



## THE PROPHECY OF DANIEL

### Lesson Number 32



**TRANSLATION LEGEND:** ASV=American Standard Version (1901), BBE=Bible in Basic English (1949), DRA=Douay-Rheims (1899), ESV=English Standard Version (2001), KJV=King James Version (1611), NKJV=New King James Version (1982), NAB=New American Bible, NASB=New American Standard Bible (1977), NAU=New American Standard Bible (1995), NIB=New International Bible, NIV=New International Version (1984), NJB=New Jerusalem Bible, NLT=New Living Translation, NRSV=New Revised Standard Version (1989), RSV=Revised Standard Version (1952), TNK=JPS Tanakj (1985), YLT=Young's Literal Translation (1862).

----- Bible Translation Codes with Identification -----

# THE FUTURE IS UNFOLDED TO DANIEL, #1

“ 11:1 Also I in the first year of Darius the Mede, even I, stood to confirm and to strengthen him. <sup>2</sup> And now will I show thee the truth. Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia; and the fourth shall be far richer than they all: and by his strength through his riches he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia. <sup>3</sup> And a mighty king shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will. <sup>4</sup> And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven; and not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion which he ruled: for his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others beside those. <sup>5</sup> And the king of the south shall be strong, and one of his princes; and he shall be strong above him, and have dominion; his dominion shall be a great dominion. <sup>6</sup> And in the end of years they shall join themselves together; for the king's daughter of the south shall come to the king of the north to make an agreement: but she shall not retain the power of the arm; neither shall he stand, nor his arm: but she shall be given up, and they that brought her, and he that begat her, and he that strengthened her in these times.” <sup>KJV</sup>  
(Daniel 11:1-6)

## INTRODUCTION

**T**he angel has told Daniel he is going to show him what is written in “*the Book of Truth*” <sup>NIV</sup> – the tablets of heaven upon which the destiny of men and nations has been written. These are Divine determinations, not what God saw would take place independently of Him. The “*Book of Truth*,” or “*Scripture of Truth*,” does not suggest that God determines everything that is done among men. Those who declare such things tend to relieve men of responsibility for their own actions. However, this is never the approach of the Holy Spirit. **In fact, if every single facet and deed of life**

**was predetermined by God, there would be no purpose for the day of judgment.**

### THERE ARE DIVINE DETERMINATIONS

There are things, however, that God **has** determined – and they are written in “*the writing of truth*,” <sup>NASB</sup> or “*Scripture of truth*.” <sup>NKJV</sup> These are determinations that flow out from His “*eternal purpose, which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord*,” a “*purpose*” that was formed “*before the world began*” (Eph 3:11; 2 Tim 1:9). None of these determinations have been made

independently of this purpose or the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ. It is a major milestone in life when one becomes aware of this. Life does not revolve around individuals, groups of individuals, nations, or objectives determined by men.

Already this very point has been emphasized in the book of Daniel. There is a sort of blueprint that is driving history – a Divine blueprint. Ultimately, God has purposed that “*in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth; in Him*”

*The angel confirms God is active in the affairs of heathen governments, as he begins to unfold the future, by Given O. Blakely*

## OUTLINE

- ▶ THE FIRST YEAR OF DARIUS THE MEDE (11:1)
- ▶ I WILL SHOW THEE THE TRUTH (11:2a)
- ▶ THREE KINGS, AND THE FOURTH (11:2)
- ▶ A MIGHTY KING SHALL STAND UP (11:3)
- ▶ HIS KINGDOM SHALL BE BROKEN AND DIVIDED (11:4)
- ▶ THE KING OF THE SOUTH (11:5)
- ▶ THE END OF YEARS (11:6)

(Eph 1:10). The word “*dispensation*” means an administration, or economy. The emphasis of the word is **management or oversight**. The angel is not revealing things to Daniel that are simply going to happen. **Rather, this is a revelation of God’s management of time, and the events that occur in it.** Prophecy does not flow from mere foresight, but from Divine purpose and Sovereignty. This is critical to an understanding of Scripture. When speaking of God’s foreknowledge we are told, “*Known to God from eternity are all His works*”<sup>NASB</sup> (Acts 15:18). Of course, He does know all the works of men as well. However, they are not the subjects of prophecy, which would make God more of a prognosticator than the One who “*rules over the nations*”<sup>NKJB</sup> (Psa 22:28).

Four times Daniel was told of things that had been “*determined*.”

▶ “*Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.*” (Dan 9:24)

▶ “*And after threescore and two weeks*

*shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.*” (Dan 9:26)

▶ “*And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.*” (Dan 9:27)

▶ “*And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvelous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done.*” (Dan 11:36).

There are other specific determinations revealed in Scripture.

▶ God “*determined*” the destruction of king Amaziah (2 Chron 25:25-26).

▶ Job confessed that man’s days are “*determined*,” and that bounds have been “*appointed*” to him (Job 14:5).

▶ God “*determined*” a destruction in Israel that would not be total, but would leave a remnant (Isa 10:23; 28:22).

▶ The Lord decreed that Judah would be a terror unto Egypt because of the counsel He had “*determined*” against

it (Isa 19:17).

▶ The vicarious death of Christ was “*determined*” by God, not men (Lk 22:22; Acts 4:28).

▶ God “*determined*” the times set for “*every nation of men*,” and “*the exact places where they should live*” NIV (Acts 17:26).

The people of God must zealously seek to be freed from the notion that the world and its nations are operating on their own. **There is no such thing as a will – any will – that can successfully function independently of God.** A significant amount of fear, doubt, and anxiety occur because men forget “*The earth is the LORD’S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein*” (Psa 24:1). When “*the kings of the earth*” conspire against the God of heaven, and think to free themselves from His restraints, He laughs at them (Psa 2:2-4). These kings are no threat to God, but He is “*terrible*” to them (Psa 76:12). Now, in this day of salvation, Jesus Christ is the “*King of kings*” (1 Tim 6:15). Before that, they were still under heaven’s rule, whether they realized it or not, for “*God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings*” (Dan 2:47). God raises up kings and removes them, and none can “*stay His hand, or say unto Him, ‘What doest Thou?’*” (Dan 2:21; 4:35).

Thus, when we hear of the rise of despots, we are to understand they are under the strict control of God. If they reek havoc like Nebuchadnezzar, they will go no further than God has determined. If they seek to thwart His purpose like Pharaoh, Sennacherib, or Herod, they will be thrown down. The saints of God must trust Him in the matter of the kings and governments of

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this world. The **“Scriptures of Truth”** are the template for history, not the ambitions of men.

### THE CENTRALITY OF THE JEWS

The Jews are central in this whole prophecy. Daniel has fervently prayed the Lord forgive, “for Thy city and Thy people are called by Thy name” (9:19). Daniel had set himself to pray for this people, even though they had sinned against God miserably, and were chastened for it. A messenger has been sent from heaven to declare what will befall “thy people in the latter days” (10:14).

Moses declared that when God

*of Israel. And they shall come thither, and they shall take away all the detestable things thereof and all the abominations thereof from thence. And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh; that they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God.”* (Ezek 11:17-20)

▣ *“A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of*

(Jer 46:28)

▣ *“For I am with thee, saith the LORD, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished.”* (Jer 30:11)

▣ *“For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins”* (Rom 11:26-27).

## BECAUSE THIS IS SUCH A CENTRAL MATTER IN THE PROPHETS, I WANT TO SHARE SOME OF THE PROMISES GOD HAS MADE TO THE JEWISH PEOPLE. THESE HAVE NOT BEEN MADE BECAUSE OF THEIR EXEMPLARY CONDUCT OR FAITHFULNESS TO HIM.

### THE KINGDOM TAKEN FROM THEM

On this point, there is a great deal of controversy within the church. It is frequently taught that all of the promises made to Israel have been voided for them, and transferred to the Gentiles. Some of this reasoning is based upon our Lord’s words concerning the kingdom being taken from them. *“Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof”* (Matt 21:43).

separated *“the sons of Adam,”* dividing them into nations, and placing them throughout the earth, He did so with Israel in mind. *“When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel”* (Deut 32:8).

*your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.”* (Ezek 36:26-28)

Because this is such a central matter in the Prophets, I want to share some of the promises God has made to the Jewish people. These have not been made because of their exemplary conduct or faithfulness to Him. Rather, they are *“beloved for the father’s sakes,”* Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Rom 11:28). These things are shared because *“For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance”* (Rom 11:29).

▣ *“If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the LORD, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever. Thus saith the LORD; If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the LORD.”* (Jer 31:36-37)

▣ *“Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will even gather you from the people, and assemble you out of the countries where ye have been scattered, and I will give you the land*

▣ *“Fear thou not, O Jacob my servant, saith the LORD: for I am with thee; for I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have driven thee: but I will not make a full end of thee, but correct thee in measure; yet will I not leave thee wholly unpunished.”*

This was, indeed, a declaration of the loss of Jewish prominence, when the highest place would be taken from them and given to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus. It equates to Jerusalem being *“trodden under foot of the Gentiles”* (Lk 21:24), and *“some of the branches”* being *“broken off”* (Rom 11:17). Elsewhere it is referred to as Israel falling (Rom 11:11), being *“cast away”* (Rom 11:15), God *“sparing not the natural branches”* (Rom 11:21), and being *“blinded”* (Rom 11:7).

