he will be broken, neither in anger nor in battle.” The first half of the verse is enigmatic, primarily due to the four words מלכות הדר נוגש מעביר. Zimmermann comments, “Whatever one may make of the words at the end of the verse, the four words מלכות הדר נוגש מעביר simply do not make sense.”¹⁰⁴ Ginsberg regards the phrase “practically meaningless,”¹⁰⁵ and Di Lella sees it as “sheer gibberish.”¹⁰⁶ Ancient translators seem to have struggled with these words as well. For instance, the OG reads, “and a royal plant will arise from his root for rising up, a man striking the honor of the king.”¹⁰⁷ Theodotion is slightly different: “and there shall arise out of his root one that shall cause a plant of the kingdom to pass over his place, earning kingly glory.”¹⁰⁸ The Vulgate differs from the Greek and Hebrew texts: “and there shall stand up in his place one most vile, and unworthy of kingly honor.”¹⁰⁹ It seems impossible to reconcile the MT with the other ancient versions.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁴ Frank Zimmermann, “The Aramaic Origin of Daniel 8–12,” *JBL* 57, no. 3 (1938): 255.

¹⁰⁵ Harold Louis Ginsberg, *Studies in Daniel*, Texts and Studies of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America 14 (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1948), 42.

¹⁰⁶ Hartman and Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel*, 268.

¹⁰⁷ καὶ ἀναστήσεται ἐκ τῆς ρίζης αὐτοῦ φυτὸν βασιλείας εἰς ἀνάστασιν, ἀνὴρ τύπτων δόξαν βασιλέως.

¹⁰⁸ καὶ ἀναστήσεται ἐκ τῆς ρίζης αὐτοῦ φυτὸν βασιλείας ἐπὶ τὴν ἐτοιμασίαν αὐτοῦ παραβιβάζων πράσπων δόξαν βασιλείας.

¹⁰⁹ *et stabit in loco eius vilissimus et indignus decore regio.*

¹¹⁰ See also J. E. H. Thomson and W. F. Adeney, *Daniel*, Pulpit Commentary (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1909), 313.

The Peshitta renders, “and there shall arise in his place one who causes power and glory of kingdoms to pass away.”¹¹¹ It is close to the MT but still differs at several places: (1) נגשׁ in the MT is substituted by *šwltn* in the Peshitta; (2) the conjunctive *waw* is added to *hdr* in the Peshitta; and (3) מלכות in the MT is substituted by *mlkwn* in the Peshitta. Zimmermann proposes that the prophecy was originally written in Aramaic. The original text for the four words was מהעדה שלטן יקר מלכו (cf. Dan 7:14). The translator misunderstood the word שלטן as “exactor, ruler” instead of “dominion, sovereignty.” The translation for the revised text is then: “one who will cause sovereignty and royal majesty to pass away.”¹¹² He is followed by Ginsberg, who translates the phrase as “one deprived of dominion, glory, and sovereignty,”¹¹³ and Di Lella, who renders it as “one suffering a loss of dominion, glory, and sovereignty.”¹¹⁴ Their emendation, therefore, seems to have support from the Peshitta.

Nevertheless, one does not have to dismiss the Hebrew text too quickly. Zechariah 9:8ba has a very similar syntax to that of Daniel 11:20a: ולא יעבר עליהם עוד נגשׁ (“and no oppressor will pass over them anymore”). Zechariah 9:8 at least illustrates that the combination of עבר and נגשׁ in a Hebrew clause is neither “meaningless” nor “gibberish.”¹¹⁵ Moreover, although נגשׁ can mean “extracting” of taxes (2 Kgs 23:35), semantically, it is not limited to it. The root connotes “the exertion of cruel and dehumanizing pressure on another person by forced labor, tribute, or repayment of debt.”¹¹⁶ When used as a participle, its meaning is certainly broader than tax-collector.

¹¹¹ אַחַרְיָאן בְּלִי מַלְכֻתָּא דְּמַלְכֻתָּא דְּמַלְכֻתָּא דְּמַלְכֻתָּא דְּמַלְכֻתָּא.

¹¹² Zimmermann, “Aramaic Origin of Daniel 8–12,” 266.

¹¹³ Ginsberg, *Studies in Daniel*, 42.

¹¹⁴ Hartman and Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel*, 268.

¹¹⁵ Goldingay maintains that Seleucus IV’s sending of Heliodorus is an “anti-fulfillment” of Zech 9:9. Goldingay, *Daniel*, 298–99.

¹¹⁶ I. Swart and Philip J. Nel, *NIDOTTE*, ed. Willem A. VanGemeren (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997), s.v. “נָגַשׁ,” Accordance Bible Software.

As for מלכות, it has been taken to refer to Judea or Jerusalem.¹¹⁷ With this understanding, verse 20a then refers specifically to the event that Seleucus IV sent the prime minister Heliodorus to seize the temple treasure in Jerusalem (2 Macc 3). However, as Keil and Delitzsch point out, מלכות is not synonymous with ארץ הצבי (v. 16); it is closer in meaning to הוד מלכות (v. 21) and means *the glory of the kingdom*.¹¹⁸ Nevertheless, the verse probably does not mean that “the glory of the kingdom was brought down by נגש.”¹¹⁹ This translation would require the reading of מעביר נגש (i.e., נגש as the subject of מעביר) instead of מעביר נוגש (i.e., מעביר as the subject of נוגש), and Seleucus would be the נוגש, as Bevan has suggested.¹²⁰ The problem is that there is no textual basis for the emendation, neither is there a need to emend the text. מלכות can function adverbially as accusative of purpose (cf. ESV, CSB, NRSV, and NIV).¹²¹ Though not definitive, by using a participle (מעביר) instead of a finite verb, the prophecy may not be predicting about a *specific* event at all. This reading also aligns well with the use of נגש whose meaning is not limited to “text collector.” Verse 20a then indicates that Seleucus IV was exploiting his kingdom for his own pleasure.¹²²

¹¹⁷ Hitzig takes it to be Judea. Zöckler takes the phrase to refer to Jerusalem. Plöger understands it to be Palestine or Judah. Ferdinand Hitzig, *Das Buch Daniel* (Leipzig: Weidmann, 1850), 201; Otto Zöckler, *The Book of the Prophet Daniel: Theologically and Homiletically Expounded*, trans. James Strong (New York: C. Scribner’s Sons, 1899), 246; Marti, *Das Buch Daniel*, 82; Plöger, *Das Buch Daniel*, 156. The editors of the NASB hold the same view. The NASB translates the verse as: “Then in his place one will arise who will send an oppressor through the Jewel of his kingdom.” In the footnote, the editors comment that “Jewel” is “probably Jerusalem and its temple.”

¹¹⁸ Keil and Delitzsch, *Daniel*, 789–90.

¹¹⁹ Keil and Delitzsch, *Daniel*, 790.

¹²⁰ Bevan, *Short Commentary on Book of Daniel*, 185–86.

¹²¹ Although this usage is rare, it does exist. See Russell T. Fuller and Kyoungwon Choi, *Invitation to Biblical Hebrew Syntax: An Intermediate Grammar* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 2017), §13qq.

¹²² Benjamin E. Scolnic, “Heliodorus and the Assassination of Seleucus IV According to Dan 11:20 and 2 Macc 3,” *JAJ* 7, no. 3 (2017): 354–62. The indemnity to Rome was not as unbearable as it was often thought. Georges Le Rider, “Les ressources financières de Séleucos IV (187–175) et le paiement de l’indemnité aux Romains,” *Cahiers du Centre Gustave Glotz* 4, no. 1 (1993): 23–24. See also Arthur Houghton, Catharine C. Lorber, and Oliver D. Hoover, *Seleucid Coins: A Comprehensive Catalogue. Part 2, Seleucus IV through Antiochus XIII* (New York: American Numismatic Society, 2008), 1.

Verse 20b states that the king will be broken “*in a few days.*” Many commentators have noted that the twelve years of Seleucus IV’s reign is certainly not “a few days.” The phrase **בִּימִים אֶחָדִים** has been taken in a few ways: (1) Some reason that compared with his father Antiochus III, a reign of twelve years is considered a short period.¹²³ This reading is unlikely. First, there is no sign of comparison in the text. Second, although the reign of Seleucus is only a third of that of his father, twelve years is not short. He reigned much longer than his uncle Seleucus III and longer than his successor Antiochus IV. (2) It refers to the time between the murder of Seleucus IV and the mission of Heliodorus to Jerusalem,¹²⁴ or the time between the inception of the plot to its execution,¹²⁵ or either.¹²⁶ This reading assumes that the prophecy is predicting Heliodorus’s trip to Jerusalem. However, as has been argued above, verse 20a is probably not limited to this incident. (3) The prophecy means that Seleucus IV will meet a sudden and unexpected death.¹²⁷ As has been pointed out, dying “not in the heat of battle, in secret, at the hand of a trusted courtier,” was regarded as ignominious in ancient Near Eastern culture.¹²⁸ Perhaps equally, if not more, important is that the king’s death is put in a passive mode (see also v. 19), “indicating that a higher than he has power over him.”¹²⁹

¹²³ E.g., Montgomery, *Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Daniel*, 445; Hartman and Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel*, 293; Jeske, *Daniel*, 204–5; Stortz, *Daniel*, 198.

¹²⁴ E.g., Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel*, 240; Seow, *Daniel*, 175.

¹²⁵ E.g., Georg Behrmann, *Das Buch Daniel* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1894), 75.

¹²⁶ E.g., Driver, *The Book of Daniel*, 177.

¹²⁷ E.g., Bevan, *Short Commentary on Book of Daniel*, 186.

¹²⁸ Seow, *Daniel*, 175. See also Montgomery, *Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Daniel*, 445; Hartman and Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel*, 293.

¹²⁹ Baldwin, *Daniel*, 210.

Daniel 11 and the Akkadian Prophecies

The similarities between Daniel 11 and the so-called “Akkadian prophecies” (also called “Akkadian apocalypses”¹³⁰ or “present-future prophecies”¹³¹) have been widely acknowledged. Five texts belong to this category: the Shulgi Speech, the Speech of Marduk, Prophecy Text A, the Uruk Prophecy, and the Dynasty Prophecy.¹³²

The first two texts date to the reign of Nebuchadnezzar I (ca. 1127–1105).¹³³ The Shulgi Speech is a prophecy put in the mouth of Shulgi, a famous king of the third dynasty of Ur (ca. 2046–1998). It contains predictions about the fall of Nippur and Babylon by the Assyrian king Tukultiniruta I (ca. 1243–1207), under the command of the god Enlil.¹³⁴ It ends with a prediction about a future king who will bring the restoration of the cults of the gods.¹³⁵

The Speech of Marduk contains the first-person speech of Marduk about his statue being captured three times in the past, followed by his prediction about a coming salvation that a ruler will bring about. The ruler is not named, but he is identified with certainty as Nebuchadnezzar I.¹³⁶ The text is believed to have been written shortly after Nebuchadnezzar’s successful campaign against Elam.¹³⁷

¹³⁰ W. W. Hallo, “Akkadian Apocalypses,” *IEJ* 16, no. 4 (1966): 231–42.

¹³¹ Jonathan A Goldstein, “The Historical Setting of the Uruk Prophecy,” *JNES* 47, no. 1 (1988): 43–46.

¹³² Albert K. Grayson, *Babylonian Historical-Literary Texts* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1975), 14.

¹³³ Catherine Wessinger, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Millennialism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 238.

¹³⁴ Albert K. Grayson and W. G. Lambert, “Akkadian Prophecies,” *JCS* 18, no. 1 (1964): 20–21; Rykle Borger, “Gott Marduk und Gott-König Šulgi als Propheten,” *Bibliotheca Orientalis* 28 (1971): 3–24; Walter Beyerlin, ed., *Near Eastern Religious Texts Relating to the Old Testament*, trans. John Bowden, OTL (London: SCM Press, 1978), 120.

¹³⁵ Matthew Neujahr, *Predicting the Past in the Ancient Near East: Mantic Historiography in Ancient Mesopotamia, Judah, and the Mediterranean World*, BJS 354 (Providence, RI: Brown University, 2012), 46–50.

¹³⁶ Beyerlin, *Near Eastern Religious Texts Relating to OT*, 121.

¹³⁷ Neujahr, *Predicting the Past in Ancient Near East*, 39–40.

Prophecy Text A is dated to the seventh century BC and consists of predictions about the rise and fall of a succession of kings.¹³⁸ The predictions are formulaic. Each section begins with “a prince will arise and rule for . . . years,” followed by a series of events that will occur during his reign, and finally concludes, though not consistently, with the fall of the ruler.

The Uruk Prophecy predicts the rise of more than ten kings. Most of them “will not perform justice for the land” and “will not make the (right) decisions for the land.” Then a good king will rise who “will perform justice for the land” and “will make the (right) decisions for the land.” He will also establish the rites of Anu in Uruk and restore the goddess of Uruk to her sanctuary in Uruk. It goes on to predict that his son will rise after him and rule “the four quarters.” His dynasty will endure forever, and the kings will rule like the gods.

In the Uruk Prophecy, all the kings are unnamed. Hunger and Kaufman propose that the good king is Nebuchadnezzar II. The prophecy was written during Amel-Marduk’s reign (562–560 BC) to “legitimate and lend support to” his rule.¹³⁹ Lambert identifies the last two good kings as Nabopolassar and his son Nebuchadnezzar and dates the prophecy to sometime after Nebuchadnezzar’s accession in 605 BC.¹⁴⁰ Goldstein takes the good king to be Marduk-apla-iddina II and dates the prophecy between 721 and 710 BC.¹⁴¹ Scurlock disagrees with all proposals above and suggests that the good king is

¹³⁸ Wessinger, *Oxford Handbook of Millennialism*, 238.

¹³⁹ Hermann Hunger and Stephen A. Kaufman, “A New Akkadian Prophecy Text,” *JAOS* 95, no. 3 (1975): 374–75. See also Paul-Alain Beaulieu, “The Historical Background of the Uruk Prophecy,” in *The Tablet and the Scroll: Near Eastern Studies in Honor of William W. Hallo*, ed. William W. Hallo et al. (Bethesda, MD: CDL Press, 1993), 46.

¹⁴⁰ W. G. Lambert, *The Background of Jewish Apocalyptic*, Ethel M. Wood Lecture 1978 (London: Athlone Press, 1978), 11–12.

¹⁴¹ Goldstein, “Historical Setting of Uruk Prophecy,” 46.

the Assyrian king Assurbanipal (668–631 BC).¹⁴² In any case, it dates to a time earlier than the Persian era.

The Dynastic Prophecy is dated to the early Hellenistic period. It predicts the rise and fall of the kings from Neo-Assyria and Neo-Babylon down to Persia and Alexander the Great.¹⁴³ Beginning with line 13b of Column III, the text appears to predict the victory of Darius III over Alexander, which, of course, never happened. This leads to the conclusion that what follows is a genuine—yet failed—prediction about the victory of Darius.¹⁴⁴

Stylistically, Daniel 11 and the Akkadian prophecies have similarities. They all predict the rise and fall of several kings. Since these Akkadian texts are universally taken as *vaticinium ex eventu* (“prophecy from/after the event”), many scholars also take Daniel 11 to be a pseudo-prophecy.

