

manner of address used was usual when the one addressed was of superior rank.

- *no strength...breath left in me*: The repetition of this thought emphasizes the extent to which Daniel sensed his inability. The idea of "no breath" being left in him suggests that he found it even hard to breathe.

18–19 Then this one with human appearance touched me again and strengthened me. He said, “O man of high esteem, do not be afraid. Peace be with you; take courage and be courageous!” Now as soon as he spoke to me, I received strength and said, “May my Lord speak, for you have strengthened me.”

- *this one with human appearance*: This expression differs slightly from that in verse sixteen, with "appearance" (מְרֹאָה, *mar'eh*) being used in place of "likeness" (דְּמוּת, *demut*); but the thought is the same, and reference is yet to the same angel.

- *Touched me*: This is the third touch of the majestic person. This time it was to give strength, whereas the second had enabled Daniel to speak, and the first had enabled him to rise from the ground. God, of course, was the One who imparted the strength, using the angel merely as an instrument.

- *O man, of high esteem*: This is the third use of the expression (9:23; 10:11) and carries the same thought as before, for the purpose of encouragement.

- *do not be afraid*: The angel now replied for the purpose of further strengthening the needy one before him. These first words were to remove his fear, so that emotional strength might replace it. Fear is the opposite of peace. The admonition not to fear had been given before (v. 12), but now was repeated with the addition of "peace be with you."

- *take courage and be courageous*: The same word is used twice (חָזַק, *chazak*) in an identical imperative form. Daniel was commanded very emphatically to be strong. When fear is replaced by peace, one can be strong.

- *as soon as he spoke to me*: The use of the infinitive construct (וּבְדַבְרֵי, *uvedaberō*, literally, "as his speaking"), shows that Daniel's strength returned while the angel's words were being formed.

- *I received strength*: The word used (root , חָזַק, *chazak* again) is in the hithpael (reflexive) and carries the sense of "I felt myself strengthened." Apparently, Daniel's strength returned by degrees, with the last impartation restoring him to the point where he could participate properly in the revelational experience.

- *May my lord speak*: Daniel realized this renewed capacity and asked that the angel proceed. He recognized also who it was that had given the new strength.

20–21. Then he said, “Do you understand why I came to you? But I shall now return to fight against the prince of Persia; so I am going forth, and behold, the prince of Greece is about to come. However, I will tell you what is inscribed in the writing of truth. Yet there is no one who stands firmly with me against these forces except Michael your prince.

- *Do you understand*: The force of this question was not to solicit an answer from Daniel, but, rhetorically, to bring Daniel to realize that the angel's coming had been for a larger reason than what was obvious. Prior to the break in his earlier words, the angel had stated the obvious: that his coming involved giving Daniel information in response to his prayers, but he had also indicated that there was a warfare among supernatural powers concerning these matters. Now he was about to continue to speak about this warfare and he wanted Daniel to know that this warfare was indeed involved in the full reason for his coming.

- *I shall now return to fight*: The meaning of "now" (עַתָּה, *'atāh*) here, in view of the angel's continuing immediately with his words of chapters eleven and twelve, must be: "directly after I have told you the following information." That the angel had to return to wage war with his demonic opponent, over whom he had already gained a victory, shows that this victory needed to be renewed. In other words, Satan's representative would be trying again and again to regain his place of influence with the Persian rulers, and Daniel's visitor was needed to resist these at tempts.

- *so I am going forth*: The angel did not state from where this going forth would be, but, in the light of the context, the meaning is clear: "when he had gone forth from maintaining his place of influence with the Persian kings." The expression "going forth" (יֹצֵא, *yōtze'* literally, "one going forth") is used elsewhere of one going forth to combat (cf. 2Kings 11:7), and it is so used also here. The foe in mind at this point was no longer the prince of Persia, but a new prince, one assigned to Greece. The thought is that the angel would continue contending for the place of influence with the Persian kings, until their period of world supremacy had ended, and then he would go forth from that area of warfare to the new one, involving influence with Grecian kings. • *The prince*

of Greece: This is not Alexander the Great, as held by some expositors, but another demon, one assigned, as just noted, to Grecian rulers. He is called "prince" (רש, *sar*), in parallel with the prior Satanic emissary to Persia. The time when he would "come" would be when Greece had replaced Persia as the dominant world power, bringing Jews thereby under Grecian control (after 331 B.C., the time of Alexander's third and decisive victory over Persia). The angel's period of contending for Persian influence would last yet another two centuries (from 536 to 331 B.C.), then, before he would move to the Grecian area of warfare.

