# [Daniel 11:1-35 - The Silent Years](https://fbcdewittmi.org/event-media/daniel-11-1-35-silent-years)

2 Timothy 3:16-17 says, “All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.” Most of my ministry career, this has been a blessing. This week it has been a challenge. The passage this week is full of minute details, too many for one service, but difficult to understand without the context of the other verses. It is hard to find the themes within the myriad details. When Timothy says All Scripture, He doesn’t have a footnote that says, “except Daniel 11” so this is likewise useful. In an effort to make this more understandable, I am going to take a major diversion from my normal sermon style. The verse by verse exposition is in a separate document. For those who have an internet connection, it can be downloaded from the church website. If you don’t have the option of downloading off the internet, please let me know and I will get you a printed copy.

Th last books of the Old Testament, Nehemiah and Esther, were written before a 400+ year gap. From their writing to the time of Christ, the Bible does not recognize any prophets Because no books of the Bible were written during this time, it is often called “The Silent Years.” But God’s silence during these years did not indicate that he didn’t care about what happened during that time. From Daniel chapter 9 we learn that God laid out a 483 year plan for the coming of the Messiah the King. It divides this into a group of 49 years and a group of 434 years. Now in the first half of chapter 11, an angel comes to Daniel and explains what is to happen during that time. The prophecy is so accurate that sceptics insist it could only have been written after the events happened, but we know from secular sources that over 2/3 of it happened AFTER the book was translated from Hebrew to Greek. In the first 35 verses there are at least 30 different predictions that were fulfilled to the smallest detail.

Looking through the predictions, I noticed a trend. Leaders first relied on their wealth, then they relied on their power. When power failed, they tried to exploit family connections. When all else failed, they would resort to treaties and promises to cooperate. But no matter how they scheme, these leaders learned that Relying on Wealth and Power will Fail. Family Connections may Fade Away. A Treaty is Only as Good as the Signatories. But through it all, God is Not Surprised.

## Relying on Wealth and Power will Fail

### Wealth

**2** "And now I will tell you the truth. Behold, three more kings are going to arise in Persia. Then a fourth will gain far more riches than all of them;as soon as he becomes strong through his riches, he will arouse the whole empire against the realm of Greece.

Sometimes people rely on their wealth to protect them. King Xerxes referred to in this passage was one of the wealthiest kings in all of history. This is the same king that appears in the book of Esther. To get an idea of how rich this king was, in the book of Esther, Hamman offers 10,000 talents of silver to be able to kill the Jews. A talent is about 70 pounds, so he was offering 700,000 pounds of silver (worth about 180 million dollars). Xerxes dismisses the offered silver as if it was nothing.

All of Xerxes’ wealth did nothing. When Alexander the Great came through, the kingdom of Persia was destroyed in spite of their wealth. Proverbs 11:28 tells us that those who trust in riches will fail.

“Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy.” (1Ti 6:17 NAS95) The riches of God will never fail, but wealth of this world will be destroyed or stolen.

The truth is, though, most people don’t seek money for itself. They don’t act like Scrooge McDuck and swim in their piles of money. People want money for survival, for freedom or for power.

The very poor tend to see money as a way to buy food, get shelter and survive. This view of money ignores that our source of survival is not what we can buy, but what God provides to us. “**25** ¶ "For this reason I say to you, do not be worried about your life, *as to* what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, *as to* what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? **26** "Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns, and *yet* your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they?” (Mt 6:25-26 NAS95)

Most Americans have moved beyond seeing money as a source of survival, they see money as a source of freedom. If I only had enough money, I would be free to buy that car or take that vacation. If I only had enough money I would be free to retire. This is a false type of freedom that they seek. When they get the car they have to pay for repairs, when they retire they try to figure out how to make those funds last. The freedom we seek becomes another type of slavery. But God says, “It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery.” (Ga 5:1 NAS95) God’s freedom is beyond our freedom, it is complete and eternal.