Recently, Neujahr has pointed out a few differences between the prophecies in Daniel and has even questioned the dependency of Daniel on the Akkadian prophecies: (1) The prophecies of Daniel are first-person accounts of a human agent from a divine revelation and are contained within a narrative framework. The Akkadian prophecies are all anonymous. (2) The revelation comes to Daniel by a divine intermediary. The Akkadian prophecies do not mention any divine intermediaries.¹⁴⁵ (3) Daniel contains

¹⁴² JoAnn Scurlock, “Whose Truth and Whose Justice? The Uruk Prophecy Revisited,” in *Orientalism, Assyriology and the Bible*, ed. Steven W. Holloway, Hebrew Bible Monographs 10 (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2006), 454–55.

¹⁴³ Neujahr, *Predicting the Past in Ancient Near East*, 59–67.

¹⁴⁴ This is not the only interpretation. Grayson contends that Column IV continues to talk about Philip Arrhidaeus (lines 1–2), Alexander IV (line 3), and Seleucus I (line 4). Therefore, Column III, line 13ff is not a genuine prediction (he leaves the discrepancy unanswered). Grayson, *Babylonian Historical-Literary Texts*, 26–27. Sherwin-White sees Darius (lines 1–2), Philip Arrhidaeus and Alexander IV (line 3) and Antigonos (line 5–6) in Column IV. Susan Sherwin-White, “Seleucid Babylonia: A Case Study for the Installation and Development of Greek Rule,” in *Hellenism in the East: The Interaction of Greek and Non-Greek Civilizations from Syria to Central Asia after Alexander*, ed. Amélie Kuhrt and Susan M. Sherwin-White (London: Gerald Duckworth, 1987), 14. Others have denied that these lines refer to Darius III and Alexander the Great; however, for Neujahr’s discussion of these views, see Neujahr, *Predicting the Past in Ancient Near East*, 65–67.

¹⁴⁵ Neujahr, *Predicting the Past in Ancient Near East*, 101.

eschatology, while the Akkadian texts “lack anything that might properly be called eschatology.”¹⁴⁶

Besides these differences, it is crucial to recognize that all the Akkadian texts are highly propagandistic,¹⁴⁷ seeking to legitimize the royal family’s rule. The prosperity of the nation is closely related to the king’s care of the cult. It is not so with the book of Daniel. In Daniel’s prophecies, salvation is purely the work of God. Daniel 12:1 says, “Everyone whose name is found written in the book will be saved.” Some might lead others to righteousness, but the coming of salvation is not dependent on anyone’s righteousness.

Portier-Young argues that the book of Daniel advocates for “a program of nonviolent resistance to the edict and persecution of Antiochus and the systems of hegemony and domination that supported his rule.”¹⁴⁸ However, as Garrett points out, “For this to be true, the visions would have to do two things: They would have to advocate resistance, and they would have to reject violence as a means of resistance (for example, by condemning the Maccabean warriors). In fact, the visions do neither.”¹⁴⁹ Daniel’s three friends publicly defied Nebuchadnezzar’s order (Dan 3: 12, 16–18). Daniel privately disobeyed Darius’s decree (Dan 6:10 [MT 11]). They all decided not to accept the royal food and wine (Dan 1:8, 12–13). In a sense, all these behaviors could be regarded as a form of resistance. Nevertheless, they are more of a display of loyalty to God—thus, a call for faithfulness—than a call for resistance. Daniel even advises Nebuchadnezzar to repent so that his prosperity may be prolonged (Dan 4:27 [MT 24]).

¹⁴⁶ Neujahr, *Predicting the Past in Ancient Near East*, 109.

¹⁴⁷ Neujahr, *Predicting the Past in Ancient Near East*, 27, 49, 57, 70.

¹⁴⁸ Anthea Portier-Young, *Apocalypse against Empire: Theologies of Resistance in Early Judaism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011), 229.

¹⁴⁹ Duane A. Garrett, “Daniel,” in *The Problem of the Old Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, forthcoming).

Another related issue is the dating of the prophecy. Critical scholarship universally dates Daniel to the Maccabean period. Daniel 11 is used to date the book to ca. 165 BC, shortly before the death of Antiochus IV. It is based on the argument that Daniel 11:2b–35 (or 39) accurately presents the historical events, while 11:36–45 (or 40–45) fails to predict future events. Chapter 2 draws out a few discrepancies between Daniel 11:21–35 and the life of Antiochus IV. Verses 2b–20 generally coincide with the historical accounts. Still, it is not history. Daniel 11:10 appears to refer to a war waged by the two sons of Seleucus II against Egypt, but strictly speaking, the older brother Seleucus III Ceraunus never set his foot to Coele-Syria. Instead, he led a campaign to Asia Minor and was murdered there. Likewise, if verse 16b is taken to refer to Antiochus’s destruction to Jerusalem, no evidence has been found in the extant historical accounts. On the contrary, evidence shows that he was welcomed by the Jewish leaders and showed favor to the Jews. These signs indicate that the prophecy is not to be read in a strictly literal way. As a result, the basis for the Maccabean dating is questionable. For the same reason, the interpretations of the conservative scholarship that read the prophecy in a strictly literal manner is also problematic. A new approach for the interpretation of Daniel 11 is needed.

Conclusion

While opinions may differ significantly on the exact meaning of certain parts of the verses, there is a general consensus that Daniel 11b–20 covers the history from Cambyses, the successor of Cyrus the Great, to Seleucus IV. This consensus should be affirmed. The stylistic similarities between Daniel 11 and the Akkadian prophecies suggest that the author of Daniel 11 is familiar with at least some of the Akkadian texts.¹⁵⁰ Nevertheless, it does not automatically follow that Daniel 11 is also a prophecy

¹⁵⁰ See Duane Garrett’s insightful comment on the stylistic similarities between Dan 11 and the Akkadian prophecies: “If a divine revelation to some degree accommodates the worldview and expectations of the recipient, one would expect a revelation to Daniel to conform to a mode that he would recognize and appreciate. By analogy, the Book of the Covenant (Exod 21–23) has elements that closely resemble Hammurabi’s Code, Proverbs in in some respects similar to Egyptian wisdom, and Song of Songs

after events. There are significant differences between Daniel 11 and the Akkadian texts. The language of Daniel 11 is often vague, and exaggeration is frequently found in it. More importantly, certain verses demand that Daniel 11 should not be interpreted in a strictly literal way. This will become clearer as the remaining verses of the chapter are examined in the next chapter.

has close parallels in Egyptian love poetry. One should not be surprised that biblical texts resemble other texts from their cultural context, and one should not consider this to be contrary to the idea of inspiration.” Garrett, “Daniel,” forthcoming.

CHAPTER 5
A TYPOLOGICAL READING OF
DANIEL 11: PART 2

This chapter contains two sections. The first section is the continuation of the verse-by-verse commentary of Daniel 11 (vv. 21–45). A closer examination of these verses challenges the scholarly consensus that Daniel 11:21–35 is a “remarkably accurate” prediction about Antiochus IV. The second section then synthesizes the data and argues for a typological reading of Daniel 11.

Verse-by-Verse Commentary

The following section is a verse-by-verse commentary on Daniel 11:21–45.

Daniel 11:21

“Then a despised¹ person will arise in his place; royal honor has not been conferred to him. He will come unexpectedly² and seize the kingdom through intrigue.”

The Seleucid ruler after Seleucus IV was Antiochus IV.³ Seleucus IV sent his elder son

¹ Most modern versions translate נבזה as “contemptible” (NIV, ESV, NRSV, NET), “despicable” (NASB) or “vile” (NKJV). Scolnic argues that the word should be translated as “spurned/scorned/rejected,” a word intended to indicate that Antiochus IV was rejected of royal status (cf. Isa 53:3) rather than to describe that he was a contemptible person in character, because the proposed translation (1) “fits the context of the verse in that it is parallel to the second half where he was not given the appropriate royal honors and powers”; (2) “has the same meaning as in the passage on which it builds” (i.e., Isa 52:13–53:12); and (3) makes sense of the historical context, namely, Seleucus IV probably “wanted to exclude a potential threat.” Benjamin E. Scolnic, “Antiochus IV as the Scorned Prince in Dan 11:21,” *VT* 62, no. 4 (2012): 572–81. In defense of the modern translations, the Niphal participle of בזה can mean “contemptible” by extension, just as the Niphal participle of ירא can mean “dreadful” (Deut 1:19) or “awesome” (Neh 1:5). This meaning also fits the context well since he seized the kingdom through intrigue (cf. also John Calvin, *Daniel 7–12*, trans. Thomas Myers, *Calvin’s Commentaries* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996], 305.). On the other hand, Scolnic’s argument also has merits. Perhaps both meanings are communicated here.

² Literally, בשליוה means “at ease” or “in tranquility.” People living in this state are unaware of attacks. The LXX renders it ἐξάπινα (“suddenly”).

³ Calvin maintains that he is Ptolemy Philometor. Calvin, *Daniel 7–12*, 307.

Demetrius to Rome as a hostage to exchange for his younger brother Antiochus. Antiochus did not return to Syria immediately; he went to Athens instead. When Antiochus was still in Athens, Seleucus IV was murdered by the prime minister Heliodorus and his younger son Antiochus succeeded him. Afterward, Antiochus, the brother of Seleucus IV, returned to Syria with the help of Eumenes II of Pergamum and his brother Attalus. Heliodorus fled and henceforth disappeared from the horizon.⁴

Daniel 11:22

“*And overwhelming⁵ forces will be overwhelmed before him and crashed, and even the covenant Lord.*” This verse describes the military successes of the *despised person*. If it is intended to describe Antiochus IV, it is an exaggeration. Antiochus IV did defeat the Egyptian army and took control over most of the land of Egypt during the sixth Syrian war, but he lost it as soon as he returned to Syria. His military successes could not compare with those of his father, Antiochus III the Great.

The reference of נגיד ברית is debated. It has been taken as a reference to the following: (1) “the king of Israel” who will form a treaty with the Romans but will be betrayed⁶; (2) Judas Maccabeus⁷; (3) one of the sons of Herod⁸; (4) Antiochus the

⁴ The events surrounding Antiochus IV’s rise to power are murky. For a recent reconstruction of the events, see Benjamin E. Scolnic, “Seleucid Coinage in 175–166 BCE and the Historicity of Daniel 11:21–24,” *JAH* 2, no. 1 (2014): 1–36.

⁵ Though many read השתף for השטף, the translation here follows the MT. The use of השטף may be a deliberate literary device emphasizing the military successes of the “despised person.” See also Benjamin E. Scolnic, “Antiochus IV as the Man Who Will Overflow the Flood and Break Its Arms (Daniel 11.22),” *Bible Translator* 65, no. 1 (2014): 26–27.

⁶ Rashi and A. J. Rosenberg, *Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah: A New English Translation*, Judaica Books of the Hagiographa: The Holy Writings (New York: Judaica Press, 1991), 104. Rashi takes Dan 11:20 as a prophecy about the fall of the Hasmonean dynasty and v. 21 the rise of the Rome Empire.

⁷ הוא יהודה מכבי ראש ישראל ישטף מלפניו. Joseph Ibn Yahya, *Perush Chamesh Megillot U-Ketuvim* (Bologna, 1538), accessed February 21, 2022, https://www.sefaria.org/Joseph_ibn_Yahya_on_Daniel.

⁸ אחד מבני הורדוס. Abraham Ibn Ezra, *Ibn Ezra on Daniel*, accessed February 21, 2021, https://www.sefaria.org/Ibn_Ezra_on_Daniel.

younger son of Seleucus IV⁹; (5) the king of Egypt—Ptolemy Philometor¹⁰; (6) Onias III the high priest whom Antiochus IV deposed¹¹; and (7) an unknown prince in covenant relation with Antiochus IV.¹² Ptolemy VI Philometor and Onias III are the most popular candidates.¹³ The term נגיד denotes a leader over a group of people or in charge of a job. It has been used to refer to a national leader, a king.¹⁴ It may also refer to a priest and the chief officer (פקיד נגיד) in the temple of the Lord (Jer 20:1; see also Neh 11:11; 1 Chr 9:11). In addition, it is also used for a military commander (1 Chr 13:1) or the chief officer over the treasury (1 Chr 26:24). Therefore, theoretically, both Ptolemy Philometor and Onias III are possible. However, both identifications are not without difficulties.

Those who identify נגיד ברית with Ptolemy Philometor usually see the fulfillment of Daniel 11:22 during Antiochus IV's first campaign against Egypt.

Antiochus IV defeated Ptolemy Philometor, but the people in Alexandria set up Ptolemy

⁹ H. H. Rowley, "The 'Prince of the Covenant' in Daniel XI. 22," *ExpTim* 55, no. 1 (1943): 24–27; Mark K. Mercer, "An Historical, Exegetical, and Theological Study of Daniel 11: 2b–12: 4" (ThD diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 1987), 150–51n175. Rowley proposes that ברית is a mistranslation of the Aramaic word קימא and the phrase originally means "lawful/rightful prince." His proposal is based on the theory that the prophecy was originally written in Aramaic.

¹⁰ מלך מצרים שהיה עמו בברית. Malbim, *Malbim on Daniel*, accessed February 21, 2021, https://www.sefaria.org/Malbim_on_Daniel; Calvin, *Daniel 7–12*, 307; Gleason L. Archer Jr., *Daniel*, in *Expositor's Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, *Daniel and the Minor Prophets*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelien (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1985), 137; Stephen R. Miller, *Daniel*, NAC, vol. 18 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1994), 299.

¹¹ Theodoret of Cyrus, *Commentary on Daniel*, trans. Robert C. Hill, WGRW 7 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2006), 297; John Wesley, *John Wesley's Notes on the Whole Bible* (Grand Rapids: Christian Classics Ethereal Library, n.d.), Note on Daniel 11:22, Accordance Bible Software; Leon J. Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1973), 196; Joyce G. Baldwin, *Daniel: An Introduction and Commentary*, TOTC, vol. 23 (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 1978), 213; Louis F. Hartman and Alexander A. Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel*, AB (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1978), 269; Paul T. Butler, *Daniel*, Bible Study Textbook (Joplin, MO: College Press, 1988), 424; René Péter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the Book of Daniel*, UBS Handbook (New York: United Bible Societies, 1993), 302; C. L. Seow, *Daniel*, Westminster Bible Companion (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2003), 176.

¹² J. E. H. Thomson and W. F. Adeney, *Daniel*, Pulpit Commentary (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1909), 314–15; Edward J. Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1949), 242; John C. Jeske, *Daniel*, People's Bible Commentary (St. Louis: Concordia, 1992), 206.

¹³ Rowley, "'Prince of the Covenant' in Daniel," 24.

¹⁴ It has been applied to Saul (1 Sam 9:16), David (2 Sam 5:2), Solomon (1 Kgs 1:35), Jeroboam (1 Sam 9:16), Baasha (1 Kgs 16:2), and Hezekiah (2 Kgs 20:5).

VIII Ptolemy and Cleopatra II as co-rulers. It is said that Ptolemy promised to be an ally of Antiochus IV if the latter would help him regain the throne; therefore, Ptolemy Philometor is called נגיד ברית. Nevertheless, using נגיד ברית to refer to him in Daniel 11 would be surprising, as the king of Egypt in the prophecy is consistently referred to as “the king of the South.”¹⁵ Moreover, even if there was an agreement between Antiochus IV and Ptolemy Philometor, to call Philometor, whom Antiochus IV just defeated, נגיד ברית would still be inappropriate.¹⁶ After the so-called “agreement” and reconciliation of the Ptolemaic brothers, although Antiochus IV had every intention to “break” Philometor as he marched toward Alexandria, he was no longer able. Before reaching the destination, he received the Roman ultimatum and had to abandon the campaign for good.