- *I will tell you...the writing of truth:* The force of these words is only parenthetical, but they are necessary for two reasons: first, they let Daniel know that the angel intended to tell him God's message prior to going to renew the conflict with the demon and, second, they stated directly that this message would be one on which Daniel could fully rely, being "inscribed in the writing of truth." Daniel could be relieved of any possible renewed anxiety, then, which might arise in view of this continuing conflict just described. He could know, since the message was in God's own "writing of truth," that all would surely work out according to God's will and would be for good.

- *No one...except Michael:* Daniel's visitor made clear that he alone contended with Satan's emissaries, assigned first to Persia and later to Greece, except that he could call on Michael for help at any time. He had already done this, during the preceding twenty-one days. As noted under verse thirteen, Michael's main task was to oversee matters pertaining specifically to the Jews; but, since the Jewish welfare was vitally involved with the dominating empire of the day, it fell to him to assist at times in controlling matters regarding that empire as well. As for Daniel's visitor, these words show further that his primary task was waging warfare against Satan's high and trusted emissaries.

11:1 – In the first year of Darius the Mede, I arose to be an encouragement and a protection for him.

- *The first year of Darius:* Perhaps it was the insertion of this date which prompted a chapter division to be made prior to this verse, but it should not have been done. The thought continues directly from that of 10: 21, with the break coming after this verse. Daniel's visitor continued to speak of his relation to Michael, referring to a past incident which occurred in the first year of Darius (two years prior to this third year, then).

- *I arose:* This phrase was to call attention to Daniel's visitor as having gone also to Michael's aid at one time in the past. In other words, the two mighty beings held a mutual assistance arrangement, each helping the other as he had particular need.

- *to be an encouragement and protector:* The word for "encouragement" (root, חָזַק, *chāzak* "to be strong") is a hiphil participle, meaning "one causing to be strong." The word for "protection" (מִצְדָּה, *mā'ōz* "a strong place") is a noun. Daniel's visitor had supplied the qualities of both concepts for Michael two years before, which means at the general time of the Jews' return to Judah under Sheshbazzar (cf. Ezra 1: 1-11). Michael, wanting this return to be effected, had apparently encountered difficulty in influencing Darius and Cyrus to that end, and Daniel's visitor had come to his aid. Thus it comes to be known that Cyrus' decision to let the Jews go had been accomplished by God working through these two high angels; and it may be concluded that, whenever such decisions are made in high places relative to God's people, God's angels may well be involved in bringing about the desired result.

Some Notes on Daniel Chapter 11

With this chapter the predictive portion of Daniel's fourth time of revelation begins. Chapter ten has been important for its own purpose, but has not presented the message proper, which the grand angel was sent to give Daniel. This comes now, beginning with verse two.

The stress of the message is on Antiochus Epiphanes (vv. 21-35) and the Antichrist (vv. 36-45), the former typifying the latter. Again an implied time gap exists between the two. Neither is identified by name, but only by description of character and actions, something found true also in the previous contexts considered. Before either is mentioned, however, the angel's message tells of history preceding Antiochus. First, early Persian rulers are set forth and then Alexander the Great who defeated Persia for Greece. After this comes a remarkably detailed presentation of successive kings, who ruled two of the divisions of Alexander's empire: the Egyptian division, ruled by the Ptolemies, and the Syrian, ruled by the Seleucids. These two divisions call for this special consideration because the affairs of Palestine, lying between the two, were so often involved with their

activities. The detail of this history as presented provides one of the most remarkable predictive portions of all Scripture.

A. HISTORY UNTIL THE DIVISION OF ALEXANDER'S EMPIRE (VV. 2-4)

The angel's message begins by telling of history starting with the time when Daniel lived. The angel spent little time, however, with either the Persian period or the meteoric rise of Alexander, a combined period of more than two centuries (539-323 B.c.), but moved on quickly to the era when Alexander's vast holdings had been divided into four regions.

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.