### Not A Permanent Condition

However, Jesus gave no indication that this was to be a permanent condition. It was a most severe judgment, to be sure, but the door of hope was not closed, nor were His promises to them voided. This is substantiated in several ways.

▣ Jerusalem will be stomped under the feet of the Gentiles *“UNTIL the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled”* (Matt

21:24).

- ▶ Their house is left desolate “*UNTIL the time come when [they] shall say, ‘Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord’*” (Lk 13:35).
- ▶ Blindness has happened to them “*IN PART*” (Rom 11:25).
- ▶ “*SOME of the branches*” were broken off, but the tree itself remains (Rom 11:17).
- ▶ The glow of hope is found in the expression, “*And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft*

*them in again*” (Rom 11:23).

- ▶ It is more reasonable for them to be grafted into their own tree, than that the Gentiles were grafted into it (Rom 11:24).
- ▶ Partial blindness has happened to them “*UNTIL the fulness of the Gentiles be come in*” (Rom 11:25).
- ▶ God’s covenant to them is to “take away their sins” (Rom 11:27).
- ▶ Israel has not stumbled, “*so as to fall beyond recovery? Not at all! Rather, because of their transgression, salvation has come to the Gentiles to*

*make Israel envious*” (Rom 11:11).

- ▶ The purpose of Paul’s Apostleship to the Gentiles was actually to provoke the Jews to jealousy, in fulfillment of Moses’ prophecy (Deut 32:21; Rom 10:19; 11:13-14).

I have taken the time to say these things because an understanding of them is critical to our text. Daniel loved and prayed for Israel. God declared plans for Israel. Michael was assigned as their prince. Holy angels, according to Divine mandate, worked in their behalf. They are beloved for the father’s sakes. Now an angel comes to tell Daniel “*what shall befall thy people in the later days.*”

## THE FIRST YEAR OF DARIUS THE MEDE

***“11:1 Also I in the first year of Darius the Mede, even I, stood to confirm and to strengthen him.”***

This verse is a continuation of the eleventh chapter, The messenger from heaven is still speaking with Daniel.

We will now be taken behind the scenes – given to behold heavenly activities that impacted directly upon earthly events. The angel will do precisely what he said – make known to Daniel what had been written in the book of Divine destiny, “*the Scriptures of Truth.*”

This has relevance to the Messiah, in whose hand this “*book*” now resides. In the vision he received on Patmos, John saw this book – “*the Scriptures of truth.*” He first saw it as a book with writing within and on the back, sealed with seven seals. A challenge rang throughout heaven, asking if one could be found who was worthy to unseal the book and reveal its contents. None could be found (Rev 5:1-3). It was at this point that a heavenly personality stepped forward and announced that “*the Lion of the tribe of Judah*” had prevailed, and was thus able to “*open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof*” (Rev 5:5).

There are some similarities in the experiences of Daniel and John. Both

were especially beloved, and were thus given insights into things to come. The insights given to them were preceded by warfare involving someone from heaven.

for men. Being “*taught by God*” (John 6:45; 1 Thess 4:9), receiving “*the Spirit of wisdom and revelation*” (Eph 1:17), and being given “*understanding*” (1 John

### WE WILL NOW BE TAKEN BEHIND THE SCENES – GIVEN TO BEHOLD HEAVENLY ACTIVITIES THAT IMPACTED DIRECTLY UPON EARTHLY EVENTS. THE ANGEL WILL DO PRECISELY WHAT HE SAID – MAKE KNOWN TO DANIEL WHAT HAD BEEN WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF DIVINE DESTINY

With Daniel, it was a holy angel engaged in war with the “*prince of Persia.*” With John, the warfare was between the Lord’s Christ and the hosts of darkness, whom He utterly defeated. In both cases, the book was the same, even though the segments of it that were revealed differed.

#### An Observation

From these things we learn something about the complexities involved in truth being made known to the sons of men. There are forces that seek to thwart heavenly messages being brought to men – and they are too strong

5:20), are not to taken for granted. Neither, indeed, are they the result of some automated process, or the fruit of mere human inquiry.

**Whatever can be concluded or deciphered independently of Divine involvement cannot be of significant consequence.** Such knowledge brings no lasting advantages to those who are identified with the God of heaven. In my judgment, it is exceedingly difficult to justify the current religious emphasis upon the wisdom of men – the wisdom of this world. The average American

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Christian is regularly exposed to a haberdashery of religious fare that is too close to the world. It is like a garment spotted by the flesh. Many of the issues with which pulpiteers and leaders deal are not Scriptural issues. They do not require expertise in the Word of God, acquaintance with the Lord Himself, or strong faith and hope.

It will be apparent that none of these circumstances are found in our text. Daniel was wholly reliant upon the God of heaven for an understanding of what would take place, and why it would occur

*Babylonian captivity, that they were about to be fulfilled.*” Those “books” were not secular history, or the record of human prognostications. They were the prophecies of “*Jeremiah the prophet,*” who was inspired to write what the God of heaven was to “*accomplish*” (Dan 9:1-2). It is then that Daniel set his “*face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes*” (Dan 9:3).

**Now, we will find that simultaneous with Daniel engaging in protracted and fervent prayer, an**

*“I arose to be an encouragement and a protection for him,”*<sup>NASB</sup> *“I took my stand to support and protect him,”*<sup>NIV</sup> *“I stood up to support and strengthen him,”*<sup>NRSV</sup> *“I was on his side to make his position safe and make him strong.”*<sup>BBE</sup>

The New Living Translation represents the angel as standing to help Michael the prince: “*I have been standing beside Michael as his support and defense since the first year of the reign of Darius the Mede.*” The commentator Benson also holds to this view, saying “from the time that Daniel addressed those ardent prayers to God about the affairs of his people, mentioned in chap. 9., which was in the first year of Darius, from that very time HE (namely, the angel Gabriel) had strenuously co-operated with Michael, in working the deliverance of the Jewish nation.” While there may be an element of truth to Gabriel and Michael working together, that it not the point of this text. This, to me, is a foolish absurdity, for this very angel has declared that Michael helped him (Dan 10:13). To imagine that a subordinate angel supports and defends an angelic prince, or principality, calls for our thoughts to stretch beyond the line of spiritually sound thought.

The one advantaged by this angel was “*Darius the Mede,*” not Michael the prince. He is the one the angel stood up, or exercised an initiative, to support and protect. All of this does relate to the Jews, for they were the subject of Daniel’s prayers (9:19-20). They were also the subject of angelic revelation (9:24; 10:14).

**From these considerations, together with the opposition of “*the prince of Persia,*” we conclude there was a Satanic initiative against the Jews.** We do not know the extent of the knowledge of the “*powers of darkness,*” but they had apparently become aware of the imminent conclusion of the Babylonian captivity. That captivity ended in 536 B.C., twenty years before the Temple rebuilding was completed (516 B.C.). In the years that followed the first year of Darius, a number of initiatives against the Jews are recorded.

☐ 537 B.C. Daniel was thrown into lion’s den (Dan 6:1-28).

☐ 535 B.C. The Samaritans interfere with the rebuilding of the Temple (Ezra 4:1-5).

**THE ANGEL IS CONFIRMING TO DANIEL THAT THE PROPHET WAS BROUGHT INTO INVOLVEMENT WITH THE WORKING OF GOD. HIS PRAYERS WERE WORKING HAND-IN-HAND WITH THE POWERS OF HEAVEN.**

– even though heaven had already brought him considerable information about it. No amount of Babylonian wisdom could assist him in grasping what the angel was bringing to him.

**THE FIRST YEAR**

*“Also I in the first year of Darius the Mede . . . ”*

The “*I*” of this text is not Daniel, but the angel who is speaking with him.

The identity of this angel is not certain. Some believe it is Gabriel, who was introduced in the eighth chapter (8:16). He later came to Daniel while he was praying (9:21). Others are persuaded it is Michael, who was an angelic “*prince*” of Israel (10:21). Still others see this as a unique angel whom Michael came to help in order that he might deliver this present revelation (Dan 10:13). I am inclined to the latter view, although I do not see it as a critical matter.

Daniel has already recounted something that he experienced in “*the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes.*” It was at that time that Daniel “*understood by books the number of the years*” of the

**angel from heaven became active in the reign of Darius.** This was not coincidence. We have here a coordination of activities between a messenger from heaven and a prophet upon earth. The prophet is praying while the angel is intervening in the affairs of men. Here is an example of angelic interaction with the God of heaven working together with “*the prayers of the saints*” (Rev 8:3-4). We are not able to know with certainty the fulness of the association of the prayers of Daniel with the activities of this angel. However, I am persuaded it is more profound than we are presently able to discern.

The primary thing to see here is that the angel is testifying to Daniel of his own activities during the first year of Darius. It was at that time that a significant change took place in Daniel’s perception and conduct. The angel is confirming to Daniel that the prophet was brought into involvement with the working of God. His prayers were working hand-in-hand with the powers of heaven.

