

**Daniel #16**

**June 23, 2024**

**Series Title: Daniel's Visions Of the Ages**

**Today's Message: The Book of Truth: Chronicles of the Fore-ordained Future of Israel, pt 1;  
Daniel 10:20-21; 11:2-20**

The book of Daniel has let us see an unfolding of world history. From the first great vision of Nebuchadnezzar when he saw the great golden idol statue in Daniel chapter two, to the future antichrist in Daniel 9. By now you probably have figured out that Daniel's vision of history is not literally encompassing the entire earth, but rather more focused on the eschatological future of Israel. It's like this: Daniel had visions of the future concerning Israel. And as we read it we can look back in the chronicles of history and see Daniel's visions coming to life, providing us with a renewed confidence that God is faithful to His promises concerning Israel, and therefore faithful to fulfill His eschatological promises to believers and the Church of our Lord Jesus!

In the last verse of Daniel 10 the angel said something to Daniel that should cause us to stop and think about a biblical concept so important that it can change your thinking when it comes to world events. In Daniel 10:21 the angel tells Daniel, "...but first I will tell you what is written in the Book of Truth." What is the Book of Truth? In context we can discern that the Book of Truth includes the contents of the angel's message from God which we will study in Daniel 11 and 12. In short, it is a telling of events yet future to Daniel that ultimately involves God's deliverance of the people of Israel (**see Daniel 12:1**). So, listen, what is written in the Book of Truth must be nothing less than the record of events future to Daniel involving many nations, kings and empires and their impact on Israel's future deliverance. In other words, the future is already written!

This week we will probably only cover the history contained in Daniel 11:1-20. And next week, Lord willing we will finish the chapter. Daniel 11:1-20 draws our attention to a relatively localized history of two small, but very powerful kingdoms that emerged from Alexander the Great's large empire. In Daniel 11:21-45, Daniel sharpens the point of history by bringing to the forefront Antiochus IV Epiphanes, and then the ultimate troubler of Israel, Antichrist. What is important to get in our minds right now is that God is allowing Israel to be pressured and squeezed, but for the good! God is doing a redemptive work over a long period of time to bring the Jewish people to repentance and salvation.

We will study this with two purposes in mind. First, to remember that God is not finished with Israel. And second, that God rules over history and events yet to come. So, we can live with confidence in God as ruler.

So, let's get busy and look at Daniel 11: 1-20 in three ways. 1) (11:1-4) History concerning Persia and Greece; 2) (11:5-20) History of the wars between the Kings of the South and Kings of the North; 3) Why knowing this is important for building our faith and trust in God.

**l) (11:1-4) History concerning Persia and the *united* Grecian Empire under Alexander.**

- A) (11:1) Why the concern for Darius the Mede?
  - 1) Remember that Cyrus was the Persian king with ruling authority over Medes.
    - (a) But Darius was given rulership over the Babylon, where many Jewish people lived!
      - (i) The angel went to support Darius because of the presence of the Jewish people.
- B) (11:2) The "Truth" of verse 2 is linked with "The Book of Truth" in 10:21.
  - 1) Three **more** kings will appear in Persia after **Cyrus**.
    - (a) In 539 B.C. Cyrus decreed that the temple is to be rebuilt.
      - (i) Cyrus is predicted in Isaiah 44:28; 45:13 at least 150 years before he was born.
    - (b) Foundation for the temple was completed in 536 B.C.
    - (c) Cyrus died in 530 B.C.
  - 2) The Three **more** kings:

- (a) Cambyses II, son of Cyrus, ruled from 530 -522 B.C.
  - (i) With no natural heirs, he secretly killed his younger brother, Smerdis.
- (b) Pseudo- Smerdis, ruled only a few months in 522 B.C., yet not without influence.
  - (i) He is referred to as “Pseudo” because he was the pretend brother of Cambyses II.
- (c) Darius I, The Great. Reigned from 522- 486 B.C. considered to be the “The King of kings”!
  - (i) The kingdom was most expansive at this time, including Egypt!
    - (a) Darius I also ruled as Pharaoh of Egypt from 522- until his death in 486 B.C.
    - (b) Darius I is mentioned in the books of Ezra, Daniel, Haggai, and Zechariah.
      - 1. His sovereign rule paved the way for temple completion and the protection of Jewish worshipers as well as Jewish re-settlers of Judah!
- 3) The fourth king: Xerxes I, (486 – 465 B.C.) Also referred to as *Ahasuerus* (Heb.) in **Esther**.
  - (a) The richest and one of the most powerful kings of Persia. However, in 480 B.C. he began **provoking** Greece. This ended in disaster, and Xerxes I and the Persian empire never recovered their former prowess and glory.
    - (i) People have long memories. Greece never forgot. Greece would arise.
- 4) There were more Persian kings but are not noted or mentioned in the Book of Truth revealed.
  - (a) There is one more Persian king mentioned in the Bible after Xerxes I. He is mentioned because of his usefulness in God’s hands to preserve and protect Israel.
    - (a) Artaxerxes I (465-425 B.C.). You read about him in Ezra 7:1, Neh. 2:1.
    - (b) **Note:** A mysterious Artaxerxes is mentioned in Ezra 4:7-24. This may very well be the same person, **Pseudo-Smerdis**. He only ruled for a short time in 522 B.C. Yet, his evil influence and power did, in fact, effectually stop the rebuilding of the temple!
  - (b) Other Persian kings followed in succession until Alexander the Great conquered them in 330 B.C., but they are not mentioned in the Bible.
- C) (11:3-4) The mighty king and the divided kingdom parceled out to the four winds.
  - 1) This mighty king was Alexander the Great. He swiftly amassed an empire in a relatively short period of time and ruled from 336 until his untimely death in 323 B.C.
    - (a) Greece conquered the Persian Empire in 330 B.C., 150 years after Xerxes I provoked Greece.
  - 2) After his death no less than 12 generals snatched control of the empire. Once the dust settled 4 generals emerged. These four generals became kings of four distinct regions.
  - 3) The four General/ kings:
    - (a) **Ptolemy** ruled over Egypt. (323-285 B.C.)
    - (b) Lysimachus ruled over Thrace and Bithynia. (306- 281 B.C.)
    - (c) Cassander ruled over Macedonia. (319- 297 B.C.)
    - (d) Antigonus ruled over Babylon and Syria for a short and tumultuous period of time.
      - (i) However, Antigonus fell out of favor with the three generals allied against him and squeezed him out, in favor of general **Seleucus**. Seleucus became very powerful!

## II) (11:5-20) History of the wars of the Kings of the South and Kings of the North.

- A) A Chronology of the Ptolemaic and Seleucid kingdoms up to Antiochus IV.

Kings of the South: Ptolemies	Points of interest	Kings of the North: Seleucids
11:5 Ptolemy I Soter from 323 – 285 B.C.	As one of Ptolemy’s commanders, Seleucus Nicator, who sought his own kingdom, failed to gain Babylon for himself. Having fled Babylon, he later recovered and, along with Ptolemy I Soter, defeated Antigonus at Gaza, winning Babylon in the process. Seleucus became even “stronger.” (11:5). From this point on, both sides would fight for control of the land bridge connecting Africa and Asia. Israel was caught in the middle.	11:5 Seleucus I Nicator finally secured Babylon and Syria and ruled from 312 – 281 B.C.  Although not engaging in all-out war, tensions were high even as the son of Seleucus Nicator, <u>Antiochus I Soter</u> reigned from 281 – 262 B.C.