- *I make known to you the truth:* The angel indicated that he was about to begin the message proper. Designating the message as the "truth" (אמת, 'emet), he identified it with the earlier "writing of truth" (10:21). He wished to stress that the remarkable message to be given was indeed true.
- *Three more kings:* Because the fourth king of the following phrase must be Xerxes (486-465 B.C.), as will be seen, these three must be his predecessors. Actually four kings preceded him (Cyrus, 539-529 B.C.; Cambyses, 529-522; Smerdis, 522-521; Darius Hystaspes, 521-486), which means that one is omitted. It could be Cyrus, since he was already ruling when the angel spoke, and the angel did say "yet" (עוד, 'od); or it could be Smerdis, because he ruled less than one year and was probably an imposter in doing so. It should be realized that several other kings ruled Persia besides the four mentioned, namely, Artaxerxes Longimanus, 465-424 B.C.; Xerxes II 424-423; Darius II Nothus, 423-404; Artaxerxes II Mnemom, 404- 359; Artaxerxes III Ochus, 359-338; Arses, 338-336; and Darius III Codomannus, 336-331. The thought here is that a total of three ruled before the one arose who attacked Greece, an attack which gave reason for the counterattack of Alexander, soon to be mentioned, years later. None of the Persian successors of Xerxes provided a similar reason.
- *A fourth shall accumulate greater wealth:* This king is Xerxes (486-465 B.c.), identified clearly by the description given, especially regarding his expedition against Greece. His father, Darius Hystaspes, had also attacked Greece, in 490 B.C., but not with the same scope of operation. Xerxes also was very rich. His predecessors had amassed an enormous fortune, both through the lucrative conquests of Lydia, Babylonia, and Egypt, and a severe taxation program especially by Darius Hystaspes; and Xerxes added measurably to this wealth as a part of his preparation of four years for the Grecian strike. His feast of no fewer than 180 days (Esth. 1:1-12)⁴ depicts something of the grandeur of this preparation.
- *becomes strong:* Reference is especially to his growing strong for the Grecian attack.
- *he will arouse the whole empire against the realm of Greece:* Some translate this, "He shall stir up all the kingdom of Greece." It should be noted, however, that the word for "stir up" (root, עור, 'ur) is used in the hiphil, "to stir up," and is used to indicate "stirring up a fire," this indicating incitement to action. Those whom Xerxes incited to action were his own troops, not the enemy. The problematic אַחַת, 'et, may be explained either as meaning "with" or as what Keil calls the "accusative of the object of the movement" (cf. Ex. 9: 29-33).⁵ The thought is that this fourth king would put forth great effort to arouse his own country for attacking Greece with the largest force possible. History testifies that Xerxes did this, both as to army and navy, at tempting to avenge the humiliating defeat of his father by Greece.

3-4 And a mighty king will arise, and he will rule with great authority and do as he pleases. 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.

- *a mighty king:* This is Alexander the Great of Greece (336-323 B.C.), again unmistakable from the description. He retaliated against Persia and seized the entire empire for Greece. He is called "mighty" (גִּבּוֹר, gibōr) because of the amazing strength and ability he displayed in conquering so much in one continuous extended campaign (cf. 8: 5-8).

4 The Ahasuerus of Esther is the same as Xerxes, the name Ahasuerus being a good Hebrew equivalent for his Persian name, Khshayarsha. Also the character of Xerxes fits the biblical picture of Ahasuerus.