The dominant view among the modern scholars is that נגיד ברית refers to Onias III the high priest.¹⁷ This view is also problematic. The text suggests that נגיד ברית will suffer death in the hand of the despised king.¹⁸ Although multiple conflicting accounts about Onias III (see chap. 2) are found, none of them suggests that Antiochus IV was responsible for his death.

In a word, the term נגיד ברית is at best ambiguous. All proposed solutions have problems. On the other hand, the ambiguity could be a deliberate technique. The unidentified reference could open for multiple fulfillments. Keil and Delitzsch conclude that נגיד ברית should be understood “in undefined generality of covenant princes in general.”¹⁹

¹⁵ S. R. Driver, *The Book of Daniel*, Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1900), 182.

¹⁶ As has shown above, נגיד is not synonymous with a national leader or a king (although it may be used to refer to a king), it denotes a leader over a group of people. In Gen 14:13, Abraham’s allies are called בעלי ברית אברם.

¹⁷ John J. Collins, *Daniel: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 382.

¹⁸ Rowley, “‘Prince of the Covenant’ in Daniel,” 25.

¹⁹ Carl F. Keil and Franz Delitzsch, *Daniel*, trans. M. G. Easton, Commentary on the Old

Daniel 11:23

“And after an alliance is made with him, he will act deceitfully. He will become powerful²⁰ with a small nation.” This verse has been taken to refer to these possibilities:

(1) The alliance between Antiochus IV and Eumenes II of Pergamum. The “small nation” is then Pergamum.²¹ (2) Antiochus IV’s (possible?) deal with his nephew, the younger son of Seleucus IV²²; (3) Antiochus’s agreement with Ptolemy Philometor.²³ (4) Antiochus IV’s deal with Jason but also other political deals he made.²⁴ (5) Antiochus IV’s general character.²⁵ For the four latter views, the “small nation” is Syria.

Attempts to identify the “agreement” all have difficulties. Verse 22 already speaks about overwhelming armies that will be swept away before the king. There is no evidence that Antiochus IV needed to defeat the Syrian army multiple times (רעות in v. 22 is plural) to return to Syria and gain a position in the Seleucid court. Taking התחברות as a reference to Antiochus IV’s “agreement” with Eumenes II will mean that these verses are not in chronological order; namely, the events in verse 22 occur after the event in verse 23. Taking the “agreement” to be the one with Ptolemy Philometor will have the

Testament, vol. 9 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2011), 796.

²⁰ עלה ועצם is taken as a hendiadys. See Hartman and Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel*, 269.

²¹ Joe Sprinkle, *Daniel*, Evangelical Biblical Theology Commentary (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2020), 310.

²² Mercer, “Historical, Exegetical, and Theological Study of Daniel 11,” 151n177. Mercer takes נגיד ברית to be Antiochus the younger son of Seleucus IV; concerning v. 23a, he writes, “the most natural antecedent in the context is the covenant prince.” But the personal pronoun could also refer to the despised king.

²³ Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel*, 295–96. Wood writes, “Antiochus’ father, Antiochus the Great, had promised the two states, Coele-Syria and Palestine, to Egypt as a dowry with Cleopatra, on her marriage to Ptolemy Epiphanes. It may be assumed that Antiochus reiterated the promise on his first coming to the throne, to foster the friendship he then needed. It is known that he rescinded this promise in 170 BC, however, five years after coming to power, by marching through both areas, asserting the control of Syria over them, and making the attack on Egypt set forth in verse twenty-five.”

²⁴ Seow, *Daniel*, 177.

²⁵ Keil and Delitzsch, *Daniel*, 796; Jeske, *Daniel*, 206.

same chronological issue, since, as most modern scholars agree, later verses seem to describe Antiochus IV's war against Egypt.

It is more likely that these verses are a general description about the king. The person with whom the king makes an agreement is unidentified. It may be a deliberate literary device to make the description general. The king makes “treaties and formed alliances, but without any intention of respecting them.”²⁶

Concerning מעט גוי, the majority view is that it refers to Syria. However, while the Seleucid army suffered a disastrous defeat at the battle of Magnesia at the time of Antiochus III, Syria was still the largest country in Asia. As mentioned in chapter 2, Seleucus IV had even planned an expedition to Asia Minor to support Pharnaces I against Pergamum, though he eventually cancelled the expedition. Verse 23, like verse 22, is perhaps an exaggerated statement for Antiochus IV. When Antiochus IV came back to Syria, the kingdom was still relatively weakened; he still had to pay war reparations to Rome. However, he managed to build a strong army and defeated the Egyptians during the sixth Syrian war.

Daniel 11:24

“Suddenly, and into richest parts of a province he will come and do what neither his near nor his distant ancestors had done²⁷: He will distribute plunder, spoil, and wealth to them. He will devise plans against strongholds, but only for a time.” The first part of verse 24a, בשלוח ובמשמני מדינה יבוא, is somewhat ambiguous. The ancient translations are not helpful. In the OG, משמני is omitted. It reads, ἐξάπινα ἐρημώσει πόλιν (“suddenly, he will make desolate a city”). The Peshitta omits the MT בשלוח and יבוא and

²⁶ Jeske, *Daniel*, 206.

²⁷ The rendering of אבתיו ואבות אבתיו as “his near and distant ancestors” follows Hartman and Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel*, 295.

puts *ובמשמני מדינה* at the end of verse 23, which results in the meaning of “he will become strong with a small nation and with the richest parts of provinces.”²⁸

The clause has been taken in two ways by modern scholars. One way is to take *משמני* as “the powerful ones,”²⁹ “stout (warriors),”³⁰ or “rich ones.”³¹ Taken this way, these people will come with the king and receive booty from him. This reading has merits. *משמן* occurs four times in the Hebrew Bible. Isaiah 17:4 says metaphorically that the fat of Jacob’s body (*משמן בשרו*) will waste away, but in both Psalms 78:31 and Isaiah 10:16, the term refers to persons—the sturdy (men) among the Israelites and the Assyrians respectively. Therefore, semantically, *משמן* could mean sturdy people. Moreover, syntactically, the plural suffix of *להם* in verse 24 naturally points back to these people. As it stands, the beginning of the verse may be translated literally as “with quietness and with rich ones (people) of a province.”³² The phrase *בשלוה ובמשמני מדינה* describes the manner of the coming of the king. This reading is analogous to Daniel 11:13 (*יבוא בוא בחיל גדול וברכוש רב*).

Most modern translations take *משמני מדינה* as “the richest parts of the province.” Taken this way, the verse means Antiochus IV will come to attack rich places and take plunders and distribute them to his followers. The construction of “*בוא + ב + a place*” is often used to convey a military attack (E.g., 1 Sam 7:13; 2 Kgs 6:23; Mic 5:4–5; Dan 11:29, 40–41). The difficulty with the view is that the pronominal suffix of *להם* appears to lack an antecedent. Nevertheless, it could be easily taken as his followers in

²⁸ The omission may be due to the translator’s difficulty in understanding the syntax of vv. 23–24. Richard A. Taylor, *The Peshitta of Daniel*, Monographs of the Peshitta Institute 7 (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 278.

²⁹ John Goldingay, *Daniel*, WBC, vol. 30 (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1989), 273.

³⁰ Mercer, “Historical, Exegetical, and Theological Study of Daniel 11,” 152.

³¹ Seow, *Daniel*, 177.

³² Seow, *Daniel*, 177.

this context.³³ Another issue is that this second reading appears to require an emendation of the text. For instance, Di Lella moves the conjunction *waw* in בשלוח ובמשמני מדינה יבוא to the beginning of the clause, thus, reading ובשלוח במשמני מדינה יבוא.³⁴ However, a literal translation does also make sense, “In quietness and into riches of a province he will come.”³⁵

Either way, the king will suddenly attack cities, taking plunder and distributing them to his followers. The verse could certainly apply to Antiochus IV. Josephus speaks of him as being “magnanimous” and “liberal.”³⁶ Interestingly, 1 Maccabees 3:30 mentions that Antiochus IV gives gifts “with a liberal hand” and “exceeded the kings preceding him.” However, to say that he did what “his near and distant ancestors have not done” is a hyperbole, as this is a typical behavior of virtually every victorious ruler of the ancient world.

Verse 24b states that the king will devise plans against strongholds, but only for a time. The “strongholds” are taken as Egyptian fortresses.³⁷ This is possible. However, again, the statement is a general one. It could be applied to other kings as well.

Daniel 11:21–24 speaks of the king’s rise, his military successes, treacherous character, squandering of booties, and unending desire for conquests. Verse 24 ends with an ominous phrase: “but only for a time.” It is reminiscent of verse 3, 12, and 19. The king may succeed in what he does, but only for a while; in the end, he is doomed.

³³ Another way is to take the people of מעט גוי as its antecedent. See Péter-Contesse and Ellington, *Handbook on Book of Daniel*, 304.

³⁴ Hartman and Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel*, 259.

³⁵ William Nelson, *Daniel*, Understanding the Bible Commentary (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013), 306. First Macc 1:29–40 recounts that Antiochus IV sent a chief revenue agent to Jerusalem. He spoke peaceful words to the Jews with deceit and gained their trust. Then he suddenly attacked the city and plundered it.

³⁶ Josephus, *Ant.* 12.7.2.

³⁷ Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel*, 242; Seow, *Daniel*, 178.

Overall, Daniel 11:21–24 appears to be a general description of the king’s life rather than merely his rise to power. Most statements are general, and scholarly attempts to identify the specific events have encountered difficulties. Verse 21 begins with the rise of the king, but verse 24 already anticipates his fall.

Daniel 11:25–27

25 And he will stir up his strength and mind against the king of the south with a great army, and the king of the south will wage war with a large and very powerful army. But he will not stand because plots will be devised against him. 26 And those who eat his ration will break him. And his army will be swept away. And many will fall slain. 27 As for the two kings, their hearts [will be set] on evil. And they will speak lies at one table. But it will not succeed, for there is yet an end at the appointed time.

Most scholars take this section as a reference to Antiochus IV’s first Egyptian campaign. Overall, the verses do find correspondences in history, but there are also a few deviations. In Egypt, when Cleopatra Syra, sister of Antiochus IV, died in 176 BC, regency fell into the hands of two court officials, Eulaeus and Lenaeus. These two men judged that time was ripe for an invasion of Syria and instigated war against it. However, Antiochus IV discovered the Egyptian intent and was well prepared. His army marched into the land of Egypt before Philometor’s force could reach Syrian soil. Philometor’s army was decisively defeated, and the king fled from the battlefield (169 BC). Historically speaking, the Ptolemaic government is responsible for initiating the war.³⁸ Nevertheless, the prophecy does not hint at it; it emphasizes the aggressiveness of the despised king.

Sprinkle maintains that the end of verse 25 refers to Antiochus IV’s failure to capture *all* of Egypt due to “plots” against him [Antiochus IV].³⁹ But there is little support for this reading. First, Antiochus IV had just won a decisive war. **לֹא יֵעָמֵד** cannot

³⁸ Otto Mørkholm, *Antiochus IV of Syria* (Oslo, Norway: Gyldendal Norsk Forlag, 1966), 67–68. Cf. Polybius, *Histories* 27.19; Livy, *The History of Rome* 42.29.5–7.

³⁹ Sprinkle, *Daniel*, 312.

refer to him. It could only refer to the king of the south. Second, a reference of the “plots” against Antiochus IV cannot be found. Alexandria resisted Antiochus IV; however, it is inappropriate to call the city’s defense “plots” against him.

Some see Antiochus IV (and his agents in Egypt) as those who plotted against Philometor,⁴⁰ but more commentators, in light of verse 26a, see only a reference to the advisors⁴¹ or see also the Egyptian officials who betrayed Philometor.⁴² However, there is little evidence of any “plots” against Philometor that caused the defeat before Antiochus IV. In hindsight, Eulaeus and Lenaeus did give poor advice to Philometor,⁴³ but they did not devise “plots” against him.⁴⁴ It is even said that the two advisers fled to Alexandria after the war and switched sides to support Philometor’s younger brother,⁴⁵ but there is no evidence of it. On the contrary, the two regents simply disappeared from the scene.⁴⁶ On the other hand, as mentioned in chapter 2, the description fits Philometor’s father Ptolemy V well, since his own officials assassinated him.

Verse 27 speaks of the two liar kings at one table, but their plots will not succeed. The verse has been taken to refer to the negotiation between Antiochus IV and Philometor after the war. Antiochus devised to set up Philometor, whom he left in Memphis when returning to Syria, as a puppet king in Egypt. However, while Antiochus IV was away from Egypt, the two Ptolemaic brothers were reconciled, and Philometor

⁴⁰ E.g., Archer, *Daniel*, 137–38.

⁴¹ Hartman and Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel*, 296; Seow, *Daniel*, 178; Collins, *Daniel*, 383; J. Paul Tanner, *Daniel*, Evangelical Exegetical Commentary (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2020), 674.

⁴² Miller, *Daniel*, 300.

⁴³ Hartman and Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel*, 296; Seow, *Daniel*, 178.

⁴⁴ Duane A. Garrett, “Daniel,” in *The Problem of the Old Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, forthcoming).

⁴⁵ Seow, *Daniel*, 178.

⁴⁶ Mørkholm, *Antiochus IV of Syria*, 76. Mørkholm, citing Diodorus (*Library of History* 10.16), suggests that the two regents probably met a violent end.

was received back into Alexandria. Consequently, Antiochus IV's plan fell through. Nevertheless, no evidence shows that Philometor spoke lies to Antiochus IV in negotiation.⁴⁷ Scholars who make this claim usually depend on the Daniel text.⁴⁸ As pointed out in chapter 2, this description does not best fit Antiochus IV and Philometor, but it is more fitting with other Hellenistic kings such as Antiochus III and Philip V of Macedon; they sat together and plotted to divide up Ptolemy V's lands. Another similar incident is the negotiation between Antiochus III and Ptolemy IV during the fourth Syrian war. Antiochus III resumed the war in 219 BC and successfully captured Seleucia, Tyre, and Ptolemais. As winter approached that year, the Ptolemaic government proposed a truce. However, as Grainger observes, "negotiations for peace over the winter were conducted without hope or sincerity on either side."⁴⁹

Daniel is told that "the plots of the kings will not succeed." Here, it may be an intentional allusion to the pattern already repeated in verses 6 and 17, in which both the king of the north and the king of the south devise to control the opponents through an alliance, but both failed.

The prophecy goes on to state that their failed plots are due because "*there is yet an end at the appointed time.*" This statement prepares readers for more events to follow; the worst is to come. It also indicates that the kings do not dictate the course of history; they will have their end at the time *appointed* by God.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Hartman and Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel*, 296.

⁴⁸ See e.g., Miller, *Daniel*, 300; Tanner, *Daniel*, 675. Sprinkle writes, "Philometor deduced Antiochus' duplicity and for his part double-crossed Antiochus by secretly negotiating an agreement with his brother and sister." Sprinkle, *Daniel*, 312. However, as noted in chap. 2, according to Livy (*The History of Rome* 45.11.4–5), Philometor only came to be suspicious of Antiochus after seeing the latter left a strong garrison in Pelusium so that he might invade Egypt at any moment in the future.

