

Verse 20 describes Seleucus IV, who reigned from 187-176 B.C. After the 36-year reign of his father, these eleven years seemed to be "only a few years" (v. 20). The heavy indemnity required by the Roman victors, added to the costs of his father's many years of fighting, forced him to devote himself to raising as much money as possible.

His chief minister conspired against him and killed him. He was "destroyed, yet not in anger or in battle."

These events have been described in considerable detail. There is no other chapter in the Bible in which so many events that are now past history were predicted in one passage. This was not done simply to satisfy curiosity. Most of the predictions were so stated that it would be difficult to know in advance exactly how they would be fulfilled. Yet in almost every case one could easily see, after the events had occurred, how true the predictions had been. The purpose of this long preview was to prepare God's people for one of the greatest crises in their history -- a crisis already predicted in chapter 8 under the symbol of the horn that "started small but grew in power" (8:9).

Two Great Crises

Up to this point everything in the chapter had been leading up to the great crisis about to be described. Before examining the next verses in detail we should make a general survey of the rest of the passage. Verses 21-24 tell about the accession of a king and describe his character. Verses 25-31 tell about his career. Verses 32-35 discuss the fate of God's people. Verses 36-39 again describe the character of a king. Verses 40-45 tell about this king's career. The first three verses of the next chapter discuss the fate of God's people.

Thus Daniel 11:21-12:3 divides naturally into six sections with the first three paralleled by the last three. This inevitably raises the question whether the same person is dealt with in all six sections, or whether a different king is discussed in the second group of three sections.

Nearly all interpreters agree that the first three sections