**TO CONFIRM AND TO STRENGTHEN**

*“ . . . even I, stood to confirm and to strengthen him.”* Other versions read,

- ▶ 529 B.C. Letters of accusation against the Jews are sent to the Persian king Ahasuerus (Cyrus' son Cambyses) (Ezra 4:6-16).
- ▶ 529 B.C. The command is given to stop the temple building project (Ezra 4:17-22).
- ▶ 528-521 B.C. The Temple project is suspended for seven years (Ezra 4:23-24).
- ▶ 521 B.C. Heathen governors send letters questioning whether the rebuilding of the Temple was really commanded by Cyrus (Ezra 5:5-17).
- ▶ 474 B.C. Haman initiates a plot to kill all the Jews in the realm (Esther 3:1-6).
- ▶ 474 B.C. Letters are sent throughout the realm *"to destroy, to kill, and to cause to perish, all Jews, both young and old, little children and women, in one day"*(Esther 3:12-15).
- ▶ 444. B.C. Sanballot, Tobiah, and Geshem ridicule Nehemiah's plans to rebuild Jerusalem's wall (Neh 2:19-20).
- ▶ 444 B.C. Sanballot becomes indignant at the building of the walls of the holy city, and spoke to his brethren and the army of Samaria against the work (Neh 4:1-2).
- ▶ 444 B.C. Tobiah joins in the mockery, saying a fox would be able to break down their stone wall (Neh 4:3).
- ▶ 444 B.C. A conspiracy is formed against the building of the wall, involving Sanballot, Tobiah, the Arabians, the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites, to fight against the builders (Neh 4:7-9).
- ▶ 444 B.C. Sanballot, Tobiah, and Geshem seek to draw the builders away from the wall into the plans of Ono (Neh 6:1-17).

These are only the recorded oppositions that followed *"the first year of Darius."* They all occurred even though this angel had stood up to encourage and

strengthen Darius. This indicates the vehemence of the opposition initiated by *"the prince of Persia"* against the Jews. All of these efforts were a reflection upon earth of an initiative launched by *"spiritual; wickedness in high places,"* and *"the rulers of the darkness of this world"* (Eph 6:12).

#### The Angel Stood

This angel engaged in an initiative to fortify the reign of Darius, particularly regarding the Jews. The result of his action was extended favor toward the Jews, in order that they might be sustained, and not wiped out by the

**THIS ANGEL ENGAGED IN AN INITIATIVE TO FORTIFY THE REIGN OF DARIUS, PARTICULARLY REGARDING THE JEWS. THE RESULT OF HIS ACTION WAS EXTENDED FAVOR TOWARD THE JEWS, IN ORDER THAT THEY MIGHT BE SUSTAINED, AND NOT WIPED OUT BY THE INFLUENCE OF "THE PRINCE OF PERSIA."**

influence of *"the prince of Persia."*

#### The Angel and the Will of God

It must be remembered that angels are dispatched from the throne of God. They do not operate on their own, but *"do His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His word"* (Psa 103:20). In the interest of His people, God had sent an angel to fortify Darius in his favor toward the Jews. That is why Daniel was elevated a place of political prominence (Dan 6:2). That is why Darius published a world-wide proclamation to *"all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in the earth."* In this decree, Darius proclaimed *"the God of Daniel,"* saying *"He is the living God, and steadfast for ever, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and His dominion shall be even unto the end. He delivereth and rescueth, and He worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth"* (Dan 6:16-27).

Here is an excellent example of one of the ways God fulfills these marvelous promises – Divine commitments to bless His people.

▶ *"The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and His ears are open unto their cry."* (Psa 34:15)

▶ *"Ye that love the LORD, hate evil: He preserveth the souls of His saints; He delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked."* (Psa 97:10)

▶ *"The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them."* (Psa 34:7)

▶ *"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called*

*according to His purpose."* (Rom 8:28)

▶ *"Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my Helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."* (Heb 13:6)

These texts, and more, show us the magnitude of what has been revealed in Christ Jesus: *"Are they [the holy angels] not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?"* (Heb 1:14). The ministrations of these obedient spirits is not always directly to us. Sometimes, as in the text before us, they are sent to bolster those who are inclined toward us. Other times they are sent forth to subdue our enemies, as shown in the overthrow of the hosts of Sennacherib (2 Kgs 19:35). Sometimes they lead us, as they did Israel through the wilderness Ex 32:34). Whether we are aware of them or not,

these angels are working for the saints, ministering to the heirs of salvation.

#### An Observation

If God moved among men in favor of the fleshly seed of Abraham, how much

more will He do so in regard for those who are in Christ Jesus, and are Jews inwardly, and whose circumcision is of the heart, and not the flesh (Rom 2:29)? Now, Jesus is governing the world with a regard to bring many sons to glory (Heb 2:10).

He has been made the Head over all principality and power *“for the church”* (Eph 1:22-23). He shall *“put down all principality and power,”* and bring all of the children of God to glory, blameless and in joy (1 Cor 15:24; Jude 1:24-25).

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## I WILL SHOW THEE THE TRUTH

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<sup>2a</sup> *“And now will I show thee the truth.”* Other versions read, *“And now I will make clear to you what is true,”*<sup>BBE</sup> and *“Now then, I will reveal the truth to you.”*<sup>NLT</sup>

#### SHOWING THE TRUTH

The angel had said he had come to

because the things God has decreed are not apparent to the sons of men. **If He does not make them known, there is no possible way men can come to any understanding of them.**

Thus it is written, *“For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the*

those professing identity with God. There is an unfortunate tendency with the church to limit their thinking to the realm of obligation: i.e., what is the will of God for my life? Let it be clear, it is imperative that such things be known, and considerable has been revealed about what God expects of all men in general, and His people in particular. However, there are higher domains of thought than this – terrains that shed light on human duty, and enable us to fulfill those duties with joy and confidence.

These loftier realms have to do with Divine determinations – what the Lord has purposed. In summary, these things are God’s *“eternal purpose,”* particularly revealed in Jesus Christ. **Now, the angel is going to reveal some of the details of that purpose, particular as they relate to the Jews.** If this is considered to be irrelevant to salvation, let the words of our blessed Lord be remembered: *“salvation is of the Jews”* (John 4:22). The extent of this statement is made known through Paul: *“Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.”* (Rom 9:4-5).

#### THE TRUTH

If Jesus is, in fact, *“the Truth”* (John 14:6), and if He alone is able to unlock the mysteries of Divine intent (Rev 5:2-9), then **no truth has ever been stated that is independent of Him.** Every articulation of truth intersects with the Lamb of God and His great salvation. **Because of this, truth always relates to the saints, whether it is spoken to Abraham in Ur of the Chaldees, on**

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## EVEN WHEN HIS DETERMINATIONS ARE WROUGHT OUT AMONG MEN, THEY ARE NOT ABLE TO CONFIDENTLY AND INSIGHTFULLY RELATE THEM TO THE GOD OF HEAVEN UNTIL HE MAKES THAT ASSOCIATION THROUGH REVELATION.

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tell him what was written in *“the Scriptures of TRUTH,”* and now he will do precisely that. He will not merely tell Daniel what is going to happen, but what has been determined by God, for that alone is *“the truth.”* The *“truth”* of which he speaks is the outward manifestation of the decrees of Almighty God. It is how Divine purpose is played out, as it was, among the sons of men.

The reason for the disclosure of these events is to assure Daniel that the government belongs to the Lord, and that He is at the helm of history, directing the affairs of men in the strict interest of His people. That is why the angel told Daniel, *“Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days”* (10:14).

To *“show”* the truth is to make it apparent to Daniel’s understanding, or make it clear to him. This is necessary

*spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God”* (1 Cor 2:11). While this text has particular reference to the things God has *“prepared for them that love Him”* (2:9), the principle applies to anything God has determined. What God has purposed, whether it immediately relates to the Jews, the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, or the governments of this world, is secret until God makes it known. **Even when His determinations are wrought out among men, they are not able to confidently and insightfully relate them to the God of heaven until He makes that association through revelation.** Until that time, His purposes are, as it was, sealed in the *“Book of Truth.”*

#### Loftier Thought

Here we are dealing with a loftier form of thought than is normal among

**Mount Sinai, or by an angel to Daniel.** Although the relationship of truth to believers is not always clearly seen, yet the relationship does exist, making “*all Scripture*” profitable to us (2 Tim 3:16-17).

For this reason, we must take great care not to limit our perspective of Scripture to history, culture, customs, and the likes. **Those will often be present in the Word of God, but they are always on the periphery, and never**

**at the center.** We may observe the outworking of Divine purpose in history, and do so with some profit. But ultimately our thoughts must be brought back to the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. That is where we obtain proper focus.

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## THREE KINGS, AND THE FOURTH

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*“<sup>2b</sup> Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia; and the fourth shall be far richer than they all: and by his strength through his riches he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia.”*

Once again, the significance of the kingdoms of Persia and Greece are being made known.

- ▣ They were revealed in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream of the multi-metaled statue. Heaven revealed to Daniel that they would be destroyed with all other kingdoms, by the Kingdom of God (Dan 2:32-45).
- ▣ Again, these same two kingdoms were included in Daniel’s vision of the four beasts that rose out of the sea. In that instance, heaven made known to Daniel that each of them would be supplanted by another government (7:3-17). The glorified Christ was introduced at this time, together with the Divine determination to ultimately give the kingdom to the saints (7:9-10, 13-14, 18, 22, 25).
- ▣ In an even more focused revelation, the same kingdoms were the subject of Daniel’s vision of the ram and the he goat. In that vision, the ruthlessness with which Persian would be overthrown was accented (8:3-27). In this revelation, Daniel was told of the impact of these kingdoms upon the Jews (8:12-14,24). The Messiah Himself was also introduced (8:25).
- ▣ The same kingdoms were then the subject of exposition by a holy angel who revealed that a fierce battle in the high places accounted for the displacement of the Persian empire by that of Greece (10:12-13, 20-21).

