

Daniel 11:-1-14–God Makes Empires Crumble

HebrewLexicon, Henry, TSK, Trapp, Poole, Gill, Delitzsch, JFB, Expositor, Geneva, Clarke,

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: Earlier, God told Daniel that there would be 3 future empires after the Babylonian Empire (Medo-Persian, Greek, and Roman) and God gave him an introduction to how those empires fit into his plan of redeeming mankind. But God knew that the Jews would benefit from more specific prophecies... details of what would take place... When those details would come true it would remind the Jews that their God was the true God of heaven and earth with all power, and this truth would strengthen their faith during times of trial... especially those times like when it looked like Messiah would not come and establish his kingdom throughout the world.

Today you will hear some details of crumbling of the collapsing of the Medo-Persian Empire and the cracking Greek Empire at the hands of God Almighty.

Our headings are: **The Disintegration of the Medo-Persian Empire, the Division of the Greek Empire into four parts, and the Deeds of two Parts of the Greek Empire**

Our goals are: That seeing God's hand of providence, **you will trust that he will care for his children,** and that you will work for the spread of Christ's kingdom.

The Disintegration of the Medo-Persian Empire

- 1 ("Also in the first year of Darius the Mede, I, even I, **stood up to confirm and strengthen him.**)
- 2 "And now I will tell you the truth: Behold, **three more kings will arise in Persia,** and **the fourth shall be far richer than them all;** by his strength, through his riches, **he shall stir up all against the realm of Greece.**

1. Angels do a lot of work for Christ and his Bride. Angels even use non-believers to advance 推进 the cause of Jesus Christ. And this angel was no different. He worked for Christ by working with the Mede King Darius. The angel gave him strength and skill, along with Cyrus, to capture and destroy Babylonian leadership. The angel gave Darius wisdom so that he started thinking about sending Jews home. The angels brought words of strength to Darius to stand up against those who wanted to destroy Daniel and the Jews. What power angels have! They are not feeble 软弱的 creatures who sit around all day and play harps. They are not little girls. Angels can enter, with God's permission, the human mind and teach God's Words. They are ministering spirits. Angels even appeared in men's dreams – as one did to Joseph. (Matthew 1:20) Imagine how this knowledge would have helped Daniel to trust the Lord.

Psalms 94:16 Who will rise up for me against the evildoers? Who will stand up for me against the workers of iniquity?

2. The angel then mentioned that 3 more kings of the Medo-Persian Empire were coming after Darius, and then a 4th rich king would come—more than 50 years later. Could someone 50+years ago have predicted details of individuals today?

1. Cyrus/Darius – They co-ruled. Darius (Cyrus' uncle) died first and Cyrus then had full power.
2. Artaxerxes (Cambyses) – Cyrus's son. He attacked one temple and captured three hundred talents of gold, and 2300 talents of silver.
3. Ahasuerus (Darius Hystaspes).
4. Xeres was the 4th – and very rich. The 4th king's (Xeres') expedition against Greece is famous in history. There he met with a shameful defeat. He was rich but routed 被击溃 He had about 1,000,000 soldiers, (700,000 of his own and 300,000 auxiliary 辅助的 army) yet in four battles he was defeated, and fled away with shame. He was forced to retire. All these prophetic details, when they came true, gave additional confidence that God's was real, and that the Jews trusted God with confidence. They were able to wait with confidence for Messiah.

3 "Then a mighty king shall arise, who shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will.

3. About 100 years later, Alexander, the Greek General, used Xeres' attack as the basis for his attack (and ultimate destruction) of the Persian Empire in 334BC. Alexander was so powerful he did whatever he wanted... to everyone... including the Medo-Persians. Many nations worshipped him as a God. The Greeks were called goats and Medo-Persians, rams.

Daniel 8:5 And as I was considering, suddenly a male goat came from the west, across the surface of the whole earth, without touching the ground; and the goat had a notable horn between his eyes. 6 Then he came to the ram that had two horns, which I had seen standing beside the river, and ran at him with furious power. 7 And I saw him confronting the ram; he was moved with rage against him, attacked the ram, and broke his two horns. There was no power in the ram to withstand him, but he cast him down to the ground and trampled 践踏 him; and there was no one that could deliver the ram from his hand.