⁴⁹ John D. Grainger, *The Syrian Wars, History and Archaeology of Classical Antiquity* 320 (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 202.

⁵⁰ Hartman and Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel*, 297.

Daniel 11:28

“And he will return to his land with great wealth. And his heart [will be set] against the holy covenant.⁵¹ He will take action, and then he will return to his own land.”

This verse fits Antiochus IV well. After the Egyptian conquest, Antiochus returned to Syria with much wealth (1 Macc 1:19). On the way back to Syria, he stopped by Jerusalem and pillaged the temple (1 Macc 1:20–24). It is worth noting that the prophecy is vague on what will happen, and the description recalls what has been said about a previous king of the north in verse 16. One may also recall Antiochus IV’s predecessor Seleucus IV since he also sent Heliodorus to confiscate the temple treasure in Jerusalem.

Daniel 11:29–31

29 At the appointed time, he will return and attack the south. But the first and the latter one will not be alike. 30 Ships of Kittim will come against him, and he will lose heart. And he will turn back and be enraged against the holy covenant and take action. He will turn back and give attention to those who forsake the holy covenant. 31 And armies from him will stand. And they will defile the sanctuary—the stronghold.⁵² They will remove the daily sacrifices and set up the abomination that makes desolation.

Overall, these verses fit Antiochus IV. Upon hearing the reconciliation of the Ptolemaic brothers, Antiochus IV rushed back to Egypt and intended to reconquer it. At this time, however, the Roman army had finally defeated the Macedonians; thus, they were able to interfere directly in Asian affairs. Caius Popilius Laenas was commissioned to mediate between Syria and Egypt. As soon as receiving the news about the Roman victory over Macedonia, he sailed to Egypt to meet Antiochus IV. The meeting between the two is often called “the Day of Eleusis.”⁵³ Antiochus crossed the river at Eleusis,

⁵¹ “Holy covenant” occurs twice in 1 Macc (1:15, 63), in which the term means the Jewish faith.

⁵² Due to the lack of the conjunction, *המקדש* and *המזבח* probably have the same reference. Péter-Contesse and Ellington, *Handbook on Book of Daniel*, 310. Collins points out that the temple was fortified during the time of Antiochus IV (1 Macc 4:60; 6:7) and David called the temple to be built by Solomon *הבירה* (“the fortress”). Collins, *Daniel*, 385.

⁵³ Polybius, *Histories* 29.27.1–8; Livy, *The History of Rome* 45.12.3–7.

about four miles from Alexandria, and saw Popilius there. Antiochus greeted him from a distance and held out his hand. Popilius handed the copy of the Senator's ultimatum to him and asked him to read it first. After reading it, Antiochus replied that he would like to discuss it with his friends. Popilius then drew a circle with the stick in his hand around Antiochus and asked him to reply to the Senator before stepping out of it. Antiochus was "astonished," but he eventually complied and aborted the campaign. Polybius (*Histories* 29.27.8) said Antiochus was "deeply hurt and complaining."

Antiochus IV vented his indignation upon the Jews as he returned to Syria. He decided to eliminate the Jewish religion and replace it with Hellenism. He killed thousands and sold many others into slavery. He dedicated the temple to Zeus and sacrificed swine on its altar. Possessing the Torah and circumcising children were capital crimes.

Many also observe the connection between Daniel 11:30 and Numbers 24:24, which reads, וצִים מִיַּד כִּתִּים וְעֵנו אֲשׁוּר וְעֵנו עֵבֶר וְגַם הוּא עֲדֵי אֲבָד ("And ships [will come] from the side of Kittim, and they will afflict Assur, and they will afflict Eber, but he too will come to destruction"). There is no consensus on the exact relationship between the two. Various terms have been used to describe the use of Numbers 24:24 in Daniel 11:30, such as "a free interpretation,"⁵⁴ a "citation,"⁵⁵ an "allusion,"⁵⁶ an "echo,"⁵⁷ or a "fulfillment."⁵⁸ To complicate the issue, Numbers 24:24 is itself cryptic. Scholars debate

⁵⁴ Hartman and Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel*, 270.

⁵⁵ Michael B. Shepherd, *Daniel in the Context of the Hebrew Bible*, Studies in Biblical Literature 123 (New York: Peter Lang, 2009), 101.

⁵⁶ Collins, *Daniel*, 384.

⁵⁷ Sprinkle, *Daniel*, 314.

⁵⁸ F. F. Bruce, "Prophetic Interpretation in the Septuagint," *BIOSCS* 12 (1979): 23.

on the references of כתיים, אשור, עבר, as well as הוא.⁵⁹ Some have suggested the emendation of the text.⁶⁰

The referent of Kittim changes over time.⁶¹ Archaeologists have identified the land of the Kittim as Kition on the southeast coast of Cyprus, by the modern town of Larnaca (this might be the place to which ארץ כתיים in Isa 23:1 refers).⁶² Jeremiah 2:10 and Ezekiel 27:6 speak of *islands* of Kittim (אי כתיים). Thus, more than one island is in view in these two passages. In 1 Maccabees 1:1 and 8:5, Macedonia is identified with the land of Kittim. In 4QIsa^a (4Q161) Frag. 8, 10:2–3, Kittim is identified as Lebanon, and in 4QpNah (4Q169) Frag. 3, 4I:2–3, the term appears to refer to the Romans.⁶³ In the OG, the MT כתיים is translated as Ῥωμαῖοι (“Romans”),⁶⁴ and most commentators accept this identification for Kittim in Daniel 11:30.⁶⁵ Josephus writes of Kittim,

⁵⁹ See discussions in George B. Gray, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Numbers*, ICC (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1976), 378–79; Gordon J. Wenham, *Numbers: An Introduction and Commentary*, TOTC, vol. 4 (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1981), 204–6; Timothy R. Ashley, *The Book of Numbers*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 508–11; Walter R. Wifall, “Asshur and Eber, or Asher and Heber: A Commentary on the Last Balaam Oracle, Num 24:21–24,” *ZAW* 82, no. 1 (1970): 110–14.

⁶⁰ See e.g., William F. Albright, “The Oracles of Balaam,” *JBL* 63, no. 3 (1944): 207–33; Wifall, “Asshur and Eber, or Asher and Heber.”

⁶¹ See Vermès’s helpful summary: Géza Vermès, *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, rev. ed., Penguin Classics (London: Penguin Books, 2011), 59–60.

⁶² Marguerite Yon, “Kition in the Tenth to Fourth Centuries BC,” *BASOR* 308 (1997): 9.

⁶³ The identification of “Kittim” is debated, but it is either the Seleucids or the Romans. For more discussion, see W. H. Brownlee, “Kittim,” in *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979), 3:45–46, Accordance Bible Software; Shani L. Berrin, *The Peshar Nahum Scroll from Qumran: An Exegetical Study of 4Q169*, STDJ 53 (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 101–4.

⁶⁴ “The king of the south” is also consistently identified as “the king of Egypt.”

⁶⁵ Donald E. Gowan, *Daniel*, Abingdon OT Commentaries (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2001), 149; R. H. Charles, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1929), 131; Driver, *The Book of Daniel*, 186; James A. Montgomery, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, ICC (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1959), 455; F. F. Bruce, *Biblical Exegesis in the Qumran Texts* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1959), 71; Hartman and Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel*, 270; Norman Porteous, *Daniel: A Commentary*, OTL (London: SCM Press, 1965), 167; Arie van der Kooij, “A Case of Reinterpretation in the Old Greek of Daniel 11,” in *Tradition and Re-Interpretation in Jewish and Early Christian Literature: Essays in Honour of Jürgen C. H. Lebram* (Leiden: Brill, 1986), 74; Miller, *Daniel*, 301; Paul L. Redditt, *Daniel*, NCB (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999), 183; Seow, *Daniel*, 179.

Cethimus possessed the island Cethima; it is now called Cyprus: and from that it is that all islands, and the greatest part of the seacoasts, are named Cethim by the Hebrews; and one city there is in Cyprus that has been able to preserve its denomination; it is called Citius by those who use the language of the Greeks, and has not, by the use of that dialect, escaped the name of Cethim.⁶⁶

Note that Josephus lived in the first century AD and had lived in Rome. However, he does not identify Kittim as Rome.⁶⁷

The three names of Numbers 24:24, Kittim, Assur, and Eber, all occur in the Table of Nations in Genesis 10. Balaam's prophecy likely alludes to the Table of Nations. According to Genesis 10:4–5, Kittim is a son of Javan (Greek), and from the sons of Javan “the coastland peoples spread in their lands.” If the allusion is genuine, then Kittim of Numbers 24:24 refers to the descendants of Kittim, son of Javan, and the term is not limited to the inhabitants of Kition of Cyprus.

In Balaam's oracle, Assur will take captive of the Kenites (Num 24:22), but it will be afflicted by the ships from the side of Kittim (צִיִּים מִיַּד כִּתִּיִּים), and, eventually, the Kittim will also be destroyed (Num 24:24). Underlying the oracle is the theme that the oppressor (Assur) will be oppressed (by the Kittim), but in the end, the oppressor of the oppressor (the Kittim) will also perish. In contrast, he who is a star from Jacob and a scepter from Israel will be victorious and will subdue the enemies of Israel (Num 24:17–19). In Daniel's prophecy, the despised king will attack the king of the south, but he will be attacked by Kittim ships (צִיִּים כִּתִּיִּים). Besides a connection in words, there is also a thematic link between Daniel 11:30 and Balaam's oracle. The allusion implies that the Kittim will also perish eventually.

Balaam's oracle is about the latter days (בְּאַחֲרֵית הַיָּמִים; Num 24:14) of Israel; so is Daniel's prophecy (בְּאַחֲרֵית הַיָּמִים; Dan 10:14). At the time of Balaam's prophecy, the Israelites were still wandering in the wilderness; they did not have a land. However,

⁶⁶ Josephus, *Ant.* 1.6.1.

⁶⁷ Benjamin E. Scolnic and Thomas Davis, “How Kittim Became ‘Rome’: Dan 11,30 and the Importance of Cyprus in the Sixth Syrian War,” *ZAW* 127, no. 2 (2015): 309.

they will be victorious over their enemies under the leadership of a coming ruler. King David fulfilled the prophecy when he subjugated “Edom, Moab, the Ammonites, the Philistines, Amalek” (2 Sam 8). Nevertheless, David has not exhausted the prophecy, as Wenham comments,

The subjugation of these nations was only temporary: whenever the kingdoms of Israel and Judah were weak, their fortunes revived and they attacked the Hebrew kingdoms again. Thus many of the later prophets contain oracles directed against Moab, Edom and Philistia (e.g. Amos 1:6–2:3; Isa. 14:28–16:14; Jer. 47–49). Sometimes indeed they quote the prophecies of Balaam (e.g. Jer. 48:45// Num. 24:17; Dan. 11:30//Num. 24:24). And the great royal Psalm 110 contains enough verbal parallels with Numbers 24:15–19 to make it probable that the psalmist knew Balaam’s oracle and was consciously alluding to it. This re-use of the prophecies by later writers shows that they realized that they had been only partially fulfilled. . . . If the primary fulfilment of Balaam’s prophecies was in the rise of David and the defeat of his foes, a further fulfilment may surely be seen in Jesus, the son of David, who has conquered sin and death, and now reigns “until he has put all his enemies under his feet” (1 Cor. 15:25).⁶⁸

Likewise, in Daniel’s prophecy, the Jews will be afflicted again (Dan 11:16, 20, 28, 30–31). This process will continue until the time of the end (Dan 11:40).

According to Daniel 11:31, the king will set up “the abomination that makes desolation.” The LXX renders the MT השקוף משומם (“the abomination that makes desolation”) as βδέλυγμα ἐρημώσεως. The exact wording occurs in 1 Maccabees 1:54, describing Antiochus IV’s evil deeds in Jerusalem. Thus, in the eyes of the author of 1 Maccabees, Antiochus IV fulfilled the prophecy. In light of 1 Maccabees, it is attempting to identify the “abomination” as *only* the offering of the swine on the altar, since 1 Maccabees 1:54 recounts, “On the fifteenth day of Cheseleu in the one hundred and forty-fifth year, he constructed an abomination of desolation *on the altar*” [emphasis added]. In the Old Testament, however, שקוף has a broader meaning; it means “everything detestable from the perspective of Yahweh worship” (e.g., Deut 29:17 [MT 26]; 1 Kgs 11:7).⁶⁹ Before the time of Daniel, God already accused the Israelites of

⁶⁸ Wenham, *Numbers*, 205.

⁶⁹ Michael A. Grisanti, *NIDOTTE*, ed. Willem A. VanGemeren (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997), s.v. “שקוף,” Accordance Bible Software; see also D. N. Freedman and A. Welch, “שקוף,” in *TDOT*,

setting up their abominations in the temple (Jer 7:30; 32:34; Ezek 5:11). Moreover, Jesus predicts that there will be another “abomination that makes desolation” (Matt 24:15; Mark 13:14). Thus, Antiochus IV was not the first one to set up “the abomination that makes desolation,” and he will not be the last one.

Daniel 11:32–35

32 And those who violate the covenant, he will seduce with flattery, but the people who know their God will stand firm and take actions. 33 And the wise among the people will make many understand; for some days, they will stumble by sword and flame, by captivity and plunder. 34 When they stumble, they will be helped with a little help. Many will join them with flattery. 35 Some of the wise will stumble, so that they may be refined, purified, and made white, until the end of the time, for it is still for the appointed time.

Antiochus IV did attempt to seduce some Jews into apostasy. Many commentators refer to the incident recounted in 1 Maccabees 2:17–18. Agents sent from him promise to Mattathias that he and his sons will be among “the Friends of the king” and will receive silver and gold if he follows the ordinance of the king.

There are a variety of views concerning the identity of *עם ידעי אלהיו* (“the people who know their God”) and *משכילי עם* (“the wise among the people”). Seow sees two groups of people here with opposing attitudes toward the persecution of Antiochus IV: *עם ידעי אלהיו* are those who opted for “active resistance (v. 32), and *משכילי עם* are those who took passive resistance (vv. 33–35).⁷⁰ According to Sprinkle, *עם ידעי אלהיו* are the Maccabees and those who followed them. The Maccabees, among others, are also *עם משכילי* who give understanding to other Jews. The “little help” refers to those with whom Judas Maccabeus made an alliance.⁷¹ Di Lella is yet of another opinion. To him,

ed. G. J. Botterweck and H. Ringgren, trans. J. T. Willis, G. W. Bromiley, and D. E. Green, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974–2021), 15:467–68.

⁷⁰ Seow, *Daniel*, 181.

⁷¹ Sprinkle, *Daniel*, 316–17. Archer takes the “little help” to refer to “the relatively small numbers of compatriots who joined the Maccabean troops after the early successes of the original guerrilla band.” Archer, *Daniel*, 141.