Once again, the Jewish people come into the picture (10:14, 21).

- ▣ Now, a heavenly messenger puts a spiritual magnifying glass on the same two kingdoms, showing in remarkable detail how Divine determinations will be worked out among the sons of men. Once again, Israel is an integral part of the message. The “*glorious land*” is mentioned (v 16, 41), together with the sanctuary and the daily sacrifice (v 31).

**It should be apparent to us that the kingdoms of Persia and Greece played a significant role in the coming of Christ into the world.** That role was a preparatory one, and not a central one. Yet, it was worthy of some elaboration, and thus the angel begins to open up how God worked things together for the good of His people.

### YET, THREE KINGS IN PERSIA

*“Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia . . .”* Other versions read, “*three more kings will arise in Persia,*”<sup>NKJV</sup> “*three more kings are going to arise in Persia,*”<sup>NASB</sup> and “*three more kings will appear in Persia.*”<sup>NIV</sup>

The point of the prophecy is not a

strict chronology of all of the kings of Persia. Rather, the angel is accounting for the initiative of Greece against Persia, wherein that kingdom was cast down. In the high places, the shift of power was the result of a conflict between holy angels and the “*prince of Persia*” (10:20). Now the impact of that battle upon the earth will be opened up.

The time for which the angel is accounting begins with “*the first year of Darius the Mede*” (11:1). From that time, three more kings would arise before anything significant would happen within Divine purpose. That is, the kingdom of Persia would remain in power without any significant opposition. The three kings that followed are:

- ▣ Cyrus, who reigned alone after Darius the Mede. With Cyrus, special political favor was shown to the Jews. He is the king God used to initiate the rebuilding of the Temple (2 Chron 36:23).
- ▣ Artaxasta, or Artaxerxes, who was called Cambyses by the Greeks. This king is mentioned in Scripture by the name “*Ahasuerus.*” He is the one to whom accusations were written against the Jews. Those accusations eventually led to an edict that stopped

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**IT SHOULD BE APPARENT TO US THAT THE KINGDOMS OF PERSIA AND GREECE PLAYED A SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN THE COMING OF CHRIST INTO THE WORLD. THAT ROLE WAS A PREPARATORY ONE, AND NOT A CENTRAL ONE. YET, IT WAS WORTHY OF SOME ELABORATION**

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*The angel confirms God is active in the affairs of heathen governments, as he begins to unfold the future, by Given O. Blakely*

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the rebuilding of the Temple for seven years (Ezra 4:6-24). His significance is seen in his interface with the Jews.

- ▣ Ahasuerus, whom married Esther, and was called “Darius Hystaspis,” or “Darius son of Hystaspes.” He was also brought into Scriptural prominence because of the favor he showed toward the Jews (Esther 2-3).

Historically, there was another Persian king names Smerdis. This king was a usurper, who pretended to be the son of Cyrus the Great, who was murdered by his own brother, Cambyses. Of this usurper history says, “Smerdis . . . was later successfully impersonated by Gaumata, a Magian, who was able to seize the throne when Cambyses died in 522 BC. The usurper reigned for only eight months, however, before he was slain by Darius and other Persian nobles suspicious of his origin.”<sup>BRITANNICA 2003</sup> He is omitted from the listing because of this circumstance.

Referring to their historical

and Darius Hystaspis, also called Darius son of Hystaspes.

I do not consider this conflict to be significant, for the point is not the three kings, but the fourth one. In either method of reckoning, the fourth king would be the same.

**THE FOURTH KING**

“ . . . and the fourth shall be far richer than they all . . . ” Other versions read, “a fourth will gain far more riches than all of them,” NASB and “the fourth will have much greater wealth than all of them.”<sup>BBE</sup>

It is generally understood that Xerxes is “the fourth king.” The decline of the Persian empire began with this king, who was rash and filled with pride.

**Far Richer**

This fourth king – Xerxes – inherited the vast wealth of the Persian rulers before him. Concerning Cyrus alone, the Lord said, “And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden

wealth of his father Darius, who was renowned for his taxation. Herotus says of his, “The sum of tribute under Darius was fourteen thousand five hundred and sixty talents. Besides this sum received from regular taxation, Herodotus enumerates a great amount of gold and silver, and other valuable things, which Darius was accustomed to receive annually from the Ethiopians, from the people of Colchis, from the Arabians, and from India.”<sup>BARNES</sup>

All this vast wealth was inherited by Xerxes, the son and successor of Darius, and the “fourth king” to which our text refers.

**An Explanation**

There were more than four kings in Persia. The following is a listing from history.

- ▣ Cyrus — 536
- ▣ Cambyses — 529
- ▣ Pseudo-Smerdis — 522
- ▣ Darius Hystaspis — 521
- ▣ Xerxes I. — 485
- ▣ Artaxerxes I. (Longimanus) — 464
- ▣ Xerxes II. — 425
- ▣ Sogdianus — 425
- ▣ Darius Nothus — 424
- ▣ Artaxerxes II. (Mnemon) — 405
- ▣ Artaxerxes III. — 359
- ▣ Darius Codomannus — 336

The third is omitted by the angel because he was an imposter. The others are of no significance in the Divine economy, and thus are not mentioned. It is the manner of God’s Word not to bother us with details relating to those who do not intersect with the purposes of God.

**THE SUCCESS OF THEIR KINGDOMS IS OWING TO ANGELIC OPPOSITION TO THE “PRINCE OF PERESIA,” WHO WAS SET AGAINST THE JEWS. HIS PURPOSES, HOWEVER, WERE THWARTED, AND THE JEWS FOUND FAVOR DURING THE REIGN OF THESE THREE KINGS.**

names, the three kings of reference are, therefore, Cyrus, Cambyses, and Darius son of Hystaspes. In Scripture they are known as Cyrus, Ahasuerus I, and Ahasuerus II. The success of their kingdoms is owing to angelic opposition to the “prince of Peresia,” who was set against the Jews. His purposes, however, were thwarted, and the Jews found favor during the reign of these three kings.

Some choose to reckon the time from the revelation itself, which took place in the “third year of Cyrus king of Persia” (10:1). If this view is taken, the three kings would include the usurper, and would thus be Cambyses, Smerdis,

riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the LORD, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel” (Isa 45:3). Cyrus’ son, Cambyses, increased that wealth. Of him “Universal History” records, “On his return from Thebes, in Egypt, he caused all the temples in that city to be pillaged and burned to the ground. But he saved from the flames gold to the amount of three hundred talents, and silver to the amount of two thousand and five hundred talents. He is also said to have carried away the famous circle of gold that encompassed the tomb of king Ozymandias, being three hundred and sixty-five cubits in circumference, on which were represented all the motions of the several constellations.”<sup>Universal History, iv. 140</sup>

Xerxes also inherited the vast

**STIRRING UP ALL AGAINST GRECIA**

“ . . . and by his strength through his riches he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia.” Other versions read, “as soon as he becomes strong through his riches, he will arouse the whole empire against the realm of Greece,”<sup>NASB</sup> and “When he has gained power by his wealth, he will stir up everyone against the kingdom of Greece.”<sup>NIV</sup>

This is something for which Xerxes was especially noted – stirring up the empire against Greece. Remember, Daniel had been repeatedly told that the kingdom of Greece would replace the kingdom of Persia – **no less than five times**. Two of them have been by

inference, declaring the sequence of kingdoms (2:39; 7:5-6). Three of them have specifically stated referred to Persia and Greece (8:3-7, 20-21; 10:20). Now we are being provided with some of the details related to that overthrow.

Britannica Encyclopedia says the following of this king. "born 519 BC, died 465, Persepolis. Old Persian Khshayarsha, byname Xerxes The Great Persian king (486-465 BC), the son and successor of Darius I. He is best known for his massive invasion of Greece from across the Hellespont (480 BC), a campaign marked by the battles of Thermopylae, Salamis, and Plataea. His ultimate defeat spelled the beginning of the decline of the Achaemenid Empire." BRITANNICA 2003

Of his attack of the Grecian empire, Britannica reads as follows. "There has been much later speculation on the real causes for the expedition. They could not have been economic, because Greece was not important then. Perhaps it was only the manifestation of a royal absolutism: Xerxes, whose character was later distorted in Greek legend, was neither foolish nor overly optimistic; although sensible and intelligent, he was nevertheless, according to G. Glotz, 'a sovereign by divine right, to whom opposition was as annoying as sacrilege . . . nervous in temperament, fallen from youthful fire into indolence, incited to make a war he didn't like. . . .' At the head of his armies, he left Sardis for the Hellespont and had two boat bridges placed across the strait. A storm destroyed them, and Xerxes had the sea whipped as punishment. With the bridges remade, for seven days he oversaw the crossing of the army—5,000,000 men according to Herodotus and 360,000 by modern estimate, supported by 700 to 800 ships. Their passage was facilitated by a massive engineering works: a channel was dug across the Isthmus of Actium so that the peaks of Mount Athos might be avoided. Nevertheless, the army's size was of no help, partly because of misinformation about the enemy terrain and partly because of the appearance of a national feeling in Greece. After a few successes (e.g., Thermopylae, mid-August 480 BC), Xerxes occupied Attica and pillaged Athens on September 21, but on September 29, at Salamis, a naval battle that he had initiated turned into a defeat. Without a fleet to bring supplies to the army, he had to retreat; he crossed over into Asia, leaving Mardonius in Thessaly. During an indecisive battle near Plataea, on Aug. 27, 479, Mardonius was killed, and his death obliged the army of occupation to withdraw. Hostilities continued for 13 years, but thenceforth Xerxes involved himself only slightly." BRITANNICA 2003

#### THE REAL CAUSE

That is the historical perspective. **However, the sphere of causes is not found in history, or in the**

**machinations of gifted and powerful leaders!** The real cause originated with the Living God, and was recorded on the tables of Divine purpose hundreds of years before the events occurred. The overthrow of Persia did not originate upon earth, but was only reflected upon earth. The angel has already explained that the overthrow would occur in high places – the domain where spiritual powers struggle.