The Division of the Greek Empire Into Four Parts

4 "And when he has arisen, his kingdom shall be broken up and **divided toward the four winds** of heaven, **but not among his posterity** 后代, **nor according to his dominion** with which he ruled; for his kingdom shall be uprooted, even for others besides these.

1. Alexander became the most powerful man on earth with one of the best trained army the world had ever seen... an army of around 30,000. After Alexander and his army brought the Medo-Persians to nothing, Alexander no longer fit God's plans. He died of drugs and disease at age 32, or so. Then God split the Greek Empire into 4 parts.
2. But in an uncommon act, and as God decreed, the Greek Empire was not passed on to Alexander's offspring – not even one part. Statira his wife was murdered soon after his death by his other wife Roxana. Arideus, his brother, was made king in Macedonia, but Olympias, Alexander's mother, killed him and his wife Euridice, and probably poisoned Alexander's two sons, Hercules and Alexander. Olympias was herself killed by soldiers in revenge. Were these murderers responsible for their sins? Absolutely. But yet they were doing exactly what God ordained. God desired that the Greek Empire would never be that powerful as in Alexander's days – ever again. Alexander had the largest amount of land under him when he was king, but Greece was never so great again. Alexander traveled to India to conquer and may have reached up to the Afghan border. After Alexander died, the Greek Empire was split into 4 parts with 4 new leaders: Cassander, Antigonus, Seleucus, and Ptolemy. **Seleucus and Ptolemy became more powerful** and were often warred with each other.
3. This section showed **God's power over the affairs of men.** God sets one kingdom up and he brings one down. This section, gave comfort and confidence to his people as they saw God's Words fulfilled... word for word.

The Deeds of Two parts of the Greek Empire

5 "Also the **king of the South** shall become strong, as well as one of his princes; and he shall gain power over him and have dominion. His dominion shall be a great dominion. 6 "And at the end of **some years they shall join forces**, for the daughter of the king of the South shall go to the **king of the North** to **make an agreement**; but **she shall not retain the power** of her authority, and neither he nor his authority shall stand; but she shall be given up, **with those who brought her**, and with him who her, and with him who strengthened her in those times.

1. Now the rest of the text focuses on 2 parts of the split Greek Empire: The Lagidae (Egypt/South) and Selucidae (Syria/North). **Ptolemy was king of Egypt** and had Egypt, Phoenicia, Arabia, Libya, and Ethiopia under him. He was strong. **Seleucus Nicanor, one of Alexander's strong men, set up the kingdom of Syria.** And he was strong as well. **Seeing power in the North, Ptolemy Philadelphus of the South gave his daughter** (Berenice) to be wife of the king of the north, Antiochus Theus (261-246BC). So Antiochus divorced his wife Laodice and married Berenice. **Unfortunately, this marriage alliance did not make Ptolemy more powerful.** After Ptolemy died, the king of the north then divorced his new wife and took back his old wife... The old wife then promptly poisoned him and got control of Berenice (the divorced wife) and her son and murdered them both. She then installed her own son **Seleucus Callinicus (246-226BC)** as king. **The kings of earth may gather against the Lord but he brings them down to nothing. Only Christ shall have dominion.**

7 "But from a **branch of her roots** one shall arise **in his place**, who shall come with an army, enter the **fortress of the king of the North**, and deal with them and prevail 战胜 8 "And he shall also **carry their gods captive to Egypt**, with their princes and their precious articles of silver and gold; and **he shall continue more years than the king of the North.**

3. Soon after, Berenice's brother Ptolemy Euergetes (246-222BC) (branch of Berenice's roots), who became king of the South, **took revenge** for his sister, attacking the North (Syria), killing Callinicus' mother). Callinicus avoided death by hiding. Euergetes then took the North's gods and their powerful people. He even recovered the gold and precious things that Cambyses (an early Medo-Persian king) had taken from Egypt. He was renamed "Euergetes – Benefactor" for doing this. **Euergetes reigned for a** long amount of time.

