

#6 – THE KING OF THE SOUTH IS EGYPT AND REMAIN CONSISTENT THROUGHOUT THE PROPHECY

Within the context of Daniel 11, it is not difficult to discover that the ‘King of the South’ is a title that refers to Egypt throughout the prophecy. When the kings of the north and south are fighting in verses 6-8, the king of the south “enter[s] the fortress of the king of the north” and “carr[ies] their gods captive to Egypt”. It follows then, that Egypt must be the home of the king of the south. These verses (Daniel 11:6-8) detail the intrigues that occurred during the 3rd Syrian war when Berenice, daughter of Ptolemy II (king of the south), made an alliance by marriage with Antiochus II (king of the north) who sent his previous wife Laodice into exile to complete the arrangement. When Berenice’s father, Ptolemy II died, Antiochus II returned to his previous wife Laodice. Antiochus II died shortly thereafter, presumably poisoned by Laodice. Berenice, her son and attendants were murdered so Laodice could place her own son on the throne of the kingdom.

The text tells us that ‘a branch from her (Berenice’s) roots’, a reference to Berenice’s brother, Ptolemy III, would entered Antiochus’ kingdom and recover idols, gold and silver and return them to Egypt. Ptolemy III did push all the way into Babylon and beyond where he recovered 2,500 images previously taken from Egypt by Cambyses’ during the reign of Persia as well as 40,000 talents of silver and 4,000 talents of gold. This account is known from Jerome’s commentary on Daniel and the Adulis inscription, which was copied from a marble inscription by a 6th century monk. Thus the “King of the South” in Daniel 11:6-8 is equated with Egypt.

At the end of the chapter beginning in verses 40-42, the king of the south attacks the king of the north and the king of the north comes against him (the king of the south) with overwhelming force. After entering the ‘Glorious Land’ – a reference to Judah, the verse states that ‘the land of Egypt shall not escape.’ This means that the ‘King of the South’ is equated with Egypt at the very beginning of the prophecy and is equated with Egypt at the end of the prophecy – thus the prophecy intends us to understand that the ‘king of the South’ is a reference to Egypt throughout.

Because God’s people are the focus of the prophecy (Dan 10:14) the directions given are with reference to where God’s people live, and south of Palestine is Egypt. When Jesus was asked for a sign to sustain His prophetic mission and message, Jesus condemned the current generation and said that the ‘queen of the south’ shall rise up in the judgment and condemn this generation because she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and a greater than Solomon is here (Matt 12:42). Jesus reference was to the Queen of Sheba whom Josephus affirms was queen of Egypt and Ethiopia at the time, and Jesus identified her the same say Daniel identifies Egypt in this prophecy.