When the time appointed for the overthrow of Persia approached, Xerxes was stirred up against the Grecian realm. He may have imagined that the idea originated with him, but it did not. He was brought into the Divine agenda, all the while thinking the whole thing was a

set his eyes upon Greece. Thus, Daniel is told of the coming of Xerxes and his ambitions against Greece at least fifty-seven years before they took place.

#### FEAR NOT!

All of this has an immediate bearing on this time. As I write this lesson (3/2003), a military initiative is taking place in Iraq, which was a province in ancient Persia, becoming known as Iraq in the seventh century. It is presently one of the world's "leading oil producers." BRITANNICA 2003 In the conflict that is shaping up, Israel also, plays a prominent part.

In my judgment, these events have been preceded by a great struggle in high places. A shift of power is going to take

**THAT IS THE HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE. HOWEVER, THE SPHERE OF CAUSES IS NOT FOUND IN HISTORY, OR IN THE MACHINATIONS OF GIFTED AND POWERFUL LEADERS! THE REAL CAUSE ORIGINATED WITH THE LIVING GOD, AND WAS RECORDED ON THE TABLES OF DIVINE PURPOSE HUNDREDS OF YEARS BEFORE THE EVENTS OCCURRED.**

product of his own thinking. And, indeed, he did make plans and instituted initiatives against Greece. From the higher perspective, however, he fulfilled the inspired statement, "*The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the LORD*" (Prov 16:33). Other versions read, "*A thing may be put to the decision of chance, but it comes about through the Lord,*"<sup>BBE</sup> The rather vulgar NLT translation reads, "*We may throw the dice, but the LORD determines how they fall.*"

Daniel is writing around the year 537 B.C. Xerxes moved against the Grecians around 480 B.C. BRITANNICA 2003 The Persian empire began to erode from that time, finally being overthrown by Alexander the Great in 331 B.C., nearly one hundred and fifty years after Xerxes

place, much like that of in our text.

Without being drawn into premature conclusions, it is enough that the people of God be bold, and not allow themselves to be pulled into the vortex of fear. The Lord is still the Governor of the nations, and He is ruling to fulfill His purpose, and give the ultimate advantage to His people. If appearances seem to contract these things, we simply have not seen things properly.

Instead of being caught up in politics, let us engage principalities and powers, the rulers of the darkness of this world, and spiritual wickedness in high places. This is the conflict into which we have been inducted by faith (Eph 6:12). Let us be diligent to so live as to obtain spiritual power in this conflict.

*The angel confirms God is active in the affairs of heathen governments, as he begins to unfold the future, by Given O. Blakely*

## A MIGHTY KING SHALL STAND UP

**“<sup>3</sup> And a mighty king shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will.”**

Once again, the angel is covering the same material already revealed to Daniel – yet this is not mere redundancy. The introduction of the coming Messiah into the world required this explanation. The struggles put before us were not mere political activities. They were the efforts

immediately after Xerxes. **Rather, what Xerxes did in coming against the Grecian Empire was requited or avenged by Alexander.** The conflict started by Xerxes introduced friction between these empires. When Alexander arose, therefore, he was more prone to move against Persia.

Here, Alexander is called “*a mighty king*.” Earlier in Daniel he is referred to as a leopard with wings on its

of King Neoptolemus of Epirus). From age 13 to 16 he was taught by Aristotle, who inspired him with an interest in philosophy, medicine, and scientific investigation; but he was later to advance beyond his teacher’s narrow precept that non-Greeks should be treated as slaves.

“Left in charge of Macedonia in 340 B.C. during Philip’s attack on Byzantium, Alexander defeated the Maedi, a Thracian people; two years later he commanded the left wing at the Battle of Chaeronea, in which Philip defeated the allied Greek states, and displayed personal courage in breaking the Sacred Band of Thebes. A year later Philip divorced Olympias; and, after a quarrel at a feast held to celebrate his father’s new marriage, Alexander and his mother fled to Epirus, and Alexander later went to Illyria. Shortly afterward, father and son were reconciled and Alexander returned; but his position as heir was jeopardized.

In 336, however, on Philip’s assassination, Alexander, acclaimed by the army, succeeded without opposition. He at once executed the princes of Lyncestis, alleged to be behind Philip’s murder, along with all possible rivals and the whole of the faction opposed to him. He then marched south, recovered a wavering Thessaly, and at an assembly of the Greek League at Corinth was appointed generalissimo for the forthcoming invasion of Asia, already planned and initiated by Philip. Returning to Macedonia by way of Delphi (where the Pythian priestess acclaimed him “invincible”), he advanced into Thrace in spring 335 and, after forcing the Shipka Pass and crushing the Triballi, crossed the Danube to disperse the Getae; turning west, he then defeated and shattered a coalition of Illyrians who had invaded Macedonia. Meanwhile, a rumor of his death had precipitated a revolt of Theban democrats; other Greek states favored Thebes, and the Athenians, urged on by Demosthenes, voted help. In 14 days Alexander marched 240 miles from Pelion (near modern Korçë, Albania) in Illyria to Thebes. When the Thebans refused to surrender, he made an entry and razed their city to the ground, sparing only temples and Pindar’s house; 6,000 were killed and all survivors sold into slavery. The other Greek states were cowed by this severity, and Alexander could afford to treat Athens leniently. Macedonian garrisons were left in Corinth, Chalcis, and the Cadmea (the citadel of Thebes).” BRITANNICA 2003

**The angel of God, declaring in advance that whole series of events simply said, “A mighty king shall stand up.”** That is how heaven accounts for his sudden rise to prominence. He was not a “*mighty king*” by name only, but by accomplishment. In turn, that was true because the spiritual power behind Grecia

**SINCE THE DEVIL IS NOT OMNISCIENT, AND COULD NOT PRECISELY TRACE THE LINEAGE OF JESUS, HE FOCUSED HIS ATTENTION UPON THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL. FROM HIS PERSPECTIVE, THE BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY WAS AN EFFORT TO OBLITERATE A NATION.**

of Satan’s powers to thwart the coming of the “Seed” Abraham. Since the devil is not omniscient, and could not precisely trace the lineage of Jesus, he focused his attention upon the people of Israel. From his perspective, the Babylonian captivity was an effort to obliterate a nation. However, from heaven’s vantage point, it was the chastening of His people, designed to awaken them from their spiritual slumber and commitment to idols.

Now, working through “*the prince of Persia*,” the adversary is again seeking to overthrow the ancient people. And, indeed, from the standpoint of appearance, it may appear that things are going his way. But they are not. Remember, what is being revealed relates to Daniel’s people. An explanation is provided that will cause faith to flourish and confident hope to dominate.

### A MIGHTY KING

“*And a mighty king . . .*”

This is another reference to Alexander the Great, through whom the Persian empire was brought to an end. Our text does not mean he would arise

back, that moved swiftly across the world (7:6). He was also depicted as the notable horn between the eyes of a conquering he-goat (8:4-7). Now he is seen as “*a mighty king*.”

### SHALL STAND UP

“*. . . shall stand up . . .*” Other versions read, “*shall arise*,” NKJV “*will appear*,” NIV and “*come to power*.” BBE

The idea here is that Alexander ultimately stood up against the kings of Persia. Remember, in the high places, a holy angel was joined by Michael the prince to fight against “*the prince of Persia*.” **What we are here reading is the effect of that battle upon earth.** When the spiritual principality called “*the prince of Grecia*” came into power (10:20), he worked through Alexander the Great to achieve the political overthrow of Persia, which had lost its dominion because the “*prince of Persia*” had been cast down. While history calls attention to Alexander himself, the angel has told Daniel of the spiritual power behind Alexander.

Alexander was “born in 356 BC at Pella in Macedonia, the son of Philip II and Olympias (daughter

came into prominence – and that was only because the spiritual power behind Persia had been overcome by holy angels. Had these two events not taken place – the casting down of the “*prince of Persia*,” and the coming into prominence of “*the prince of Grecia*” – Alexander would never have been “*great*.”

#### **GREAT DOMINION**

“ . . . that shall rule with great dominion . . . ” Other versions read, “*he will rule with great authority*,”<sup>NASB</sup> “*he shall rule with great power*,”<sup>DOUAY</sup> “*and he shall be the lord of a great empire*,”<sup>Septuagint</sup> “*and govern a vast empire*,”<sup>NJB</sup> and “*will rule a vast kingdom*.”<sup>NLT</sup>

Prior to this, it was said of the Grecian kingdom, “*and dominion was given to it*” (7:6). Again, it was said of Alexander that Grecia was like a one horned he-goat that “*waxed very great*” (8:8). Of Alexander himself it is said, “*And the rough goat is the king of Grecia: and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king*” (Dan 8:21).

