

Introduction

If you watch what is happening in the world, you learn that Iran, through its proxies of Hesbollah, Hamas and the hutties are attacking Israel.

Iran is where the ancient Persian capital was situated.

You also learn on TV how many of the European nations side against Israel.

Our passage this morning gives us a grand picture of God's plans for Israel from the time of Daniel.

It teaches us how God's word is trust worthy.

It also reveals how God sovereignty and providentially was and continues to protect not only the body of Christ but his chosen nation Israel.

God has an unfolding plan for Israel.

God's end objective is their salvation.

We will be preaching a number of sermons as we plough our way through this final great vision that Daniel experienced.

Historical Background

10:1-3 The word of God preparing for the vision vs 10:1-3

10:4-9 The Son of God the authority of the vision vs 10:4-9

10:10-11:1 The angels of God the messengers of the vision vs 10-11:1

Passage

Daniel 11:2-4 ESV

² "And now I will show you the truth. Behold, three more kings shall arise in Persia, and a fourth shall be far richer than all of them. And when he has become strong through his riches, he shall stir up all against the kingdom of Greece.

³ Then a mighty king shall arise, who shall rule with great dominion and do as he wills.

⁴ And as soon as he has arisen, his kingdom shall be broken and divided toward the four winds of heaven, but not to his posterity, nor according to the authority with

which he ruled, for his kingdom shall be plucked up and go to others besides these.

Proposition

The great vision of Gods future plans for Israel that encourages you to trust His Word and Savior.

1. Vision of the Persian history preparing for the anti Christ vs 2
2. Vision of the Greek history preparing for the the anti Christ)vs 3-4 (vs 5-20 next week)
3. Vision of the Greek type of Anti Christ vs 21-35 (3rd sermon)
4. Vision of the the actual Anti Christ vs 36-35 (4th Sermon)

1.Vision of the Persian history preparing for the anti Christ vs 2

Daniel 11:2 ESV

² "And now I will show you the truth. Behold, three more kings shall arise in Persia, and a fourth shall be far richer than all of them. And when he has become strong through his riches, he shall stir up all against the kingdom of Greece.

² **"And now I will show you the truth.**

The I here refers to the angel that was speaking to Daniel.

The Grammar implies that someone caused the angel to show Daniel this vision of truth.

The one causing the angel to show the truth would be Jesus.

In Dan 10:4-9 he is depicted as the authority behind the vision that was brought to Daniel

The term truth =emeth= root =firmness, trustworthiness, constancy, faithfulness , truth =LOGos= a true statement with the implications that it is dependable

Jesus Christ is the authority behind God's word and that's why the word shown is true and trust worthy.

Jesus who had appeared to Daniel also sent his truth through the angel.

The truth of the revealed vision is guaranteed because of its author, Jesus Christ.

Behold, three more kings shall arise in Persia,

The term arise =amad =Nldotte= stand, or take ones stand,Logos = to originate or come into being, NASB =arise, LSB going to stand,

The point is they rose up and entered into position as leaders for the Persian empire.

Daniel had been under Babylonian captivity for 70 years.

Cyrus was the first Persian king to rule in the Persian empire that had conquered the Babylonian empire in 539 BC and was the current Emperor over Israel.

Isaiah tells us that God appointed Him to subdue the nations, to loosen the belts of kings ultimately for the benefit of Israel.

Just as Cyrus was a pawn in God's hand so were all the kings that followed Cyrus.

Isaiah 45:1–4 ESV

¹ Thus says the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have grasped, to subdue nations before him and to loose the belts of kings, to open doors before him that gates may not be closed:

² "I will go before you and level the exalted places, I will break in pieces the doors of bronze and cut through the bars of iron,

³ I will give you the treasures of darkness and the hoards in secret places, that you may know that it is I, the LORD, the God of Israel, who call you by your name.

⁴ For the sake of my servant Jacob, and Israel my chosen, I call you by your name, I name you, though you do not know me.

Cyrus wisely allowed the Babylonian exiled prisoners to return home.

This was how God allowed the exiles to return and rebuild Jerusalem and the temple.

Cyrus ruled through satraps(vassal ruler, chief representative of the king) with the central government working for the benefits of its subjects.

In 530BC Cyrus was wounded and died while fighting in the north.

Three successors followed Cyrus's death in 530 BC.

1st King

His eldest son **Cambyzes** II succeeded him.

Cambyzes led the Persian army to war in Egypt, because AmasisII(Pharaoh) refused to have his daughter marry Cambyzes and so Cambyzes vowed revenge.

He had sent back one of his officers to murder Baridya(Smerdis) in secret eliminating him as a rival to the throne.

2nd King

While Cambyses was traveling back in 522BC word came that a mage called Gaumata(**Pseudo Smerdi**), usurped the Persian throne masquerading as Bardiya, the brother of Cambyses .

Cambyses seeking to unmask him returned but was wounded when he mounted his horse and died 20 days later of infection.

Pseudo Smerdi reigned for 7 month over Persia as its pseudo emperor.

3rd King

Darius I Hystaspes, one of Cambyses officers took control of the army and marched them back to Persia and dealt with the insurrection and executed Gaumata (**Pseudo Smerdi**)

Darius recorded his triumph on what is called the Behistun Inscription which is found on the road leading to Ecbatana(**in modern day Iran**)

He was the third king over Persia after Cyrus.