5 KDC on Daniel, p. 431.

- *With great dominion:* Alexander demonstrated power of personality and strength of leadership scarcely paralleled in history, keeping his army intact for thousands of miles of travel and campaigning, and through years of continuous struggle and hardship. He forced his will on his army and on the people he conquered. The extent of his dominion finally reached from Greece and Egypt in the west to India in the east, an area still larger than Persia had controlled.
- *as soon as he has arisen:* The literal reading is "according to his standing," the form of the verb being an infinitive construct. The thought is that just as Alexander would nicely complete his conquest of all this territory, the kingdom would be broken, as mentioned next.
- *Broken and divided:* Alexander's kingdom was broken (root, שָׁבַר, *shā'var*, used in the niphal) after his early death at the age of thirty-two. It came to be divided among four of his generals, though only after several years of contention between them, as set forth under 8: 8 (which see).
- *though not to his own descendants:* Alexander had a half brother, Philip Arrhidaeus, who was mentally deficient; a son, Alexander, born to him posthumously by Roxana; and an illegitimate son, Hercules, by Barsine, daughter of Darius. At first a decision was made that the first two should rule as co-monarchs, with other persons making decisions in their names for some time. Dissension broke out as to who those others should be, however, with bitter fighting taking place before long. In 317 B.C., the half brother, Philip, was murdered in the resulting turmoil; in 310 B.C. also the young Alexander, and in 309 B.C. finally the illegitimate Hercules. No posterity of Alexander then remained to inherit any part of the empire.
- *nor according to is authority which he wielded* Literally, this reads, "and not according to his ruling which he ruled." That is, none of the four successors would rule with his authority. Bitter fighting between several generals ensued at first, with the four continuing rulers emerging as such only after a prolonged struggle. These finally brought a measure of stability to the vast area, but none of them attained the dominance in his own area that Alexander had held .
- *will be uprooted:* The word (uprooted, שָׁרַף, *natash*, in the niphal) has the basic meaning of plucking up plants by the roots, certainly a forceful thought in respect to the breaking of Alexander's kingdom.
- *Besides them:* The antecedent is "posterity." The kingdom would go to others besides members of Alexander's family.

B. THE PTOLEMIES AND SELEUCIDS UNTIL ANTIOCHUS EPIPHANES (vv. 5–20)

Having predicted that there would be four divisions to Alexander's empire, the angel continued to speak of only two: the Syrian division, lying just north of Palestine, over which the Seleucid line of kings would rule; and the Egyptian division, lying just south, over which the Ptolemaic line would be supreme. The significance of the angel's speaking further only of these two is that Palestine, where God's people dwelt, lay exactly between them and was continually involved in their later history. Especially important is the fact that the Syrian division would eventually see Antiochus Epiphanes, the "little horn" of chapter eight, come to power, as noted. The angel's message was to concern this one particularly, as he would foreshadow still another—the Antichrist of the far distant future. Before the rise of Antiochus, however, more than a century would elapse, and the angel first set forth this history. In doing so, he gave some of the most detailed prediction of a historical nature in all the Word of God. When subsequent history proves to fit it exactly, as pointed out below, it is no wonder that liberal expositors, who deny the supernatural in the Bible, insist that it must have been written after the history had transpired. Because it was indeed written before, it provides, conversely, an excellent demonstration of the fact that the Holy Scriptures are truly a product of supernatural revelation.

5—Then the king of the South will grow strong, along with one of his princes who will gain ascendancy over him and obtain dominion; his domain will be a great dominion indeed.

- *king of the South:* The word for "South" (נֶגֶב, *negev*) usually means the desert area directly south of Palestine, but here it means Egypt, evidenced by the context and the specific mention of Egypt in verse eight. That the manner of reference to both Egypt and Syria throughout this passage is merely by mention of the two directions, south and north, fits the predictive character of the passage, in which one expects terms to be used that are more general in nature. Also, in respect to Syria, the country had no distinction as such in Daniel's time, which means that, had Daniel called it by that name, his readers would only have been confused. The king

in reference is the first of the south division, Ptolemy Soter, son of Lagus and a highly capable general under Alexander. He was made satrap of Egypt in 323 B.C., directly after Alexander's death. He survived the time of struggle, and, following the deaths of all Alexander's posterity, he, along with other satraps, still surviving, proclaimed himself king of Egypt. He did this in 304 B.C. and continued to reign until 283.

- *one of his princes who will gain ascendancy over him and obtain dominion*: Literally, "from his princes, even he shall be strong above him and shall rule." Reference is to Seleucus Nicator, a lesser general under Alexander, who was appointed satrap of Babylonia in 321 B.C. but was forced to flee when Babylonia was seized by Antigonus, another general. Seleucus then came to Ptolemy Soter in Egypt to serve under him. Later, when Antigonus was defeated in 312 B.C. at Gaza, Seleucus returned to his former satrapy, where he now greatly increased his strength. Finally he succeeded in controlling the largest of all the divisions, including Babylonia, Syria, and Media, and assumed the title of king the same year as did Ptolemy Soter, 304 B.C.

- *A great dominion*: This is the angel's indication as to how Seleucus would become stronger than Ptolemy; namely, in extent of dominion. As just noted, it did become much larger.