“those who act wisely” are the Jewish leaders of the anti-Hellenistic resistance, who are later called *Hasidim* (“pious ones”); the “little help” is the resistance movement led by the Maccabees.⁷²

Against Seow, there is no basis for taking “those who know their God” and the “wise” as groups with opposing stands. In the prophecy, עַם יְדַעֵי אֱלֹהֵי is set to be in contrast with מְרַשְׁעֵי בְרִית, not with מְשַׁכְּלֵי עַם.⁷³ In other words, עַם יְדַעֵי אֱלֹהֵי of verse 32b are those who do *not* violate the covenant; מְשַׁכְּלֵי עַם of verse 33a seem to belong to עַם יְדַעֵי אֱלֹהֵי but are also able to teach others.

The identification of עַם יְדַעֵי אֱלֹהֵי and מְשַׁכְּלֵי עַם is not an easy task. As Nelson writes of Daniel 11:32, “It is not clear that the verse is suggesting that these Jews participated in the Maccabean revolt.”⁷⁴ Even Collins, who holds the Maccabean dating of the book of Daniel, admits, “It is not clear whether ‘stand firm and act’ implies an endorsement of the Maccabean revolt. . . . The wise are often identified with the *hāsīdīm*, but the identification is not well founded Whether the author of Daniel saw the Maccabees as a help at all is nonetheless doubtful.”⁷⁵

The difficulty of the identification is due to the general nature of the description. One could say that the Maccabees have fulfilled the prophecy, but so do all who remained faithful to God and even suffered death (2 Macc 6–7). Verse 33 states that the wise will stumble “by sword and flame, by captivity and plunder.” As Baldwin notes, “Sword and flame, captivity and plunder sum up the sufferings of faithful men and

⁷² Hartman and Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel*, 299–300.

⁷³ As Baldwin writes, “Polarization between those who are seduced by flattery and those who *know their God* is the theme of the next verses. Persecution eliminates the waverers. Either they *violate the covenant* by their alliance with the prevailing regime or they *stand firm and take action* (lit. ‘do’, as in v. 30).” Baldwin, *Daniel*, 216.

⁷⁴ Nelson, *Daniel*, 306.

⁷⁵ Collins, *Daniel*, 385–86.

women to this day.”⁷⁶ The same may be said of verses 34–35. Keil and Delitzsch comment on verse 35: “Such has been the experience in all periods of the church’s history.”⁷⁷ The *typical* suffering of the believers will last “until the time of the end.”

Despite the disagreements concerning the exact references of the prophecy, most commentators, whether critical or conservative, agree that Daniel 11:2–35 is about the history from Cyrus to Antiochus IV. Sprinkle states, “The writer of Daniel 11 was remarkably accurate historically up until this point.”⁷⁸ However, as has been shown, this is an overstatement. While general correspondences between the known history and Daniel 11:2–35 may be observed, much of the prophecy, especially verses 12–35, contain cryptic and/or exaggerated statements, on which commentators are either uncertain about or disagree with each other on the references of the prophecy. As Garrett concludes on Daniel 11:21–35,

First, 11:21–35 is not strictly an annalistic sequence of events in chronological order and it contains many summary statements. Second, it contains significant hyperbole. While much of it applies to Antiochus IV, much of it is not literally true of him. Third, it contains some details that are difficult to apply to Antiochus at all. Thus, while 11:21–35 in general relates well to the reign of Antiochus IV, much of the text is either exaggerated, chronologically dislocated, or broad generalization with no specific tie to Antiochus.⁷⁹

Hence, a strictly literal reading will not yield a satisfactory interpretation. This should be born in mind as one deals with verses 36–45, which is the most controversial passage of Daniel 11.

Daniel 11:36–39

36 And the king will act as he pleases. And will exalt himself and magnify himself above every god, and he will speak astonishing things against the God of gods. He will succeed until indignation is completed, for what has been determined will be

⁷⁶ Baldwin, *Daniel*, 217.

⁷⁷ Keil and Delitzsch, *Daniel*, 801.

⁷⁸ Sprinkle, *Daniel*, 322.

⁷⁹ Garrett, “Daniel.”

done. ³⁷ And he will not pay attention to the gods of his fathers or to the desire of women. He will not pay attention to any gods, for he will magnify himself above all. ³⁸ He will honor the god of fortress instead. He will honor a god whom his fathers did not know with gold, silver, precious stones, and desirable things. ³⁹ He will make for⁸⁰ strongest fortresses with [the help of] a foreign god.⁸¹ Those who acknowledge him he will give great honors, and he will make them rulers over many.

Verse 36 begins with “and the king” As chapter 1 has shown, conservative scholars and critical scholars have a sharp disagreement on the identity of “the king.” The former no longer see Antiochus IV in the verse; most take the king to be the end-time antichrist. One of the arguments is that עד עת קץ (“until the time of the end”) of verse 35 indicates that the time setting for verse 36 is the end time that is confirmed by verse 40.⁸² However, this argument is not convincing. Verses 32b–35 appear to be a parenthetical (yet important) description of the persecuted people. The last mention of the king is verse 32a, which says that “he will seduce those who violate the covenant with flattery.” It would be odd if the text suddenly stops mentioning him anymore. As one reads the text or hears the message proclaimed, a natural understanding is that “the king” of verse 36 points back to the king of verse 32a.

Verse 36 contains the third occurrence of “כרצונו + עשה” in Daniel 11. The first two refer to Alexander (11:3) and Antiochus III (11:16). In both cases, the statement refers to a king just mentioned. As Miller points out, the expression has been used of God

⁸⁰ The text is ambiguous; it is not clear whether the ל of ל עשה is ל of advantage (“he will act for”) or disadvantage (“he will act to/against”). Most translations took the latter view, rendering ל עשה as “deal with” (ESV, CSB, NRSV) or “attack” (NIV, NET). But the implication of disadvantage is usually derived from the context; e.g., “As soon as Adoni-zedek, king of Jerusalem, heard how Joshua had captured Ai and had devoted it to destruction, *doing to Ai and its king as he had done to Jericho and its king*” (Josh 10:1). In Dan 11:7, the preposition “ב” follows “עשה” to convey the meaning of “attack”: ועשה בהם ויהזיק (“and he [the king of south] will act against them and will prevail”). Rashi understands the verse to mean “And he will construct [buildings] for the fortresses of the strongholds with a foreign god [i.e., in honor of a foreign god].” Rashi and Rosenberg, *Daniel, Ezra and Nehemiah*, 108.

⁸¹ Several scholars suggested the emendation of עם (“with”) to עם (“people”) and מבצרי (“fortresses”) to מבצרי (“those who fortify”), thus translating the sentence as “And he will take actions for those who fortify strongholds, a people of a foreign god.” The statement is then taken to refer to Antiochus IV’s dispatch of a Syrian garrison at the citadel of Akra (cf. 1 Macc 1:33–34). Ferdinand Hitzig, *Das Buch Daniel* (Leipzig: Weidmann, 1850), 213; Charles, *Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Daniel*, 317; Montgomery, *Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Daniel*, 463; Collins, *Daniel*, 388; Nelson, *Daniel*, 307. For עם of advantage, see John C. Beckman, *Williams’ Hebrew Syntax*, 3rd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 125.

⁸² See e.g., Miller, *Daniel*, 305; Tanner, *Daniel*, 686.

in Daniel 4:35 [MT 32] (וכמצביה עבד) and of Persia in 8:4.⁸³ It reveals that the kings are presumptuous and will be successful (at least for some time), but it also points to their eventual downfall (cf. v. 36b).⁸⁴ The expression may also be an allusion to Isaiah 14:12–15,⁸⁵ which is a description of the king of Babylon (cf. Jer 51:53; Matt 11:23; Luke 10:15). The use of the same description for the kings suggests that these kings conform to the same type.

Verse 36 continues to depict the king as “exalting himself and magnifying himself above every god” and “speaking astonishing things against the God of gods.” Verse 37 adds, “And he will not pay attention to the gods of his fathers He will not pay attention to any gods, for he will magnify himself above all.” These descriptions are also sources of controversy. As has been mentioned in chapter 2, these verses do not fit well with the witnesses of the ancient historians about Antiochus IV. To quote Polybius’s comments about Antiochus IV again, “In regard to public sacrifices and the honours paid to the gods, he surpassed all his predecessors on the throne.”⁸⁶ Some explain that verse 37a probably refers to Antiochus IV’s honor of Zeus at the expense of Apollo, the patron deity of the Seleucids.⁸⁷ However, this explanation does not fully solve the problem. The text speaks of “gods” (אלהי אבתיו) in the plural form. Moreover, the prophecy says that the king will magnify himself above *every* god and will not pay attention to *any* gods.

⁸³ Miller, *Daniel*, 306.

⁸⁴ Commenting on the expression in Dan 11:15, Newsom writes, “The phrases ‘he will do as he pleases’ and ‘no one able to stand before him’ recall the description of the ram at the peak of its power in 8:4, signaling that his demise will soon follow.” Newsom, *Daniel*, 344.

⁸⁵ The connection between Dan 11:36 and the description of the king of Babylon in Isaiah has been observed by others. See e.g., Collins, *Daniel*, 386; Seow, *Daniel*, 182. Báez suggests that Dan 11 alludes to the Tower of Babel story via Isa 13. Enrique Báez, “Allusions to Genesis 11:1–9 in the Book of Daniel: An Exegetical and Intertextual Study” (PhD diss., Andrews University, 2013), 239.

⁸⁶ Polybius, *Histories* 26.1.

⁸⁷ E.g., Hartman and Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel*, 302; Goldingay, *Daniel*, 1989; Seow, *Daniel*, 183.

The discrepancies between the ancient witnesses and the prophecy prompted conservative scholars to seek a fulfillment other than Antiochus IV. The underlying assumption of the search is that there should be a single person that will literally fulfill all the details of the prophecy. However, this assumption is not warranted. Verse 38–39a goes on to state that “he will honor the god of fortress instead. He will honor a god whom his fathers did not know with gold, silver, precious stones, and desirable things. He will construct strongest fortresses with a foreign god.” The juxtaposition of verses 36–37 and verses 38–39a causes a problem. How can a person who does not pay attention to *any* gods simultaneously *honor* a god? A sensible conclusion is that the prophecy is not intended to refer to one person strictly literally. The description appears to be an amalgamation of different personalities. The king is so arrogant that he pays no regard to any gods. On the other hand, he will honor a god who will help him succeed. As Baldwin comments, “The contradiction is intentional. This man ‘turned god’ will put all his wealth and energies into the war-machine, accept help of a foreign god if it suits him, and bestow his favours in the form of subregencies over conquered lands.”⁸⁸ Searching for a single literal fulfillment misses the point.

Scholars generally agree that “the God of gods” refers to the God of Israel (cf. אלה אלהי in Dan 2:47),⁸⁹ but the identification of חמדת נשים (“the desire of women”) and אלה מעוזים (“the god of fortress”) is difficult, if not impossible. חמדת נשים has been taken as a reference to (1) the nation of Israel⁹⁰; (2) Cleopatra, the sister of Antiochus

⁸⁸ Baldwin, *Daniel*, 219.

⁸⁹ Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel*, 248; Archer, *Daniel*, 144; Hartman and Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel*, 301; Sprinkle, *Daniel*, 325; Tanner, *Daniel*, 697.

⁹⁰ Rashi connects the phrase with “the fairest of women,” a phrase probably taken from Song 5:9. Rashi and Rosenberg, *Daniel, Ezra and Nehemiah*, 107.

IV⁹¹; (3) the goddess Nanaia⁹²; (4) Tammuz (Adonis to the Greeks)⁹³; (5) Dionysos⁹⁴; (6) the love of women or marital relations⁹⁵; and (7) Messiah.⁹⁶ The problem is that the text does not give any hints. All the proposals are at most guesswork. In light of the context, it is attempting to take *נשים חמדת* as a reference to a deity. However, using such a term for a deity is very unusual. In the end, one has to agree with Sprinkle's conclusion, "The ambiguity precludes nailing down the meaning."⁹⁷ In comparison, *אלה מעזים* is less ambiguous since *אלה* suggests a deity and *מעזים* has a military connotation. However, this is as specific as one can get. Though several suggestions have been made—Jupiter Capitolinus,⁹⁸ the Roman beast,⁹⁹ temporal power as a "god,"¹⁰⁰ or the personification of

⁹¹ George W. Buchanan, *The Book of Daniel*, Mellen Biblical Commentary, vol. 25 (Lewiston, NY: Mellen Biblical Press, 1999), 361.

⁹² This view is mentioned in Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel*, 249.

⁹³ Driver, *The Book of Daniel*, 194; Charles, *Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Daniel*, 316; Hartman and Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel*, 302; W. Sibley Towner, *Daniel*, Int (Atlanta: John Knox, 1984), 162.

⁹⁴ J. G. Bunge, "Der Gott Der Festungen Und Der Liebling Der Frauen: Zur Identifizierung Der Götter in Dan 11:36–39," *JSJ* 4, no. 2 (1973): 178.

⁹⁵ Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel*, 249; Archer, *Daniel*, 144; Andrew E. Steinmann, "Is the Antichrist in Daniel 11?" *BSac* 162, no. 646 (2005): 206. Keil and Delitzsch also understand the phrase as a reference to the king's lack of love for women, but they further understand the meaning of the phrase to be the king's lack of humanity in general. They wrote, "The 'love of women' is named as an example selected from the sphere of human piety, as that affection of human love and attachment for which even the most selfish and most savage of men feel some sensibility." Keil and Delitzsch, *Daniel*, 804–5. Jerome maintains that the text may be read in the other way: "And he shall be engrossed in lust for women." Jerome, *Jerome's Commentary on Daniel*, trans. Gleason L. Archer (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1958), 137.

⁹⁶ Philip Mauro, *The Seventy Weeks and the Great Tribulation* (Swengel, PA: Reiner, 1970); H. A. Ironside, *Daniel* (Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux, 2005), 149; Miller, *Daniel*, 307.

⁹⁷ Sprinkle, *Daniel*, 326.

⁹⁸ Calvin, *Daniel 7–12*, 348; Montgomery, *Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Daniel*, 463; Charles, *Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Daniel*, 316.

⁹⁹ Ironside, *Daniel*, 150.

¹⁰⁰ Steinmann, "Is the Antichrist in Daniel 11?," 207; Buchanan, *The Book of Daniel*, 362; Sprinkle, *Daniel*, 326.

war,¹⁰¹ Zeus (“a bastardized version of Baal Shamem”),¹⁰² or Satan¹⁰³—a certain case cannot be settled.

Overall, Daniel 11:36–39 is a continuation of verses 21–35, but it focuses on the king’s personality, especially on the religious aspect of him. It speaks of the king as extremely arrogant; he speaks against the God of gods and exalts himself above all gods and does not pay attention to any gods, including the gods of his fathers. The language is hyperbolic. Antiochus IV may be said to have partially fulfilled the prophecy. He indeed attacked the true God and defiled the Jerusalem temple in a way his fathers had not done. Mørkholm notes that “Antiochus IV was the first Hellenistic king to introduce divine epithets such as ‘God Manifest’ and ‘God Manifest, the Victorious’ on his coins.”¹⁰⁴ Although he was said to be more generous in gifting to the gods, he also attempted to rob the temple of Artemis when he was short of money. On the other hand, his predecessors did similar things. At the beginning of verse 36, the phrase *ועשה כרצונו* connects him with Alexander the Great and Antiochus III the Great and puts them all in the same mode. Both Alexander and Antiochus III had an exceedingly successful career until their further expansion plans were frustrated and then met a sudden death, a pattern Antiochus IV would follow. As mentioned in chapter 2, Philip II, father of Alexander the Great, put his own image among the Olympian gods at a festival procession. Alexander thought himself to be a god and requested the Greeks to acknowledge him as a god. Also, as Garrett points out, many of the Hellenistic kings bore divine epithets, such as “Antiochus II

¹⁰¹ Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel*, 249.