Of the expansion of his dominion history says, “In winter 334–333 Alexander conquered western Asia Minor, subduing the hill tribes of Lycia and Pisidia; and in spring 333 he advanced along the coastal road to Perga, passing the cliffs of Mt. Climax . . . From Gordium he pushed on to Ancyra (modern Ankara) and thence south through Cappadocia and the Cilician Gates (modern Kulek BoHazi); a fever held him up for a time in Cilicia . . . Darius was astride his line of communications at Issus, north of Alexander’s position (autumn 333). Turning, Alexander found Darius drawn up along the Pinarus River. In the battle that followed, Alexander won a decisive victory . . . From Issus Alexander marched south into Syria and Phoenicia, his object being to isolate the Persian fleet from its bases and so to destroy it as an effective fighting force . . . His conquest of Egypt had completed his control of the whole eastern Mediterranean coast . . . Alexander now occupied Babylon, city and province; Mazaeus, who surrendered it, was confirmed as satrap in conjunction with a Macedonian troop commander, and quite exceptionally was granted the right to coin. As in Egypt, the local priesthood was encouraged. Susa, the capital,

also surrendered, releasing huge treasures amounting to 50,000 gold talents; here . . . In spring 330 Alexander marched north into Media and occupied its capital Ecbatana . . . In Aria he reduced Satibarzanes, who had offered submission only to revolt, and he founded Alexandria of the Arians (modern Her(t) . . . From Phrada, Alexander pressed on during the winter of 330–329 up the valley of the Helmand River, through Arachosia, and over the mountains past the site of modern K(bul into the country of the Paropamisadae, where he founded

*dominion*.” That is certainly not how an historian would say it. In fact, volumes have been written that simply state the exploits of Alexander without many embellishing comments. But the Holy Spirit wraps up the entire period of Alexander’s expanding kingdom with six words: “*and shall rule with great dominion*.” It is obvious, therefore, that Alexander’s rule was not the primary

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**BUT THE HOLY SPIRIT WRAPS UP THE ENTIRE PERIOD OF ALEXANDER’S EXPANDING KINGDOM WITH SIX WORDS: “AND SHALL RULE WITH GREAT DOMINION.” IT IS OBVIOUS, THEREFORE, THAT ALEXANDER’S RULE WAS NOT THE PRIMARY RULE, AND HIS KINGDOM WAS NOT THE PRIMARY KINGDOM.**

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Alexandria by the Caucasus . . . Alexander, marching west to Bactra-Zariaspa (modern Balkh [Wazirabad] in Afghanistan), appointed loyal satraps in Bactria and Aria. Crossing the Oxus, he sent his general Ptolemy in pursuit of Bessus, who had meanwhile been overthrown by the Sogdian Spitamenes. . . . From Maracanda (modern Samarkand) Alexander advanced by way of Cyropolis to the Jaxartes (modern Syrdarya), the boundary of the Persian Empire. There he broke the opposition of the Scythian nomads by his use of catapults and, after defeating them in a battle on the north bank of the river, pursued them into the interior. On the site of modern Leninabad (Khojent) on the Jaxartes, he founded a city, Alexandria Eschate, “the farthest.” . . . It took Alexander until the autumn of 328 to crush the most determined opponent he encountered in his . . . In June Alexander fought his last great battle on the left bank of the Hydaspes. He founded two cities there, Alexandria Nicaea (to celebrate his victory) and Bucephala (named after his horse Bucephalus, which died there); and Porus became his ally . . . In the winter of 324 Alexander carried out a savage punitive expedition against the Cossaeans in the hills of Luristan.”

rule, and his kingdom was not the primary kingdom.

#### **DO ACCORDING TO HIS WILL**

“ . . . and do according to his will. ” Other versions read, “*and do as he pleases*,”<sup>NASB</sup> “*and take action as he pleases*,”<sup>NRSV</sup> and “*accomplish everything he sets out to do*.”<sup>NLT</sup>

This kind of power is not said of many earthly potentates. It was said of Nebuchadnezzar: “*And for the majesty that he gave him, all people, nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him: whom he would he slew; and whom he would he kept alive; and whom he would he set up; and whom he would he put down*” (Dan 5:19).

Once again, this was not owing to any power on Alexander’s part. Rather, he was released to do his own will much like Satan was allowed to do his will in his assault against Job. He could not go beyond the boundaries determined by God. When his purpose had been fulfilled, he was simply removed.

**Of that impressive summation, the angelic messenger simply says, “a mighty king shall stand up, that shall rule with great**

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## **HIS KINGDOM SHALL BE BROKEN AND DIVIDED**

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“<sup>4</sup> *And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven; and not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion which he ruled: for his*

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*The angel confirms God is active in the affairs of heathen governments, as he begins to unfold the future, by Given O. Blakely*

**kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others beside those."**

The angel continues to speak of Alexander the Great and the Grecian kingdom. If one wonders why there is such repetition, it must be remembered that for Daniel this was all in the future. Further, he was living in the peak of Persian power. It no doubt was difficult to visualize that great empire being overthrown with seeming ease. Of course,

power, when all should have been going well for Alexander, he was brought down – "removed" by the God of heaven (Dan 2:21).

Here is how history records the breaking of Alexander's kingdom, or the breaking of the "notable horn." "Suddenly, in Babylon, while busy with plans to improve the irrigation of the Euphrates and to settle the coast of the Persian Gulf, Alexander was taken ill after a prolonged banquet and drinking bout; 10 days later, on June 13, 323, he

**Alexander's achievement."** BRITANNICA 2003 Of course, this was the Lord's doing, not Alexander's, and "it is marvelous in our eyes"(Psa 118:23).

**DIVIDED TO THE FOUR WINDS**

*" . . . and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven; and not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion which he ruled . . . "*

Following Alexander's death, his kingdom did not pass to any designated heir, for he had no time to appoint anyone to take his place, as others rulers did. Therefore, the kingdom did not pass "to his posterity," as with other kings. Nor, indeed, was the kingdom governed as it was during his solitary reign. It was not "according to his dominion which he ruled." A different kind of government followed his death.

The kingdom was divided into four sections, with a different ruler over each one. From the earthly perspective, **Seleucus** took charge of Syria. **Antigonus** became the chief officer of Asia Minor. **Cassander** took the kingdom of Macedon for himself. **Ptolemy** took possession of Egypt. None of them ever attained to the political stature of Alexander – "nor according to the dominion which he ruled." The kingdom did not maintain the same level of power it had when Alexander ruled. **However, what really happened was that God "parceled out" the kingdom to these four men, dividing it to whoever He desired.** Thus, as Daniel had been told before, the kingdom was allowed to continue, but in a reduced state of power: i.e., "prolonged for a season and a time"(7:12).

This same division was seen in the depiction of Greece as a four-headed leopard (7:6). Exactly the same point is made in the vision of the ram and the he-goat. Following the breaking of the "notable horn," it is written, "whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power."(8:22).

**PLUCKED UP FOR OTHERS**

*" . . . for his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others beside those."*

**ALREADY AN ANGEL HAS FLOWN TO HIM FROM HEAVEN, ANNOUNCING THAT THE BATTLE TO OVERTHROW PERSIA HAD BEGUN IN THE HIGH PLACES. IT WOULD BE NEARLY TWO HUNDRED YEARS BEFORE THAT OVERTHROW WAS ACCOMPLISHED. ONLY THEN COULD IT BE FORMALIZED UPON THE EARTH.**

it would not be an easy overthrow at all. Already an angel has flown to him from heaven, announcing that the battle to overthrow Persia had begun in the high places. It would be nearly two hundred years before that overthrow was accomplished. Only then could it be formalized upon the earth.

**HIS KINGDOM SHALL BE BROKEN**

*"And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken . . . "* Other versions read, "as soon as he has arisen, his kingdom shall be broken up," NASB "after he has appeared, his empire will be broken up," NIV "while still rising in power, his kingdom shall be broken," NRSV and "and when he shall come to his height, his kingdom shall be broken." DOUAY

This same truth was stated in the vision of the ram and the he-goat. There it was said of Alexander, "when he was strong, the great horn was broken" (8:8), and "And the rough goat is the king of Grecia: and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king. Now that being broken" (8:22a).

The exercise of Divine Sovereignty or power is seen here. At the zenith of his

died in his 33rd year; he had reigned for 12 years and eight months." BRITANNICA 2003

But Alexander's reign was not really cut short by a sudden illness. He was "broken off" by the God of heaven, having served his purpose. While he reigned, he did what he willed. In breaking him off, God did what He willed.

**The Significance of His Reign**

Alexander, the "notable horn" and "mighty king" helped to pave the way for the Gospel. An unprecedented degree of interplay between the nations came into existence with him. There was also the matter of commonality in language that he introduced. This allowed for the spreading of the Gospel. This is highlighted by history's record of him. "His career led to the moving of the great centers of civilization eastward and initiated the new age of the Greek territorial monarchies; it spread Hellenism in a vast colonizing wave throughout the Middle East and created, if not politically at least economically and culturally, a single world stretching from Gibraltar to the Punjab, open to trade and social intercourse and with a considerable overlay of common civilization and the Greek koinAas a lingua franca. It is not untrue to say that the Roman Empire, the spread of Christianity as a world religion, and the long centuries of Byzantium were all in some degree the fruits of

The “those” of this verse refers to supposed posterity of Alexander. His kingdom was not taken from him to be kept in his family. **Instead, God took it from him and gave it to four other men of his own choosing, without any choice being made by Alexander.** See the Lord ruling “in the midst” of His enemies (Psa 110:2). The children of God have every reason to be

confident and filled with hope! Their earthly circumstances may be troubling, but their future is secure in Christ, and the hand of the Lord is upon them.