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.

- *After some years*: Literally, this may be translated, "to the end of years." History reveals that Egypt and Syria did make an alliance, as here described, about 250 B.C., some fifty-four years after both Ptolemy and Seleucus proclaimed themselves kings. In the interval, both kings had died (Ptolemy, in 283 B.C.; Seleucus, in 281) and the son of Ptolemy, Ptolemy II Philadelphus (283-246 B.C.) now ruled in Egypt, and the grandson of Seleucus, Antiochus II Theos (262-246 B.C.) in Syria. The latter had been preceded by his father, not mentioned in this history, Antiochus I Soter (281-262 B.C.).

- *an alliance*: Ptolemy II Philadelphus and Antiochus II Theos fought each other bitterly at first, but later they did make an alliance between the two countries.

- *Daughter of the king of the South*: The daughter in reference is well known in history. Her name was Berenice, daughter of Ptolemy II Philadelphus, and she married Antiochus II Theos, who was twenty-three years younger than Ptolemy. The marriage served to seal the alliance, a practice common for the day. The word for "peace" (מִישָׁר, *meishār*) means literally "righteousness." The logic behind the use of the word is that, when Berenice went to marry Antiochus, she fulfilled the terms of the agreement and made matters right.

- *position of power*: This phrase refers to the capacity to do what one wishes.

- *nor will he remain with his power* [literally "neither will he stand nor his arm"] The antecedent of "he" is clearly Antiochus, whom Berenice married. That he would not "stand nor his arm" means that he would not continue as king nor be able to exercise his capacity to act. History reveals that two years after the marriage, the father of Berenice, Ptolemy II, who had apparently forced the marriage, died. Antiochus II then took back a former wife, Laodice, whom he had been compelled to divorce, and put away Berenice instead, thus removing "the strength of the arm" (hers). Laodice, however, was not yet satisfied and, fearing continued fickleness on the part of her husband, had him poisoned, thus removing the strength also of "his arm." Then Laodice had Berenice killed, after which she proclaimed her own son, Seleucus II Callinicus (246-227 B.C.), as king.

- *along with those who brought her in and the one who sired her as well as he who supported her in those times*. Not only was Berenice killed, but also her attendants (literally, "those who brought her") and her one infant son by Antiochus. The word for "child" is pointed in the Hebrew to give the meaning "begetter, father," but principal versions take it as "child," and it is known that her child did die at this time. Her father, as noted, also had died, but apparently not as a result of Laodice's wrath. The identity of the one "that strengthened her" is uncertain, but reference may be to her husband, Antiochus II. Who ever it was, he also died.

7-8. But one of the descendants of her line will arise in his place, and he will come against their army and enter the fortress of the king of the North, and he will deal with them and display great strength. Also their gods with their metal images and their precious vessels of silver and gold he will take into captivity to Egypt, and he on his part will refrain from attacking the king of the North for some years.

- *But one of the descendants of her line*: [Literally, "One from the branch of her roots"] The word for "branch" (גִּזְרָה, *gizrah*),

netzer) means something growing green, hence a "sprout, branch ." Reference is to one who would come from her "roots," in other words, a brother. Berenice had a brother, and he did succeed their father, Ptolemy Philadelphus, taking the name Ptolemy III Euergetes (246- 221 B.C.). He thus stood up "in his (Ptolemy Philadelphus') place."

- *He will come against their army:* This new ruler immediately set out to avenge the turn of events in Syria, but arrived too late to save his sister. He easily overcame the Syrian army, however, and then had the vindictive Laodice put to death. After this he took his troops eastward in to the heart ("stronghold") of the vast Syrian territory, penetrating even as far as the Tigris River.

- *display great strength:* That is, "he shall prevail." Ptolemy III Euergetes was remarkably successful in the entire campaign. He moved where he wished, much of the time quite unopposed, and forced his will on people almost as he desired. The young Syrian ruler, Seleucus II Callinicus, maintained himself during this time by staying in the interior of Asia Minor. After Ptolemy returned to Egypt, Seleucus was able to recover much of the area that his rival had seized.