¹⁰² Seow, *Daniel*, 183.

¹⁰³ Tanner, *Daniel*, 703.

¹⁰⁴ Mørkholm, *Antiochus IV of Syria*, 132.

Theos (“god”), Cleopatra Thea (“goddess”), and Ptolemy V Epiphanes (“a manifestation [of god]”).¹⁰⁵

The arrogance of the king also reminds us of Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar. Nebuchadnezzar ordered all peoples, nations, and language groups to worship the image he made (Dan 3:1–6), an honor that only the true God is worthy of. He was furious when Daniel’s friends disobeyed his command and ordered their execution. He even said to them, “What god will deliver you out of my hands?” He had a successful career and was able to do whatever he pleased (Dan 5:18–19), but he attributed everything to himself and glorified himself (4:30; 5:20a). There was a trace of him exalting himself above all gods, though he was humbled (multiple times) by God and gave glory to Him (3:28; 4:2, 37; 5:21). Belshazzar knew these things, but he still did not honor God as his father Nebuchadnezzar did (5:22–23). Thus, he met his doom (5:25–31). Even on Darius—a ruler who is portrayed as most friendly to Daniel—there is a trace of exalting himself above every god, since he decreed that all petitions should be made to him and not to any god or man (6:6–9). These texts do not claim that the kings set themselves up above *all* gods *all* the time; yet these incidents demonstrate that they do have the characteristics of the arrogance described in Daniel 11:36.

The description of verse 39b—“Those who acknowledge him he will give great honors, and he will make them rulers over many”—is a general one; it is true of almost any ancient ruler.¹⁰⁶ For instance, Appian attests that Antiochus IV appointed Timarchus and Heraclides as satrap of Babylon and treasurer, respectively. Appian adds

¹⁰⁵ Garrett, “Daniel.”

¹⁰⁶ Keil and Delitzsch, *Daniel*, 806.

that both “had been his favorites.”¹⁰⁷ Diodorus records that Artaxerxes I dismissed the satraps who were hostile to him and gave the position to his friends.¹⁰⁸

Daniel 11:40–45

40 And at the time of the end, the king of the south will engage with him in battle. And the king of the north will storm against him with chariots, horsemen, and many ships; and he will enter lands and overflow and pass through. 41 And he will enter the beautiful land, and many¹⁰⁹ will stumble. But these will escape from his hand: Edom, Moab, and the main part of the Ammonites. 42 And he will stretch out his hand against lands, and the land of Egypt will not escape. 43 And he will gain control over the treasures of gold and silver and all the riches of Egypt, and the Libyans and the Cushites will be at his steps. 44 But reports from the east and the north will alarm him, and he will go out with a great rage to destroy and annihilate many. 45 He will pitch his royal tent between the seas and the beautiful holy mountain. And he will come to his end, with no one helping him.

This last passage of Daniel 11 is more controversial than verses 36–39. As has been summarized in chapter 1, most critical scholars, following Porphyry, understand the text as a prediction about a third Egyptian campaign of Antiochus IV. While Porphyry claims that it did happen, critical scholars read it as a genuine, yet also failed, prediction about the life of Antiochus IV because such a campaign never happened. Most conservative scholars locate the prophecy at the end of time.¹¹⁰ Behind the radically different interpretations lie the same two assumptions: The first assumption is that they expect the details of the entire prophecy to be fulfilled in a strictly literal way. The second assumption flows from the first one: they read the prophecy chronologically. However, this is not the case based on the analysis of the previous texts. While a general chronological order may be observed in Daniel 11:2–20, from verse 21 on, it is less so. Daniel 11:21–39 contains general statements that do not have clear chronological order.

¹⁰⁷ Appian, *Syrian Wars*, 45.

¹⁰⁸ Diodorus, *Library of History* 11.71.2.

¹⁰⁹ Some supply ארצות and translate the clause as “many [countries] will fall.” However, the verb יכשלו is masculine. It is, thus, possible to follow Symmachus, re-pointing רבנות as רבנות (“tens of thousands”). See Driver, *The Book of Daniel*, 198; Hartman and Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel*, 260.

¹¹⁰ More alternative interpretations have been proposed. See chap. 1 for more details.

The prophecy also contains hyperboles that either do not fit Antiochus IV well or may find more fulfillments or even better fit others. The same may be said of Daniel 11:40–45.

Verse 40 begins with a temporal marker, בעת קץ (“at the time of the end”). Most conservative scholars take this to indicate that the following events occur at the “absolute eschatological end.”¹¹¹ However, בעת קץ also occurs in Daniel 8:17, where Gabriel told Daniel that the vision Daniel saw is “for the time of the end” (לעת קץ החזון). In Daniel 8:19, Gabriel stated again that he was going to tell Daniel what will happen “at the end of the indignation” (באחרית הזעם), for [the vision is] for “the appointed time of the end” (למועד קץ). Here, “the time of the end,” “the end of the wrath,” and “the appointed time of the end” all refer to the same vision. Gabriel explicitly explains that the two-horned ram represents Media and Persia, and the he-goat represents Greece. Whether critical or conservative, most scholars take the little horn of Daniel 8 as a reference to Antiochus IV.¹¹² Similar language appears in Daniel 11:21–45. In verse 27, it is said that the plots of the kings will not succeed, for “there is yet an end at the appointed time” (עוד קץ למועד). In verse 35, some of the wise will stumble so that they may be refined, purified, and made white “until the time of the end” (עד עת קץ), for it is “still for the appointed time” (כי עוד למועד). Verse 36 states that the king will succeed “until indignation is completed” (עד כלה זעם). Verse 40 begins with “at the time of the end.” This is not to say קץ עת of Daniel 8 and 11 refers to the same time, but, at least, it shows that the phrase *could* refer to the time of Antiochus IV. As one examines the content of

¹¹¹ John R. Wilch, *Time and Event* (Leiden: Brill, 1969), 111; H. C. Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1969), 520; Miller, *Daniel*, 309; Gerhard Pfandl, “Daniel’s ‘Time of the End,’” *JATS* 7, no. 1 (1996): 148; Ronald W. Pierce, *Daniel*, Teach the Text Commentary (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2015), 187; Sprinkle, *Daniel*, 327.

¹¹² Miller, *Daniel*, 225; Tanner, *Daniel*, 490; Sprinkle, *Daniel*, 209. For arguments for the little horn as the antichrist, see Mark A. Hassler, “The Identity of the Little Horn in Daniel 8: Antiochus IV Epiphanes, Rome, or the Antichrist?,” *MSJ* 27, no. 1 (2016): 33–44.

Daniel 11:40–45, it will make clear that while some descriptions do not fit Antiochus IV, much of the passage fits his life.¹¹³

Verse 40 states that the king of the south will attack the king of the north, but the king of the north will counter-attack the king of the south. As Garrett points out, this verse gives a good account of the sixth Syrian war.¹¹⁴ Egypt was the first to prepare for war against Syria, but Antiochus IV discovered the offensive intention of the Ptolemaic government. He was so well prepared that when the Egyptian soldiers set out from Alexander, the Syrian army met them in the land of Egypt!¹¹⁵ It is said that the king of the north will storm against the king of the south “*with chariots, horsemen, and many ships.*” This could be an accurate description of many ancient wars and may be applied to Antiochus IV without any issue. It will, however, be difficult to apply to a war yet to be engaged in the future. One may see “ships” as a reference to modern warships, but “chariots” and “horsemen” are no longer used in modern wars. In any case, a literal reading cannot be sustained if one locates the events at the absolute end of time.

Verse 40b states that the king of the north will “enter lands and overflow and pass through.” The statement implies that the king of the north will be overwhelmingly victorious. This is true of Antiochus IV. He won a “decisive victory” over his nephew Ptolemy Philometor.¹¹⁶ He gained control over all of Egypt except its capital city Alexandria.¹¹⁷

In verse 41, the king of the north is said to enter the beautiful land (i.e., the land of Israel) and cause many to stumble. This is also true of Antiochus IV. After the

¹¹³ Paul R. House, *Daniel: An Introduction and Commentary*, TOTC, vol. 23 (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2018), 178–79.

¹¹⁴ Garrett, “Daniel.”

¹¹⁵ Mørkholm, *Antiochus IV of Syria*, 73.

¹¹⁶ Mørkholm, *Antiochus IV of Syria*, 74.

¹¹⁷ Livy, *The History of Rome* 45.11.1.

sixth Syrian war, he entered Jerusalem and slaughtered many Jews. One cannot fail to see that this is also true of Nebuchadnezzar. He besieged Jerusalem and plundered the temple (Dan 1:1–2).

Verse 41b mentions that Edom, Moab, and Ammonites will escape the attack of the king of the north. The Edomites and the Ammonites were hostile to the Jews during the Maccabean wars. Judas Maccabaeus fought wars against them (1 Macc 5:1–8). Some commentators contend that Antiochus IV spared them because they allied themselves to him.¹¹⁸ However, Moab does not occur in either 1 or 2 Maccabees. Young notes that Moab no longer existed as a nation in Antiochus IV’s time.¹¹⁹ While Charles simply dismisses “Moab” as “an interpolated gloss,”¹²⁰ Goldingay’s suggestion seems more plausible: in verses 40–43, the author “is recapitulating Nebuchadnezzar’s invasion.”¹²¹ Daniel may indeed recall the account of Ezekiel 25.¹²² Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Judah but spared its old enemies, Edom, Moab, and Ammon.¹²³

Verse 42–43a is also a good description of Antiochus IV, since he took control over the land of Egypt and attacked the land of Israel. However, the description also fits many great conquerors such as Alexander the Great, Antiochus III, and even the Roman generals after Antiochus IV.

¹¹⁸ E. W. Heaton, *The Book of Daniel* (London: SCM Press, 1956), 239; Seow, *Daniel*, 185. See also Hartman and Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel*, 304.

¹¹⁹ He also realizes that a strictly literal interpretation is not possible here; thus, he takes these nations as “symbolical representatives of nations which are enemies of God’s people.” Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel*, 252.

¹²⁰ Charles, *Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Daniel*, 320.

¹²¹ Goldingay, *Daniel*, 305. See also Garrett, “Daniel.”

¹²² Garrett, “Daniel.”

¹²³ Keil and Delitzsch write, “Edom, Moab, and Ammon, related with Israel by descent, are the old hereditary and chief enemies of this people, who have become by name representatives of all the hereditary and chief enemies of the people of God.” Keil and Delitzsch, *Daniel*, 809.

Verse 43b states that “the Libyans and the Cushites will be at his steps.” This is usually taken as a reference to the submission of the Libyans and the Cushites.¹²⁴ This is a surprising statement, as no historical accounts have mentioned anything about Antiochus IV’s dealing with the Libyans and the Cushites. Garrett suggests that the prophecy may allude to Egypt’s 22nd and 25th dynasties.¹²⁵ Another possible allusion is to Ezekiel 38:5.¹²⁶ In the prophecy of Ezekiel, Persia, Cush, and Libya¹²⁷ will join Gog in attacking Israel. Since Persia no longer existed by the time of Antiochus IV, its absence in the list is expected. The allusion to the Gog prophecy of Ezekiel 38–39 is suggestive, as Gog is a type of imperial power that is hostile to Israel.¹²⁸

Verse 44 also fits the last years of Antiochus IV. He appointed his son (Antiochus V) as joint king, entrusted the administration to his prime minister Lysias, and then led an army to the east of the kingdom to campaign against the Armenians and the Parthians. Presumably, he regarded the crisis in the north and east as greater than the Maccabean crisis. Antiochus IV’s first campaign was against the Armenians. He successfully subdued Artaxias, who had claimed himself king of Armenia.¹²⁹ Scholars

¹²⁴ Baldwin, *Daniel*, 224; Seow, *Daniel*, 185. Di Lella takes it to mean that Antiochus IV will “subdue Egypt completely.” Hartman and Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel*, 304.

¹²⁵ Garrett, “Daniel.” The Libyans and the Cushites ruled Egypt in these dynasties respectively. Shishak I of the 22nd Dynasty plundered Solomon’s temple (1 Kgs 14:25–25), and Tirhakah of the 25th Dynasty was also involved in Israel’s history (2 Kgs 19:9).

¹²⁶ Miller also notes the possible connection between Dan 11:43b and Ezek 38:5. Miller, *Daniel*, 311n113.

¹²⁷ The MT פּוּט is usually taken as a reference to Libya (the LXX renders פּוּט as Λίβυες). See David W. Baker, “Put (Person),” in *ABD*, ed. D. N. Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992).

¹²⁸ Garrett, “Daniel,” forthcoming. McGregor also concludes that “Gog and his nations are symbolic of the people of the world who are arraigned against the people of God.” L. John McGregor, “Ezekiel,” in *New Bible Commentary*, ed. D. A. Carson et al. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1994), 740.

¹²⁹ Diodorus, *Library of History*, 31.17a; Appian, *Syrian Wars*, 45–46, 66. The exact date of the Armenian campaign is not certain; most date it to 165 BC. Mørkholm, *Antiochus IV of Syria*, 167; Grainger, *The Syrian Wars*, 316.

have also mentioned the possible allusion to Sennacherib's account (cf. Isa 37:7; 2 Kgs 19:7).

In verse 45a, the king of the north is said to “pitch his royal tent between the seas and the beautiful holy mountain.” The plural form of ימים has led to various interpretations on the location of the royal tent.¹³⁰ Most modern scholars understand the plural form as the plural of extension¹³¹ or the poetic plural¹³² and take ימים as a reference to the Mediterranean Sea. Thus, the prophecy is usually taken as that the king will pitch his tent somewhere between the Mediterranean coast and Jerusalem (or Mount Zion).¹³³ These interpretations, however, do not explain why the prophecy makes this point here. What is the significance of pitching his royal tent between the Mediterranean Sea and the beautiful holy mountain? Garrett is probably right in pointing out that “the phrase ‘beautiful holy mountain’ invokes Zion theology and alludes to something like the assault against Zion and YHWH’s anointed described in Psalm 2:1–6.”¹³⁴ In chapter 9 of the book, Daniel prayed for the “holy mountain” of God, because God’s wrath was poured out upon it due to Israel’s sin; Jerusalem and God’s people had become a byword among all around them (Dan 9:16, 20; cf. 11:36b). Ezekiel 38–39 prophesies that Israel will be attacked again by the nations under the leadership of Gog (cf. Ps 2:1–2). Gog and his army will come from the north to the mountains of Israel, but they will fall on the

¹³⁰ Porphyry identifies the place as Apedno, located between the Tigris and the Euphrates (the “seas”). Jerome argues that the “seas” are the Dead Sea and the Mediterranean Sea; hence, the tent will be in Apedno near Nicopolis (formally called Emmaus). Both Porphyry and Jerome take אפדנו as a place name. Calvin takes the seas as the Euxine (i.e., the Black Sea) and the Persian Gulf. Hävernick sees the Caspian Sea and the Persian Gulf. Jerome, *Commentary on Daniel*, 140–42; Calvin, *Daniel 7–12*, 365; Montgomery, *Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Daniel*, 467. Archer, following Jerome, identifies “seas” as the Dead Sea and the Mediterranean Sea, though without certainty. Archer, *Daniel*, 148.