9 "Also the **king of the North shall come to the kingdom of the king of the South**, but shall return to his own land. 10 "However **his sons shall stir up strife**, and assemble a multitude of great forces; and one shall certainly come and overwhelm and pass through; then he shall return to his fortress and stir up strife.

4. Syria's King Seleucus Callinicus then tried to attack the South, but was unsuccessful. He died a miserable man but left 2 sons behind: **Seleucus and Antiochus.** Seleucus was soon poisoned by his "friends" and his younger brother Antiochus reigned in his place. Antiochus was just 15 when

he started to rule and was soon called “Antiochus the Great.”

11 "And the king of the South shall be **moved with rage**, and go out and fight with him, with the king of the North, who shall muster a **great multitude**; but the multitude shall be given into the hand of his enemy. 12 "When he has taken away the multitude, **his heart will be lifted up**; and he will cast down tens of thousands, but he will not prevail.

5. The new king of the South Ptolemaeus Philopater became angry with the actions of the North's Antiochus the Great, and attacked him. History records that he came with 70,000 foot, and 5000 horses. He captured Antiochus' army of 62,000 foot, and 6000 horses. But Ptolemaeus Philopater became arrogant – boastful of his accomplishments. And according to Polybius, Philopater entered into the Holiest Place in the temple in Jerusalem – a place forbidden, except for the High Priest, but a place where he had friends. No wonder Daniel wrote “his heart will be lifted up.” God was greater than any king and he had to learn that. God humbled him. When this prophecy was fulfilled –exactly as God said- you can imagine how the people of God found encouragement!

13 "For the king of the North will return and **muster** 调动 **a multitude greater than the former**, and shall certainly come at the end of some years with a great army and much equipment. 14 "Now in those times many shall rise up against the king of the South. Also, **violent men of your people shall exalt themselves** in fulfillment of the vision, but they shall fall.

6. With the help of Philip of Macedon (another part of the former great Greek Empire) Antiochus the Great then marched on the new king of the South...son of Philopater...Ptolemy Epiphanes, who rose up on power. But Antiochus destroyed him and a great part of his army. Then some **Jews gave in to Antiochus and helped him to fight against Egypt.** But they fell. Running south to Egypt was never the solution. Running north to the Syrian was never the answer. Looking up was.

7. What is interesting here is how many nations joined with Antiochus the Great. These were indeed strange ‘bedfellows.’ Edomites, Arabians, Medes, and Babylonians, among others, joined with Antiochus. And yet, the truth is that **they were doing this according to the determined counsel of God.** God raises some up and brings some down. Nothing could stop him from sending his Son to redeem mankind. Every time a prophecy was fulfilled it was an encouragement to the Jews. They said: “That was done by our God! It wasn't done by god of the Greeks but by Jehovah.” How exciting! God strengthened the faith of his children by his Word.

Conclusion

In order to show his guiding and controlling hand in history so that his people were encouraged, God showed them the disintegration of the Medo-Persian Empire, and the rise, division, and details of the work of the Greek Empire.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: 1. **God's love for his church** is so great that he will remove any obstacle –even mountains- from her path. He raises up a nation and tosses it down, if necessary, in order to show love to his people. His love was most visible in his promise to send his Son to die for the sins of his people. No obstacle 障碍 would stop Messiah from coming. 2. **God's ability to do** what he desires for his people must therefore obliterate fear from your life. Don't fear the future. Your God controls it. Don't fear wicked leaders or judges...your God controls them. 3. **This makes worrying or complaining of hardships sinful.** Worrying or complaining shows you are not aware what Christ has promised or what Christ has done for you. Go to his Word. 4. Isn't this **good news worth telling** to those who are lost?

Finally, if you are not a Christian: Let me be one to pass on this good news to you. Jesus is the Creator of the world. Though the world fell into sin and misery, Jesus recreates those who desire to be, so they can be restored to fellowship with God. Please accept the offer, lest you die in an unsaved state and spend eternity in hell.