- *Also their gods with their metal images and their precious vessels of silver and gold he will take into captivity:* These words show the extent of Ptolemy's victory. If one can carry away the religious articles of a defeated people, he has truly humbled them. Egypt was significantly enriched by a great quantity of booty, including religious items. According to Jerome, Ptolemy brought home "40,000 talents of silver and 2,500 precious vessels and images of the gods, among them those which Cambyses had taken to Persia when he conquered Egypt."⁶ The name, Euergetes, meaning "benefactor," was given to him as a result.

- *Against the king of the North:* The preposition translated " against " is מִן *min*, normally meaning "from." Accordingly, some expositors take the thought to be that Ptolemy Euergetes would "stand from" the king of the North by living longer, and Ptolemy did live longer than Seleucus Callinicus by six years. The fact, however, is of little importance and hardly would account for a mention of this kind. Others understand the meaning to be that Ptolemy would not attack Syria again for some years, but he did have to resist an attack brought against him later in retaliation by Seleucus Callinicus, which would seem to be out of keeping with this suggestion. The view of Keil seems best: that *min* carries the thought of מִפְּנֵי *mippene*, meaning "from before" or "against," as in Psalm 43:1. Ptolemy did stand against Seleucus without defeat at any time.

9–10 Then the latter will enter the realm of the king of the South, but will return to his own land. His sons will mobilize and assemble a multitude of great forces; and one of them will keep on coming and overflow and pass through, that he may again wage war up to his very fortress.

- *Then the latter will enter:* In view of the history, it is clear that reference is still to Seleucus Callinicus. As noted above, he succeeded in regaining his position in Syria, after Ptolemy's devastating campaign through his country. Then about 240 B.C. he attempted a return attack against Ptolemy in Egypt.

- *but will return:* Seleucus was unsuccessful in the attempt and returned home without accomplishing his purpose.

- *His sons:* Seleucus Callinicus had two sons: the older who became Seleucus III Ceraunus (227-223 B.C.) and the younger, Antiochus III the Great (223-187 B.C.). The former was killed while on campaign in Asia Minor, after an abbreviated rule. Antiochus the Great then became king, at the young age of about eighteen years. The word for "will mobilize" (root, הָרָה, *gārāh*) is used in the hithpael (reflexive) and carries the thought of becoming excited or angry.

- *assemble a multitude:* The prediction is that both sons would gather large armies, and both did. The father, after his unsuccessful campaign against Egypt, had left the country in a weakened condition. The sons reacted and attempted to restore the lost prestige.

- *one of them will keep on coming:* The verb is singular, indicating that only one of the sons is now in view. The reason is that the older gave his attention to Asia Minor, where he was shortly killed, while the younger, Antiochus the Great, gave his to Egypt, which is more significant for the subject of this chapter. The Hebrew employs an infinitive absolute to lend emphasis ("surely") to the verb, suggesting unusual determination on Antiochus' part in this attention.

- *overflow and pass through:* The word for "overflow" (root, שָׁטַף, *shātaph*) is often used of a river overflowing its banks (cf. Is. 28:17; 30:28). The two verbs together speak expressively of an overpowering army (cf. Isa. 8:8). Antiochus did move south in force against Egyptian territory. It should be realized that Egypt's control had

6 Cf. Montgomery, MICC, p. 431. (*International Critical Commentary— Daniel*)

included all of Palestine until this time; and, in fact, at the time of this move by Antiochus, due to the weakened condition of Syria, it extended even to the port of Antioch in Syria itself. Antiochus' design now was to push the boundary back to its previous limits at least, so that Coele-Syria might come within the Syrian domain again. This he did accomplish in 219 B.C. and was able even to push on into Palestine and across into Transjordan. The campaign was highly successful, and his army did overflow and pass through a large amount of land.

- *that he may again* The Hebrew employs two verbs in this phrase, which may be translated, "he shall return and bestir himself." The first verb (root, שׁוּב, *shuv* "to turn, return"), however, as Montgomery points out, may in such a context mean only "again," indicating a repeated action of an accompanying verb.⁷ The accompanying verb (root, גָּרָה, *gārah*) is the same as the one used earlier in the verse, which favors this suggestion. Antiochus desisted from the campaign of 219 B.C., but returned to the attack in 217 B.C. He was able this time to push all the way to the southern Palestinian frontier post of Raphia, where a major battle with the Egyptians took place. The word "stronghold" is probably a reference to Raphia.

7 Montgomery, MICC, p. 437