Thus we again see the fulfillment of God’s Word: “the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men” (Dan 4:17). And again,

“the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will” (Dan 4:25). And again, “the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will” (Dan 4:32). As the Psalmist well said, “For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another” (Psa 75:6-7).

## THE KING OF THE SOUTH

**“<sup>5</sup> And the king of the south shall be strong, and one of his princes; and he shall be strong above him, and have dominion; his dominion shall be a great dominion.”**

Here the angel leaves an emphasis of the Grecian empire as a whole, focusing on two parts of the Grecian empire – the kingdom of the South and the kingdom of the North. The directions “South” and “North” are in relation to, as it is frequently called, “the land of Israel” (1 Sam 13:18; 2 Kgs 5:2; Ezek 7:2; Matt 2:20). The kingdom to the North is Syria, and the kingdom to the South is Egypt. At the division of the kingdom, Seleucus ruled over of Syria, and Ptolemy had charge of Egypt. It is evident that the events associated with these kingdoms will impact more directly upon Israel, Daniel’s “people.”



I am going to take the liberty of providing the dynasties for these two kingdoms. You will see the Spirit only comments on the relevant ones.

### THE PTOLEMIES (Egypt)

- 323 Ptolemy Soter, son of Ptolemy Lagus, governor of Egypt.
- 306 Ptolemy takes the title of king of Egypt.
- 284 Ptolemy Philadelphus. (It was under him that the Septuagint Testament was made.)
- 246 Ptolemy Euergetes.
- 221 Ptolemy Philopator.
- 204 Ptolemy Epiphanes.
- 180 Ptolemy Philometor.

### THE SELEUCIDAE (Syria)

- 323 Seleucus Nicator, governor of Babylon.
- 312 Seleucus recovers Babylon, and the era of the Seleucidae begins.
- 280 Antiochus Soter.
- 261 Antiochus Theus.
- 246 Seleucus Callinicus.
- 226 Seleucus Ceraunus.
- 225 Antiochus the Great.
- 187 Seleucus Philopator.
- 175 **Antiochus Epiphanes.**
- 164 Antiochus Eupator, of whom the Romans assume the guardianship.

These two nations frequently warred with each other, seeking for dominion over the holy land, which was between them. Of them Matthew Henry writes, “Ptolemy, soon after he gained Egypt, invaded Judea, and took Jerusalem on a Sabbath, pretending a friendly visit. Seleucus also gave disturbance to Judea.”

**Although Alexander’s kingdom was divided into four kingdoms, the angel now focuses on only two of them.** They are singled out because “the glorious land” became a point of contention between them. Remember, the angel is speaking with

Daniel about “what shall befall thy people in the latter days: for yet the vision is for many days” (Dan 10:14).

### THE KING OF THE SOUTH

“<sup>5</sup> And the king of the south shall be strong, and one of his princes . . .” Other versions read, “Also the king of the South shall become strong, as well as one of his princes,”<sup>NKJV</sup> and “along with one of his princes.”<sup>NASB</sup>

The “king of the South” is Ptolemy, who ruled over Egypt Lybia, Cyrene, Ethiopia, Arabia, Phoenicia, Coelesyria, Cyprus, and several isles in the Aegean sea, and many cities in Greece. He was “strong” in that he expanded his kingdom.

The phrase “one of his princes” does not refer to one of Ptolemy’s princes, but one of the princes that was under Alexander. This is Seleucus, who was “the king of the North,” who is the subject of the next verse.

### Some Observations

First, here were matters that would begin taking place at least 214 years after this message is being delivered to Daniel. So far as Daniel’s personal life is concerned, some might surmise they had no relevance to him. However, the angel is not viewing Daniel in that manner. Rather, Daniel is seen as a member of the offspring of Abraham, to whom the promises were made. What is more, he has demonstrated a fervent interest in the people of God, praying for them to be forgiven, and to again stand in the favor of God. This concern has brought him into fellowship with God,

who also regarded these people as “*the apple of His eye*” (Deut 32:10; Lam 2:18; Zech 2:8). Therefore, the Lord is sharing the future He has determined for this people.

Second, the Lord is selective about the people whose future he discloses. Even though there were four Divinely imposed division of the Grecian empire, God now speaks of only two of them. It is as though He is moving Greece under a magnifying glass, and showing Daniel matters regarding only a segment of its domain, and two of its rulers.

**Here again we see the matter of heavenly focus.** If ever a person is going to learn from God, a deliverance from the mundane and from generalities must be experienced. These are sisters of distraction who lead many deluded souls into the realm of unprofitability and vulnerability. **The more a person deals with the mundane, everyday routines, of life, the more spiritual power and insight is forfeited.** The same ensues when one gets caught up in endless generalities that never yield refreshing insights.

**STRONG WITH A GREAT DOMINION**

“... and he shall be strong above him, and have dominion; his dominion shall be a great dominion.” Other versions read, “and he shall gain power over him,”<sup>NKJV</sup> and “who gain ascendancy over him.”<sup>NASB</sup>

This is Seleucus, who ruled over Macedonia, Greece, Thrace, Asia, Syria, Babylonia, Media, Susiana, Armenia, a part of Cappadocia, and Cilicia and all the eastern countries. These extended as far as India, from Taurus to the river Indus, and from Taurus to the Aegean sea. The remainder of this chapter will deal with these two kings and their successors.

It is my persuasion that the Lord is confirming to Daniel that He will

the people of God, having no fear of God before their eyes. To the carnal mind, this appears to indicate Divine abandonment, or a sign of a lack of God’s interest in the affairs of His people – particularly if they have been less than true and faithful.

The prevalence of this kind of thinking is revealed in the level of despair that exists among professed believers. Responses such as anger toward the Lord, doubt that He loves His people, and fear

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**IT IS MY PERSUASION THAT THE LORD IS CONFIRMING TO DANIEL THAT HE WILL REMEMBER HIS PEOPLE IN THE FUTURE, AFTER DANIEL HAS BEEN GATHERED UNTO HIS PEOPLE.**

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remember His people in the future, after Daniel has been gathered unto His people.

**Divine Rule**

Over and over, God is affirming His rule over the affairs of men. He did it during the reigns of Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, Darius, and now Cyrus. It seems to me that this is a truth that is most difficult to grasp. In fact, only faith can take hold of it. Circumstance seems to contradict it. The kings of the earth are not afraid to lift themselves up against

about the future reveal the need for confirming the Lord does, in fact, “*care*” for His people (1 Pet 5:7). Even when great atrocities break out against the people of God, those atrocities have been greatly subdued.

Heaven never allows Satan to do all that he desires to do. Even as this passage will confirm, the devices of the powers of darkness, particularly as reflected in political machinations, are held in check by the Living God.

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**IN THE END OF YEARS**

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**“<sup>6</sup> And in the end of years they shall join themselves together; for the king’s daughter of the south shall come to the king of the north to make an agreement; but she shall not retain the power of the arm; neither shall he stand, nor his arm: but she shall be given up, and they that brought her, and he that begat her, and he that strengthened her in these times.”**

This is one of the unique passages of Scripture that deals with very practical

political matters. They are so remarkably detailed, that some have been tempted to either discard them as meaningless, or transfer to them mystical explanations that better suit their own personal agendas. However, there is room for passages of this sort in our thinking.

**An Example**

Take, for example, the manner in which many approach the subjects of the end of the world, the coming of Christ, and other eschatological events. The amount of preaching and literature that

major on fearful governments and difficult times is remarkable. Multitudes of people have been taught in such a way as to make them more fearful of receiving “*the mark of the beast*” than of standing before the judgment seat of Christ. Others are more shaken by thoughts of a great tribulation than they are of being cast into the lack of fire. Still others quake at the idea of one world government, as though that is the ultimate curse.

This sort of thinking does not issue from faith, and ignores certain

comforting affirmations of Scripture.

- ▶ *“The heavens do rule”* (Dan 4:26)
- ▶ *“For the kingdom is the LORD’S: and he is the governor among the nations.”* (Psa 22:28)
- ▶ *“For God is the King of all the earth”* (Psa 47:7)
- ▶ *“Thine, O LORD, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O LORD, and thou art exalted as head above all.”* (1 Chr 29:11)

and the destruction of Jerusalem. He has witnessed his colleagues, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, being thrown into a furnace of fire. He himself has been cast into a den of lions. He has heard of a coming initiative against *“the pleasant land”* (8:9). He has heard of some of the *“host of heaven”* being cast down (8:10). He has been told of the daily sacrifice being taken away, the place of the sanctuary cast down, and truth being cast down to the ground (8:11-12).

None of these things has caused Daniel to be dominated by fear, or to pray for escape from what is coming. That simply is not how faith moves a person to respond to such revelations. Rather than

**What kind of reasoning has led professed believers to speak of coming calamities in such a way as to provoke fear, rash speech, and foolish conclusions?** We do well to learn from this passage that such responses bring no glory to God, and they certainly bring no advantages to His people.