Eternally, wealth obviously doesn’t give us power, but in this world, it almost always does. But what good will that power do us?

### Power

**3** "And a mighty king will arise, and he will rule with great authority and do as he pleases. **4** "But as soon as he has arisen, his kingdom will be broken up and parceled out toward the four points of the compass, though not to his own descendants, nor according to his authority which he wielded, for his sovereignty will be uprooted and given to others besides them.

As Alexander the Great conquered Xerxes, he became the most powerful human on earth. He had conquered every possible foe. His power and success depressed him and it is reported that he cried, “There are no more worlds to conquer”. He tried to cover the depression with parties and drunkenness, but in the end he died all the same.

As Christians, we should boast in weakness, so that Christ’s power can show through us. “And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.” (2Co 12:9 NAS95)

## Family Connections may Fade Away

**6** "After some years they will form an alliance, and the daughter of the king of the South will come to the king of the North to carry out a peaceful arrangement. But she will not retain her position of power, nor will he remain with his power, but she will be given up, along with those who brought her in and the one who sired her as well as he who supported her in those times.

This verse predicts that king Ptolemy will try to use his daughter Berenice to make a peace treaty. The treaty lasted only until Ptolemy died. Without the Family Connection, King Seleucus of the North divorced Berenice and remarried his first wife, Laodice. Laodice then had Berenice as well as Berenice’s children and father killed so that she could retain power.

**17** "He will set his face to come with the power of his whole kingdom, bringing with him a proposal of peace which he will put into effect; he will also give him the daughter of women to ruin it. But she will not take a stand for him or be on his side.

About 150-180 years later, this generational war was still continuing and Syria was more powerful than Egypt. Syrian King Antiochus III ordered 16 year old King Ptolemy V to marry 13 year old Cleopatra, thinking she would support her father in future endeavors. Instead, Cleopatra betrayed her father and supported Ptolemy in rejecting Syrian dominance.

The old saying is that blood is thicker than water, but that is not always true. Both history and scripture are filled with examples of brothers, children and other relatives betraying a loved one. Most families that won’t intentionally betray you, but in minor ways we have all been betrayed by a word or deed from a sibling, cousin or parent. Since it is made of humans, even the church family may betray you. Matthew 10:21 even tells us that brother will betray brother and father will betray son.

There is only one Family that will never betray you. If God is your father, He has promised He will never leave you nor forsake you. Deuteronomy 31:6;8, Isaiah 40:10, Hebrews 13:5. If God is your father, then Jesus is your brother – Hebrews 2:11-12. You can trust his promise that whoever believes in Him will have eternal life.

## A Covenant/Treaty is Only as Good as the Signatories

**23** "After an alliance is made with him he will practice deception, and he will go up and gain power with a small force of people. **24** "In a time of tranquility he will enter the richest parts of the realm, and he will accomplish what his fathers never did, nor his ancestors; he will distribute plunder, booty and possessions among them, and he will devise his schemes against strongholds, but only for a time.

Antiochus Epiphanes entered Egypt speaking about a peaceful alliance, but it was a deceptive promise, when he was past the outer defenses, he then went to plunder and raid the Egyptian nation.

**27** "As for both kings, their hearts will be intent on evil, and they will speak lies to each other at the same table; but it will not succeed, for the end is still to come at the appointed time.

Rome forced the Syrians to make a peace agreement with Egypt, but both sides were looking for a way to violate the agreement and take advantage of their enemy.

Between countries, agreements are called treaties. Between companies they are typically called contracts. Between individuals they are often called a pact or a deal. In any of these situations, whether a document is signed or a hand is shaken, the deal is only as good as the people involved.

There have been literally hundreds of treaties that the United States has signed, but never ratified. Even among the ratified treaties, we have not always been faithful. There lawyers who specialize in re-interpreting contracts to make them more beneficial to one party or the other. If someone breaks a contract, the court may force them to fulfill their obligation, but often companies find it cheaper to cancel the contract than to fight for the truth.