¹³¹ Goldingay, *Daniel*, 280.

¹³² Keil and Delitzsch, *Daniel*, 810; Driver, *The Book of Daniel*, 200; Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel*, 253; Hartman and Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel*, 273. Driver cites Deut 33:19 and Judg 5:17 as support.

¹³³ Seow, *Daniel*, 185.

¹³⁴ Garrett, “Daniel,” forthcoming.

mountains of Israel (Ezek 38:2–4; cf. Ps 2:4–9). The holy mountain is the seat of God’s anointed king (Ps 2:6), pitching his *royal tent* between the seas and the beautiful holy mountain implies that the king intends to usurp the kingship of God’s anointed king. The allusions to Ezekiel 38–39 and Psalm 2 can better account for the mention of “beautiful holy mountain” in Daniel 11:45a.

With this understanding, one may now examine the mention of ימים. Daniel 7:2–3 is the only other place “sea” is mentioned. The four beasts in the vision of Daniel 7 all come out of the sea. Hence, “sea” is associated with the source of evil powers against God. Daniel 11:45a, thus, may allude to this association and contribute to the Zion theology. Several scholars have pointed out that the sea in Daniel 7:2–3 is not to be identified with the Mediterranean Sea, as it makes no sense to say that the four kingdoms (represented by the four beasts) emerge out of the Mediterranean.¹³⁵ Likewise, one should probably not attempt to identify the “seas” of Daniel 11:45a with the Mediterranean Sea or any other sea.

Verse 45 is frequently understood as that the king will die in the holy land and thus, it is either a failed prophecy about the end of Antiochus IV¹³⁶ or a prophecy about the end-time antichrist.¹³⁷ However, neither understanding is warranted. While Ezekiel 39:4 explicitly states that Gog and his armies will fall on the mountains of Israel,¹³⁸ Daniel 11:45 does not make such a claim. House correctly notes that the verse “does not specify that he will die in *the glorious land*.”¹³⁹ The prophecy should not be read in

¹³⁵ Montgomery, *Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Daniel*, 285; Collins, *Daniel*, 294–95.

¹³⁶ E.g., Collins, *Daniel*, 389–90.

¹³⁷ E.g., Keil and Delitzsch, *Daniel*, 810–11.

¹³⁸ It is worth noting that Ezek 39:4 should not be read literally either, since the following verse (Ezek 39:5) states that Gog will fall in the open field.

¹³⁹ House, *Daniel*, 179.

strictly chronological order.¹⁴⁰ In fact, verse 44 has placed the king outside the holy land.¹⁴¹ The allusions to other biblical passages in verse 45a indicate that this otherwise surprising statement is probably put here for a theological reason. It ties the king's fall closely with his hostility against God and his intention to usurp God's anointed king. The king's death indeed fits the death of Antiochus IV; it also fits many other rulers under the judgment of God—*“he will come to his end, with no one helping him.”*

A Proposal for a Typological Reading of Daniel 11

Daniel 11 has long been a focus of scholarly debate. Conservative and critical scholars are sharply divided on its interpretation. Within the chapter, verses 36–45 are more controversial. Critical scholars unanimously take these verses (especially verses 40–45) as a failed prophecy about the end of Antiochus IV. Conservative scholars are further divided among themselves. While some see fulfillments in Rome, Herod the Great, Roman emperors, the papacy, etc., most of them see the end-time antichrist in these verses. As has been pointed out, regardless of their differences in interpretation, most of them take the prophecy as single-fulfillment direct prophecy and tend to interpret it in a strictly literal way, attempting to put the prophecy in chronological order. Both camps agree that Daniel 11:2–35 is an accurate representation of the history from Cyrus to Antiochus IV. They also agree that verses 36–45 do not fit well with the life of Antiochus IV. Critical scholars conclude that Daniel 11:40–45 is the only genuine, yet failed, prophecy of the chapter; the rest of the chapter is just a pseudo-prophecy. The stylistic similarities between Daniel 11 (and other prophecies of Daniel) and the “Akkadian Prophecies” lead the critical scholars to contend further that Daniel 11 is

¹⁴⁰ In v. 41, the king is already said to have entered the beautiful land. Even if the prophecy is read in a chronological order, it is reasonable to assume that he had already pitched his tent in the holy land.

¹⁴¹ House, *Daniel*, 179.

essentially no different from the “Akkadian Prophecies” in that they are all *vaticinium ex eventu* (“prophecy from/after the event”). Conservative scholars do not believe so. They either attempt to find a historical entity—whether a person, a kingdom, or a system—that can fit all the descriptions of Daniel 11:36–45 or locate it at the end-time.

This dissertation proposes a different approach—a typological interpretation of Daniel 11. It argues that both critical scholarship and conservative scholarship are faulty. A strictly literal reading of Daniel 11 cannot be maintained throughout the chapter. While Daniel 11 bears stylistic similarities with the “Akkadian Prophecies,” it differs from it in several places (see the discussion in chap. 4). As a biblical prophecy, it shares features with other biblical passages that are intended to be read in a typological way. Chapter 3 has argued that both the virgin birth prophecy of Isaiah 7:14 and the Davidic covenant of 2 Samuel 7:12–16 should be read typologically. The following section attempts to lay out the common features that Daniel 11 and the other two passages share.

Ambiguities Exist in the Prophecy

2 Samuel 7:12–16, Isaiah 7:14, and Daniel 11 all have elements that appear to be ambiguous and are thus open for multiple fulfillments. In 2 Samuel 7:12–16, the promise concerns the “seed” of David. It restricts the fulfillment to the descendants of David. At the same time, the term opens the way for multiple fulfillments. In Isaiah 7:14, the prophecy concerns a young woman giving birth to a son who will be called “Immanuel.” In this case, the “son,” the “young woman,” and the title of “Immanuel” are all ambiguous. In the case of Daniel 11, both “the king of the north” and “the king of the south” already have multiple referents. “The king” in Daniel 11:36 is more ambiguous. Other terms such as *נגיד ברית עם*, *משכילי עם*, *חמדת נשים*, and *אלה מעזים* are also vague and *may* have multiple references. However, one should not press a detail or a peculiar term too much. Ambiguity is usually connected with the type.

Discrepancies Exist between the Prophecy and the (Initial) Fulfillment(s)

At first glance, this feature may strike readers as surprising. If there are discrepancies between a prophecy and a fulfillment, the most natural conclusion is that either the fulfillment or the prophecy is false. However, the conclusion is not necessarily true. It is also possible that the fulfillment has not fully realized the prophecy.

In the case of the Davidic covenant, God promised David that his seed would succeed him and would build a house for God. God would also establish his kingdom forever. God will be his son and will not leave him. It is easy to see how Solomon started to fulfill the promise as he succeeded David as king and built the temple for God. Nevertheless, one also observes the tension between the promise and King Solomon as he passed away. A more significant discrepancy appears as Jerusalem fell and the temple was destroyed.¹⁴² The Israelites thus looked ahead for future fulfillments.

In the case of Isaiah 7:14, the Lord promised that a “virgin” would give birth to a son whose title will be “Immanuel,” and he would be a sign of Judah’s deliverance from the Syro-Ephraim crisis so that the house of David would be preserved. In Isaiah 8:3a, Isaiah had a son, and YHWH confirms with Isaiah that the Syro-Ephraim crisis will soon be over (Isa 8:3b–4). Thus, Isaiah’s son appears to have fulfilled the prophecy. However, Isaiah 8:9–10 looks beyond the Syro-Ephraim crisis and Isaiah 9–11 starts to talk about yet another son who will bring salvation to God’s people. Readers are thus invited to look for another fulfillment.

In Daniel 11, a general correspondence between history may be easily observed so that readers may easily see the fulfillment of the prophecy. On the other hand, one also observes discrepancies between the prophecy and the fulfillment. For

¹⁴² Goppelt also notes the discrepancies between God’s promise to David and its initial fulfillment in Solomon when he writes, “[Solomon] did not measure up to the messianic promise that was made to the house of David (2 Sam 7:11ff.). Leonhard Goppelt, *Typos: The Typological Interpretation of the Old Testament in the New*, trans. Donald H. Madvig (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 84.

instance, Daniel 11:22–24 appears to be an exaggerated description about the military successes of Antiochus IV. Daniel 11:25–27 does not fit well with the sixth Syrian war in the strictly literal sense. The attack of the Kittim in verse 30 better fits Antiochus III than Antiochus IV. Daniel 11:36–39 contains more hyperboles and does not fit Antiochus IV perfectly. Daniel 11:40–45 contains allusions to earlier events or biblical texts; some details do not fit Antiochus IV either. These discrepancies do not deny the fulfillment; rather, they point to fulfillment(s) beyond the initial fulfillment(s).

Scripture Supports Multiple Fulfillments

Scriptural support of multiple fulfillments must be ascertained for a typological interpretation to be established. In the case of 2 Samuel 7:12–16, support for Solomon being a fulfillment is well supported (2 Kgs 2:24; 5:5; 8:17–21; 1 Chr 22:8–10; 28:6). God’s promise to David is repeatedly mentioned or alluded to in God’s dealing with the kings of Judah (1 Kgs 11:13, 34; 2 Kgs 8:18–19; 19:34; 2 Chr 21:17). Finally, Jesus Christ fulfilled the promise (Luke 1:32–33; John 1:14; 2:19–21). For Isaiah 7:14, Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz has fulfilled the prophecy (Isa 8:3–4). Jesus Christ has also fulfilled the prophecy (Matt 1:22–23).

For Daniel 11, the first case is a quotation of Daniel 11:31 by Jesus Christ in the Olivet Discourse (Matt 24; Mark 13). “Setting up the abomination that makes desolation” (Dan 11:31) has been fulfilled in Antiochus IV when he dedicated the Jerusalem temple to Zeus and sacrificed swine on the altar (1 Macc 1:54). Nevertheless, in the Olivet Discourse, Jesus Christ explicitly quotes Daniel (Matt 24:15; Mark 13:14), prophesying that it will happen again. What Jesus means by “the abomination that causes desolation” is debatable.¹⁴³ Nevertheless, whatever the phrase means in this context, as long as it will be fulfilled, a typological reading is favored for Daniel 11:31.

¹⁴³ Robert H. Stein, *Jesus, the Temple and the Coming Son of Man: A Commentary on Mark 13* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2014), 90. Stein lists eight proposed interpretations.

Furthermore, in the Olivet Discourse, the destruction of the Second Temple in AD 70 and the Second Coming of Christ are juxtaposed. Both events involve the suffering of the saints under their enemies, followers of Jesus are encouraged to prepare for this suffering, and ultimately, God will act for the elect. While in Daniel the focus is on the image of the enemy, and in the gospel the focus is on the followers of Christ, the parallel cannot be easily missed.¹⁴⁴

The apostle Paul, in 2 Thessalonians 2:3–4, writes that before the Second Coming of Christ, “the man of lawlessness,” “the son of destruction,” will appear before a rebellion, as one “who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God.” The description in Daniel 11:36–40, once considered not quite suitable to Antiochus IV, now fits very well with “the man of lawlessness.” Again, followers of Christ are told that they are not to be shaken by the enemy and that ultimately Christ will destroy him. He fulfills the type prophesied in Daniel 11.¹⁴⁵

Another possible allusion is in Revelation 13 and 17. Within Daniel 11:21–45, the subject suddenly shifts in verse 33 from the king to the wise, then shifts back to the king in verse 36. These verses briefly summarize the situation of God’s people during tribulations. The description is so general that it suits “persecutions of any time or place.”¹⁴⁶ Daniel was given insights and understanding (שכל and בינה, Dan 9:22). In Daniel 11:33, the wise will make many understand (שכל and בין). Finally, in Daniel 12:10, the wise will understand (שכל and בין). G. K. Beale argues that the combination of

¹⁴⁴ Moreover, the insertion of “let the readers understand” (ὁ ἀναγινώσκων νοείτω) seems to allude to “the wise of people will make many understand” (משכילי עם יבינו לרבים) in Dan 11:33.

¹⁴⁵ Ford thus comments on 11:36–39: “The dramatic intensity of events increases as the chapter progresses. These verses transcend Antiochus and pagan Rome, though including reminiscences of them. They are applied in the New Testament to antichrist.” Desmond Ford, *Daniel* (Nashville: Southern Pub. Assn., 1978), 271. See also James M. Hamilton Jr., *With the Clouds of Heaven: The Book of Daniel in Biblical Theology*, *New Studies in Biblical Theology* 32 (Nottingham: Apollos, 2014), 192–95.

¹⁴⁶ Garrett, “Daniel,” forthcoming.

wisdom (*σοφία*) and understanding (*νοῦς*) in Revelation 13:18 and 17:9 is best to be understood against the background of Daniel. These passages share a set of common ideas:

(1) the requirement to have ‘insight and understanding’ in order to comprehend; (2) eschatological events of tribulation; (3) brought about by an evil king(s), who persecutes the saints and deceives others into acknowledging his absolute sovereignty; (4) further, the need for such understanding is communicated in a vision to a seer (in Daniel 9, 11–12 and Revelation 17 it is an angelic communication).¹⁴⁷

Both Revelation 13 and 17, therefore, may be regarded as typological fulfillments of Daniel 11:21–45.

The New Testament’s use of Daniel 11:21–45 shown above clearly demonstrates that the prophecy is fulfilled multiple times in different ages. Therefore, the assumption that the passage is a prediction of a single person, whether Antiochus IV or another entity, does not fit the biblical data. The evidence found in the New Testament requires a typological approach to the passage.

Fulfillments Fulfill the Type

A type must be demonstratively established before one can call an interpretation a “typological” one. One must demonstrate that all fulfillments fulfill the type. As chapter 3 has demonstrated, in 2 Samuel 7:12–14, the type is the Davidic king who is a temple builder and a son of God. In Isaiah 7:14, the type is the birth of a son that signifies God’s deliverance.

Daniel has its characteristics that set it apart from the other passages. Stylistically, it is similar to the “Akkadian Prophecies.” It gives a prophecy of several kings in succession. Overall, Daniel 11:2–20 corresponds well with the known history about the kings. It is tempting to see these verses as single-fulfillment predictions.

¹⁴⁷ G. K. Beale, “The Danielic Background for Revelation 13:18 and 17:9,” *TynBul* 31 (1980): 164.

However, there are reasons that one should read the entire chapter in a typological way. First, earlier chapters suggest that the kings conform to the same type. The kings in Daniel 11 are all Persian and Hellenistic kings. Persia and Greece belong to the same image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream (Dan 2). This image will be broken by a stone not cut by human hand. The two kingdoms are also represented by beasts which are contrasted by and will be judged before the one like the Son of Man (Dan 7).¹⁴⁸ Second, Daniel 11 also puts the kings in the same mode. The same title is used for the kings. Before the kingdom was divided, all were called kings (11:2). After the kingdom was divided, the kings all share the same title; they were either "the king of the north" or "the king of the south." There are no essential differences between them: They act as they please (11:3, 16, 36); they attack each other whenever they can; they use their daughters for the sake of their own political advantages (11:6, 17);¹⁴⁹ they lie to each other at the same table (11:27). The prophecy finally rests on Antiochus IV and alludes to earlier events and biblical passages. The prophecy employs the kings, especially Antiochus IV, to set up a type. The type is an arrogant, treacherous, and power-hunting earthly ruler who sets himself against God and against his saints. Antiochus IV is a fulfillment of the type; other kings also fulfill the type. Even by reading Daniel 11 alone, one may reasonably expect more fulfillments of the type.