**THE END OF YEARS**

*“And in the end of years . . . ”*  
Other versions read, *“at the end of some years,”*<sup>NKJV</sup> *“after some years,”*<sup>NASB</sup> *“after the course of years,”*<sup>DARBY</sup> and *“and after his years.”*<sup>Septuagint</sup>

Note, the phrase does **not** say “in the end of THE years.” This is not referring to the end of time itself, but to the period of time marking the close of the two kingdoms under consideration – Syria and Egypt. This is referring to the kingdoms in general, and the final kings of them. Daniel has already been told the Grecian Empire will be supplanted by a greater kingdom. In Nebuchadnezzar’s vision, that overcoming kingdom was described as legs, and feet and toes of iron mixed with iron and clay (2:33). In the vision of the four beasts, the Persian dynasty would be replaced by a ruthless *“fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns”* (7:7).

The words before us refer to the closing days of the Persian empire, with a focus on the kingdoms of Egypt and Syria. Even in the closing days, they are under the strict superintendence of the mighty God. Even though they engage in a hearty effort to be united, they will not be able to lengthen their days.

**JOINING THEMSELVES TOGETHER**

*“ . . . they shall join themselves together . . . ”* Other versions read, *“they shall join forces,”*<sup>NKJV</sup> *“they will form an alliance,”*<sup>NASB</sup> *“they will become allies,”*<sup>NIV</sup> *“they shall join affinity,”*<sup>DARBY</sup> *“they shall be in a league together,”*<sup>DOUAY</sup> and *“they shall conclude a treaty.”*<sup>NJB</sup>

The two kings of reference are Ptolemy Philadelphus, king of Egypt, and

**WHAT KIND OF REASONING HAS LED PROFESSED BELIEVERS TO SPEAK OF COMING CALAMITIES IN SUCH A WAY AS TO PROVOKE FEAR, RASH SPEECH, AND FOOLISH CONCLUSIONS? WE DO WELL TO LEARN FROM THIS PASSAGE THAT SUCH RESPONSES BRING NO GLORY TO GOD, AND THEY CERTAINLY BRING NO ADVANTAGES TO HIS PEOPLE.**

- ▶ *“Thus saith the LORD, thy redeemer, and He that formed thee from the womb, I am the LORD that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself; that frustrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh diviners mad; that turneth wise men backward, and maketh their knowledge foolish”* (Isa 44:25)
- ▶ *“There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.”* (1 Cor 10:13)

Daniel has already heard of the oppression of his people. He has lived through the invasion of Nebuchadnezzar

running to hide, he has knelt to pray. He has given himself to prayer, contrition of heart, and fasting – asking the Lord to forgive His people and show them mercy.

God has **not** revealed these things to him to induce fear and trembling, or even to weight his heart down with sorrow. Rather, he is assuring Daniel of the uninterrupted care He has for His people. They may pass through fire and waster, but it will not mean their demise. As it is written, *“For thus hath the LORD said, The whole land shall be desolate; yet will I not make a full end”* (Jer 4:27). And again, *“Nevertheless in those days, saith the LORD, I will not make a full end with you”* (Jer 5:18). And again, *“For I am with thee, saith the LORD, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished”* (Jer 30:11).

successor to Ptolemy and Antiochus Theus, king of Syria and second successor of Seleucus . These two kings engaged in an effort to unite their kingdoms. The means through which this was sought is now a matter of historical record. The precision of the prophecy given to Daniel is so remarkably detailed that it startles the flesh. Yet, faith leaps for joy when the hand of God is seen in such things.

**THE KING'S DAUGHTER OF THE SOUTH**

“ . . . for the king’s daughter of the south . . . ” Other versions read, “the daughter of the king of the South.”  
NKJV/NASB/NIV

The “daughter of the South” is the daughter of the king of Egypt, whom I have identified as Ptolemy Philadelphus, successor to Ptolemy. The shrewdness of the attempt to unite the two kingdoms will become very evident.

**THE KING OF THE NORTH TO MAKE AN AGREEMENT**

“shall come to the king of the north to make an agreement . . . ” Other versions read, “to carry out a peaceful arrangement,”<sup>NASB</sup> “to make an alliance,”<sup>NIV</sup> and “to ratify the agreement.”<sup>NIV</sup>

The meaning of the text is **not** that she went to negotiate peace, like an emissary or envoy. History confirms that the king of Egypt gave his daughter to the king of Syria in an attempt to solidify an alliance between the two kingdoms.

“Berenice, daughter of Ptolemy II Philadelphus and Arsinoe I of Egypt. She was married to the Seleucid ruler Antiochus II Theos, supplanting his first wife, Laodice, whose children she persuaded him to bar from the succession to the throne in favor of her own.”  
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The “alliance,” then was a matrimonial one, as was often practiced among ancient rulers. The compact was,

according to history, was that Antiochus Theos should divorce his wife and half-sister Laodice, and disinherit her children, and bequeath the throne to any future child of Berenice, who would thus unite the empires of the Ptolemies and the Seleucidae.<sup>THE EXPOSITOR'S BIBLE</sup>

Jerome said of this passage, “this was Berenice, daughter of Ptolemy Philadelphus king of Egypt, who carried her to Pelusium, and from thence sailed with her to Seleucia in Syria; where he met with Antiochus king of Syria, to whom he gave her in marriage, with a vast dowry of gold and silver; hence she was called φερνοφορος; and the marriage was

Daphne, near Antioch, in Syria. Aroused by the murder, Ptolemy III Evergetes, Berenice's brother, launched a successful war (the Third Syrian War) against Laodice and her son, Seleucus II.”  
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“ . . . neither shall he stand, nor his arm, but she shall be given up . . . ” The meaning here is that the offspring of Berenice and Antiochus did not succeed in being in the royal line, and his mother was slain as well. The whole plan failed miserably.

**Utter Defeat**

**HERE THERE WAS AN UTTER OVERTHROW OF THOSE WHO HAD NO HEART FOR THE PEOPLE OF GOD. THEIR ALLIANCE WOULD BRING NO GOOD TO THE JEWS, TO BE SURE, AND THUS IT WAS THWARTED – THOROUGHLY AND DECISIVELY.**

celebrated with great solemnity” Ibid p 196 & Jerome in loc.

I share these various quotations to confirm the unanimity among Bible students concerning the meaning of this passage.

**POWER NOT RETAINED, SHE SHALL BE GIVEN UP**

**The Power of the Arm**

“ . . . but she shall not retain the power of the arm; Other versions read, “she shall not retain the power of her authority,”<sup>NKJV</sup> “she will not retain the position of her power,”<sup>NASB</sup> and “but she will, lose her influence over him.”<sup>NLT</sup>

That is, she was not able to unite th two kingdoms. She could not even keep her husband, for history confirms that the plan fell to the ground. “Laodice, however, persuaded Antiochus to come to Ephesus (in Asia Minor), where he died in 246, perhaps a victim of her intrigues. The former queen then ordered her partisans to kill Berenice and her children, who had taken refuge at

“ . . . and they that brought her, and he that begat her, and he that strengthened her in these times.”

Other versions read, “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,”<sup>NASB</sup> and “In those days she will be handed over, together with her royal escort and her father and the one who supported her.”<sup>NIV</sup>

Here there was an utter overthrow of those who had no heart for the people of God. Their alliance would bring no good to the Jews, to be sure, and thus it was thwarted – thoroughly and decisively. Berenice herself was “uprooted, with those who were the cause of her coming, and her son, and he who took her in those times.”<sup>BBE</sup> The entire faction perished, thus bringing an end to the shrewd plan. The purposes of the wicked are ultimately thrown down.

**CONCLUSION**

The historical precision of this prophecy is most remarkable in its details. Remember, these things actually took

place in what is called the inter-testamental period – between Malachi and Matthew. This was a period of

approximately four hundred years in which there was no known prophet, and no Scripture was written. Yet, even

*The angel confirms God is active in the affairs of heathen governments, as he begins to unfold the future, by Given O. Blakely*

during that time of imposed Divine silence, there were Satanic initiatives against the people of God. Great struggles would take place in high places to eliminate the children of Abraham, but they would fail. God would still work in the behalf of His people.

Those who lived during the period

of reference would have the book of Daniel to interpret what was taking place. This would fuel their faith, and enable them to anticipate the coming Messiah with confident expectation.

Faith in God is always justified, and those who believe will not be ashamed, disappointed, or confounded.

When we behold disheartening things taking place, and the rise and fall of nations, we have every reason to trust the Lord. He still cares for His own. Let none of us be moved to fear because the things that may be coming upon the earth. God is "for" those who believe, and if He is for us, "who can be against us?" **No setback we endure will be decisive!**

Our next Hungry Saints Meeting will be held on Friday, 3/21/2003. We will continue in our overview of Daniel, reviewing verses 7-13 of the eleventh chapter. The title of our lesson is, "THE FUTURE IS UNFOLDED TO DANIEL, #2." The struggle of kings and nations will be developed. Daniel will be told about the king of the North and the king of the South. The heart of a king will be lifted up, and he will cast down a multitude, yet not be profited by his conquest. Our meeting will begin at 7:00 P.M. You are invited to bring your family and friends for fellowship around the Word of God. Refreshments are served afterward, with a time of extended fellowship for everyone.

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**COMMENTARY on Daniel: <http://wotruth.com/Daniel.htm>**