God does not make contracts or treaties. God makes covenants. A contract is contingent on both parties holding up their end of the agreement, a covenant is a promise to uphold your obligations even if the other party does not. Contracts are for a period of time, covenants are forever. Contracts are based on if you then I. Covenants are based on I promise I will, no ifs ands or buts. A contract can be cancelled or replaced by a new contract, a covenant cannot cancelled, a covenant cannot be replaced, only fulfilled. The Old Covenant was not cancelled by Christ, it was fulfilled by Christ and then He created a New Covenant.

## God is Not Surprised

God’s Covenants are Always Fulfilled, His Family is Eternal and His Riches and Power are Without End. As humans, we fail in all these areas. Often the reason we fail is not our intention, but our inattention. We get surprised. I posted on Facebook the other day, the number 1 cause of older men getting hurt is forgetting they are no longer young men. People don’t expect the economy to collapse or their strength to fail. People don’t expect that something will become more important to their loved one than them. People don’t expect the other person to break their promises.

God knows you better than you do. He knows that you are not going to fulfill the covenant you make with Him, and yet He makes the covenant anyways because He WILL fulfill His obligations. Normally in Israel, rather than signing a contract, they would cut a covenant, both parties would sacrifice an animal and walk through the cut pieces. That blood would make the covenant real.

The covenant God made with Noah was initiated by the blood of those who died in the flood. It is renewed each time we see a rainbow in the sky. When God made a covenant with Abraham, He put Abraham in a deep sleep and then sacrificed the animals and walked through them by Himself. No matter what he did, Abraham could not violate the covenant because he didn’t even participate in making the covenant. This covenant was renewed by the blood of circumcision.

The Mosaic Covenant initiated by the blood of the Egyptian firstborn that God killed so Israel could go free. This Covenant complemented, but did not replace the covenant God had made with Abraham. This covenant was renewed by the sacrifice of animals.

But God made a New Covenant…knowing that we would not keep our side of it, He initiated it without our participation. This covenant fulfilled the requirements of the Mosaic covenant that our sins would be atoned by blood, but it surpassed it in that it was not the blood of bulls and goats, but the Innocent Blood of Jesus Himself. The Jews didn’t kill Jesus. The Romans didn’t kill Jesus. You didn’t kill Jesus. Jesus sacrificed Himself to create a New Covenant of His design (John 10:18, Romans 5:8). The heavenly Father sacrificed Jesus (John 3:16, Isaiah 53). He made the covenant for you. Your part is to accept it and live in it. Will you?

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## Relying on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ will Fail

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Those who \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in riches will fail Proverbs 11:28

The riches of God will never fail, but wealth of this world will be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ or stolen 1Timothy 6:17

our source of survival is not what we can buy, but what God \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to us Matthew 6:25-26

God’s \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is beyond our \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, it is complete and eternal Galatians 5:1

### \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

As Christians, we should boast in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, so that Christ’s \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ can show through us 2 Corinthians 12:9

## Family \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ may Fade Away

Brother will \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ brother and father will \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ son  
 Matthew 10:21

If God is your father, He has promised He will \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ leave you nor forsake you Deuteronomy 31:6,8  
 Isaiah 40:10, Hebrews 13:5.

If God is your father, then Jesus is your \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Hebrews 2:11-12.

## A Covenant/Treaty is Only as Good as the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

The deal is only as good as the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ involved.

The Old Covenant was not \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ by Christ, it was \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ by Christ and then He created a New Covenant.

## God is Not Surprised

Often the reason we fail is not our \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, but our \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Jesus sacrificed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to create a New Covenant of His design  
 John 10:18, Romans 5:8

The heavenly Father sacrificed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ John 3:16, Isaiah 53

He made the covenant \_\_\_\_\_\_ you. Your part is to accept it and live in it.