Not All Fulfillments Are Equal

It is crucial to bear in mind that not all typological fulfillments are equal.

Solomon and the kings of Judah do not fulfill God's promise to David in the same way.

¹⁴⁸ Similarly, Hamilton writes, "They [The visions of Daniel 2, 7, 9, and 10–12] pattern the activities of the wicked powers that have exercised beastly dominion ever since God's vicegerent surrendered that dominion through rebellious sin against the Sovereign." Hamilton, *With the Clouds of Heaven*, 104.

¹⁴⁹ Political marriages were common in the ancient world. Dan 11 mentions two of them, one initiated by the king of the south, and the other initiated by the king of the north. These two incidents demonstrate the *typical* way of the deeds of all rulers.

Although all may be called fulfillments of the promise, while Solomon built the temple for God, the other kings of Judah did not. Thus, a typological fulfillment does not require that a fulfillment fulfills the promise in every detail. The temple Jesus Christ built is also different from the physical temple built by Solomon. Jesus Christ sitting on the throne of David fulfills the promise at a higher level than Solomon and the kings of Judah do.

Likewise, Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz and Jesus Christ fulfill Isaiah's prophecy at different levels. While the former was born of a human father and a human mother, Jesus Christ was born of a virgin conceived by the Holy Spirit. Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz cannot be called "Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace" (Isa 9:6), whereas Jesus Christ saves God's people from an enemy greater than the Syro-Ephraim ally.

For Daniel 11, one may say that all the kings mentioned in the prophecy have fulfilled the same type. However, not all fulfill the prophecy equally. Not all rulers of Daniel 11 are cunning or power-hunting at the same level, not all of them are able to wage war against others and be victorious at the same level, and not all of them are hostile to God and the saints to the same degree. Thus, one may find that some are more like Antiochus IV, others are less like him, but all conform to the same type.

Conclusion

Although interpretations of details may vary, scholars generally agree that Daniel 11:21–35 accurately describe Antiochus IV. Verses 36–45 are hotly debated. Most critical scholars take verses 40–45 as a failed prophecy, and most conservative scholars take verse 36–45 as a prophecy about the end-time antichrist. Contra to both interpretations, this chapter has argued that Daniel 11:21–35 is not radically different from verses 36–45. It contains exaggerated statements that do not fit well with Antiochus IV. Some descriptions fit other rulers better. It also contains general statements that may be applied to other ages.

This chapter, along with chapter 4, argues for a typological reading of Daniel 11. Daniel 11 shares a common set of features with other biblical passages such as 2 Samuel 7:12–14 and Isaiah 7:14: (1) Certain ambiguous elements exist in all the passages, which opens the way for multiple references. (2) Discrepancies exist between the prophecy/promise and the initial fulfillment so that readers may expect more fulfillment(s). (3) Multiple fulfillments must find support from the Scripture. (4) A type must be identified so that all fulfillments may be said to fulfill the same type. (5) Not all fulfillments fulfill the type equally in every detail of the prophecy. These common features suggest that Daniel 11 should also be read typologically, just as one should read 2 Samuel 7:12–14 and Isaiah 7:14.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

Summary of the Study

This chapter provides a summary of the monograph, followed by implications of the study. This dissertation seeks to re-examine Daniel 11 and propose a typological reading of the chapter. Chapter 1 reviews the scholarly interpretation of Daniel 11, focusing on the most controversial section, verses 36–45. The consensus among the critical scholars is that Daniel 11:2–39 is a pseudo-prophecy from Cyrus to Antiochus IV; namely, it is a prophecy after the events. Daniel 11:40–45 is a genuine prophecy, but it failed. It predicts a third campaign of Antiochus IV against Egypt, which never occurred. The conservative scholars agree that the last six (or ten) verses do not fit the life of Antiochus IV. They, however, argue that these verses are not about Antiochus IV at all. While most of them take these verses as a prophecy about the end-time antichrist, others see different fulfillments, such as Rome in 65–54 BC, the Roman Empire, King Herod and Caesar Augustus, Vespasian and Titus (AD 67–70), Constantine I and the Pope, France and Turkey, Papacy as the antichrist, or the antichrist and Russia. Besides these, a small number of commentators also hold a typological interpretation. Chapter 1 also attempts to assess the strengths and weaknesses of each interpretation.

Chapter 2 briefly surveys the history from Cyrus the Great to Antiochus IV. Since the prophecy of Daniel 11 is mainly about the kings of Persia and the Hellenistic kings, this chapter mainly focuses on these kings. Since almost all scholars agree that Daniel 11:2–35 is historically accurate and the rest of the verses do not fit Antiochus IV well, preliminary observations are made about Antiochus IV and Daniel 11:21–45. The

observations confirm that parts of verses 36–45 do not fit Antiochus IV. However, it also challenges the consensus regarding verses 21–35, as some of the descriptions do not fit Antiochus IV either. How, then, does one account for the discrepancies between the prophecy of Daniel 11 and the historical accounts?

Chapter 3 selects two well-known Old Testament passages for case study: 2 Samuel 7:12–16 and Isaiah 7:14. It concludes that both passages should be interpreted typologically. A key feature of typological interpretation is that there appears to be discrepancies between the prophecy/promise and the initial fulfillment. The discrepancies do not negate the initial fulfillment; rather, they indicate that it has not exhausted the prophecy/promise. Therefore, readers are to expect another or even multiple fulfillments in the future. Later biblical passages confirm the future fulfillment(s). Chapter 3 provides a model for a typological interpretation and lays a foundation for the proposed interpretation of Daniel 11.

Chapters 4 and 5 are devoted to the interpretation of Daniel 11. Each chapter begins with a verse-by-verse commentary of Daniel 11 (vv. 2–20 and 21–45, respectively). Chapter 4 allots a separate section to discuss the relationship between Daniel 11 and the so-called “Akkadian Prophecies,” which include the Shulgi Speech, the Speech of Marduk, Prophecy Text A, the Uruk Prophecy, and the Dynastic Prophecy. While acknowledging the stylistic similarities, the study also points out that Daniel 11 is radically different in several ways.

Chapter 5 contains a separate section for discussion of typology. It lays out the features that Daniel 11 shares with 2 Samuel 7:12–16 and Isaiah 7:14. These common features suggest that, just like 2 Samuel 7:12–16 and Isaiah 7:14, Daniel 11 should be read in a typological way. These features include the following: the ambiguities of certain elements in the prophecy, which may allow for multiple references; discrepancies exist between the prophecy and the initial fulfillment, pointing to future fulfillment(s); later

biblical witnesses confirm multiple fulfillments of the prophecy; a type exists in the prophecy that may be fulfilled multiple times; not all fulfillments fulfill the prophecy in the same way.

This dissertation argues that Daniel 11 is to be read typologically. The prophesied type in Daniel 11 is an arrogant, treacherous, and power-hunting earthly ruler who sets himself against God and his saints. Antiochus IV is a fulfillment of the type. The other kings mentioned in the chapter also fulfill the type. The prophecy may be more literally true for some kings and less for others, but all share some elements of the type.

Implications of the Study

This study has at least three implications. The first implication is about the dating of the book of Daniel. Critical scholars date the book of Daniel to ca. 165 BC (also called the Maccabean dating), shortly before the death of Antiochus IV. Chapter 1 has pointed out the challenge of manuscripts to the late dating. This study makes more contributions to the issue of dating. The key argument for the Maccabean dating is that Daniel 11:2–35 accurately represents history from Cyrus to Antiochus IV, and that Daniel 11:40–45 does not fit Antiochus IV. However, this study shows that even in Daniel 11:21–35, some descriptions do not fit very well with the life of Antiochus IV. If Daniel 11 is written shortly before Antiochus IV's death, his account of Antiochus IV should be the most accurate section. Verses such as 36–38 are purely descriptive; they are not predictions about Antiochus IV at all. However, even critical scholars have to admit that these verses appear to contradict the testimonies of other ancient historians, especially that of Antiochus IV's contemporary Polybius. If Daniel 11:40–45 is not intended to predict a third campaign of Antiochus IV against Egypt, the Maccabean dating loses all its basis.

The second implication of the study is about the application of Daniel 11. If the typological reading proposed in this dissertation is accepted, then the passage has more

direct connections with Christians of any age. The type prophesied in Daniel 11 has been fulfilled in ancient times; it will continue to be fulfilled in this age and the age to come. Daniel 11:36–45 should not be used to search for an antichrist who will fulfill the prophecy in a strictly literal way. The prophecy is about a type of antichrist. Many antichrists have come, and more will come. Some fit the type in a more literal way, and others in a less literal way, but they all fulfill the type prophesied in the chapter. Finally, it should also be made clear that God has determined the end of the antichrist(s).

A third implication of the study is in the furthering of the understanding of typology and biblical prophecy/promise. Mitchell L. Chase contends that all biblical types point to Jesus Christ.¹ This study, however, reveals that a type of antichrist also exists. Robert L. Hubbard Jr. maintains that “the OT prophets have a telescopic view of the future” and that “an OT prophecy may have two fulfillments, one near the prophet’s lifetime, and one long past it.”² However, the model of “double-fulfillment” “does not explain why the two specific events were juxtaposed by the prophet,” whereas typology explains the juxtaposition of the persons and events.³

This study argues that Daniel 11 is not a single-fulfillment literal prediction about historical events (though it includes some of them); rather, it is a typological prophecy. With this study, I now seek to propose for a tentative definition of typological prophecy/promise: Typological prophecy/promise is a prophecy/promise about a type rather than a single-fulfillment prediction. The type has more than one manifestation (or fulfillment) in the course of history. A typological prophecy/promise may also be about a

¹ Mitchell L. Chase, *40 Questions about Typology and Allegory*, 40 Questions Series, ed. Benjamin L. Merkle (Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 2020), 53.

² William W. Klein, Craig L. Blomberg, and Robert I. Hubbard, *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*, rev. ed. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2004), 376–77.

³ Duane A. Garrett, “Type, Typology,” *EDBT*, 785. Gary V. Smith has a helpful discussion on interpretive issues in prophetic texts in his *Interpreting the Prophetic Books: An Exegetical Handbook*, *Handbooks for Old Testament Exegesis* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 2014), 113–40. However, an analysis on typological prophecies such as those studied in this dissertation appear to be lacking.

series of persons or events that fit the same type. The fulfillments often include, but are not limited to, a historical one in the near future and an escalated eschatological one in the distant future. For instance, 2 Samuel 7:12–16 is a promise about the seed of David that finds fulfillments in Solomon, the kings of Judah, and ultimately Jesus Christ. Isaiah 7:14 is about the miraculous birth of a son as a sign of salvation; it is fulfilled historically in Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz and eschatologically in Jesus Christ.

The book of Joel contains a series of events that are all manifestations of the Day of the Lord. The events include the locust plague (Joel 1:2–20), the invasion of the northern enemy (Joel 2:1–11), the reversal of the two—the deliverance from the northern enemy (Joel 2:20) and the healing of the land (Joel 2:21–27), the pouring out of the Spirit (Joel 2:28–32 [MT 3:1–5]) as well as the judgment on the nations (Joel 3:1–21 [MT 4:1–21]).⁴ Among the series of manifestations of the Day of the Lord, the outpouring of the Spirit contains a variety of manifestations, including “prophesying, dreaming (inspired) dreams, seeing visions, and God-given wonders.”⁵ An unequivocal fulfillment of the prophecy is found at the Pentecost (Acts 2:1–21). Nevertheless, the Pentecost marks only the beginning of an eschatological era, and not all details of the Joel prophecy are fulfilled on that day. The book of Acts continues to present more manifestations of the outpouring of the Spirit: Stephen was “full of the Holy Spirit” and saw a vision of the glory of God and Jesus Christ standing at the right hand of God (Acts 7:55). Cornelius saw an angel of God in a vision (Acts 10:3–6). Peter also saw a vision in prayer (Acts 10:9–16). The event in Acts 10:44–48 is another great example. When Peter was preaching to the people at Cornelius’s home, the Holy Spirit came upon all those who

⁴ Duane A. Garrett, *The Problem of the Old Testament: Hermeneutical, Schematic & Theological Approaches* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2020), 343–51.

⁵ Roy E. Ciampa and Brian S. Rosner, “First Corinthians,” in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, ed. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 737.

were listening. The Jews who went with Peter were astonished to see that the Holy Spirit was even poured on the Gentiles, but Peter said, “They have received the Holy Spirit *just as we have*” (Acts 10:47). Peter realized that he just witnessed another outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

Daniel 11 is similar to the book of Joel. Daniel 11:2–20 contains a series of kings; Daniel 21–45 prophesies about a king that is more of a type than a specific individual, with Antiochus IV Epiphanes being a prototype of the type. The kings before Antiochus IV are all fulfillments of the type. After Antiochus IV, more earthly rulers will continue to fulfill the same type. An escalated eschatological fulfillment will be found in the Antichrist described in 2 Thessalonians 2:3–4.

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ABSTRACT

A PROPOSAL FOR A TYPOLOGICAL READING OF DANIEL 11

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This dissertation argues that Daniel 11 is a typological prophecy and, thus, it should be read typologically. While agreeing that Daniel 11:36–45 does not fit the life of Antiochus IV in a strictly literal way, contra the scholarly consensus, this dissertation argues that Daniel 11:21–35 is not strictly literally true of Antiochus IV either. Discrepancies between the prophecy and historical accounts about Antiochus IV exist in both Daniel 11:36–45 and 11:21–35. However, the discrepancies between Daniel 11 and the historical accounts do not necessarily prove that Daniel gets history wrong. Rather, they are common characteristics of biblical typology. In Daniel 11, they signify that Antiochus IV typifies those who come after him (and also includes those who come before him). The study also shows that discrepancies between the prophecy/promise and the initial fulfillment is a feature of prophetic typology. The discrepancies do not negate the initial fulfillment, which is confirmed by Scripture; rather, they point to future fulfillment(s), which will also be affirmed by later biblical texts. The multiple fulfillments do not fulfill the type at the same level, but they all fulfill the same type that is promised/prophesied.

Chapter 1 reviews the scholarly interpretation of Daniel 11 and assesses the strengths and weaknesses of each interpretation. Chapter 2 briefly surveys the history from Cyrus the Great to Antiochus IV. Chapter 3 studies two OT passages (2 Sam 7:12–16; Isa 7:14), concluding that both passages should be interpreted typologically, thus

providing a model for a typological interpretation of Daniel 11. Chapters 4 and 5 are devoted to the interpretation of Daniel 11, beginning with verse-by-verse commentary. Chapter 4 allots a separate section to discuss the relationship between Daniel 11 and the so-called “Akkadian Prophecies.” While Daniel 11 bears stylistic similarities with the “Akkadian Prophecies,” it differs from these Akkadian texts in other ways. After the verse-by-verse study of Daniel 11, chapter 5 then compares Daniel 11 and the OT passages (2 Sam 7:12–16; Isa 7:14) and proposes a typological reading of Daniel 11. Chapter 6 summarizes the dissertation and provides implications of the study, which concludes with a proposal for a tentative definition of typological prophecy/promise.