It was in Darius time that the dispute between the Jews and Tattenai broke out concerning whether they were authorized to rebuild the temple (Ezra 5)

Darius had the records searched, found the Decree and ordered the hostilities to cease.

Darius also invaded Thrace conquering many cities in the Aegean.

Many of the Greeks submitted and became vassals(cities in submission to the Persian empire).

But some Greeks became concerned over the Persian kingdoms strength and eventually revolted in the Ionian revolt.

Darius responded by sending troops led by his son and law, but a violent storm forced them to return.

Darius again sent 20000 men but in the battle of Marathon, the Persian army was defeated by the Athenian army, which ended the Persian invasion of Greece.

Darius died in 490BC before he could return to Greece and attack again.

The scripture mentions a fourth King

and a fourth shall be far richer than all of them.

After Darius died, Xerxes 1 the designated heir also called Ahasueres took the throne.

Here we see a doorway panel in **Persepolis (Iran)**

Xerxes was the same king we meet in the book of Ester.

In his early years he was quelling revolutions in Egypt and Babylon.

He placed his brother as satrap over Egypt which alienated the priest in Egypt.

In Babylon he melted down the statue of Marduk which led to a major rebellion.

His main focus was to finish his palace in Susa and complete building projects in Persepolis.

But secondly to avenge his fathers defeat at the hands of the Greeks.

The dinner you read out with Vasti reveals something of his affluence, but it was also during this time he was planning to invade Greece.

| Esther 1:1–9 (ESV)

| ¹ Now in the days of Ahasuerus, the Ahasuerus who reigned from India to Ethiopia over 127 provinces,

| ² in those days when King Ahasuerus sat on his royal throne in Susa, the citadel,

| ³ **in the third year of his reign** he gave a feast for all his officials and servants. The army of Persia and Media and the nobles and governors of the provinces were before him,

| ⁴ while he showed the riches of his royal glory and the splendor and pomp of his greatness for many days, 180 days.

| ⁵ And when these days were completed, the king gave for all the people present in Susa the citadel, both great and small, a feast lasting for seven days in the court of the garden of the king's palace.

| ⁶ There were white cotton curtains and violet hangings fastened with cords of fine linen and purple to silver rods and marble pillars, and also couches of gold and silver on a mosaic pavement of porphyry, marble, mother-of-pearl, and precious stones.

| ⁷ Drinks were served in golden vessels, vessels of different kinds, and the royal wine was lavished according to the bounty of the king.

| ⁸ And drinking was according to this edict: "There is no compulsion." For the king had given orders to all the staff of his palace to do as each man desired.

| ⁹ Queen Vashti also gave a feast for the women in the palace that belonged to King Ahasuerus.

God's word cuts through all the pomp and states the heart motive for Xerxes mobilizing to attack the Greeks.

And when he has become strong through his riches, he shall stir up all against the kingdom of Greece.

In 481BC he moved his armies and navies west.

The time gap between Ester 1:3 and Ester 2:16 can be explained as the time when Xerxes was conducting his ill fated invasion of Greece.

When you read Ester you learn that Queen Vashti refused Xerxes drunken request to bring the queen and show her to the people.

The angry Xerxes made a decree that Queen Vashti could never again appear before him and that her royal position would be given to another. Ester 1:19

Between 483-480BC a search was made for a replacement queen, but it was also during this time Xerxes went on his invasion to Greece.

He defeated the Spartans at Thermopylae that fought to the last man, but on the island of Salamis he was trapped by thousands of Greek warriors.

He lost 200 Persian ships.

He blamed his loss on the cowardice of the Phoenician and Egyptian Mercenaries who abandoned him

He placed Mardonius in charge of his troops, while he returned to Persia to quell another revolt.

Mardonius made tactical errors and lost a series of battles and lost his life the battle of Plataea

In 479BC the Greeks dealt a decisive blow at Mycale burning the rest of the Persian fleet.

Ester became queen in 479BC, the 7th year of his reign.

| Esther 2:16 (ESV)

| ¹⁶ And when Esther was taken to King Ahasuerus, into his royal palace, in the tenth month, which is the month of Tebeth, **in the seventh year of his reign,**

This was when the conspiracy to kill Xerxes was overheard by Mordecai, who reported it through Ester to the king.

Mordecai received the title "orosanges" benefactor of the king, which meant he did not need to bow to anyone except the king.

This may have been why Haman angered at Mordecai's refusal to prostrate to himself, learned Mordecai was a Jew. (Ester 3:2)

He then set out to persuade Xerxes to sign a decree that all the Jews would be killed. (Ester 3)

Ester agreed to help the Jews, we read how she pleaded with the king.

Esther 7:3-6 ESV

³ Then Queen Esther answered, "If I have found favor in your sight, O king, and if it

please the king, let my life be granted me for my wish, and my people for my request.

⁴ For we have been sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be killed, and to be annihilated. If we had been sold merely as slaves, men and women, I would have been silent, for our affliction is not to be compared with the loss to the king."

⁵ Then King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther, "Who is he, and where is he, who has dared to do this?"

⁶ And Esther said, "A foe and enemy! This wicked Haman!" Then Haman was terrified before the king and the queen.

The king ordered the execution of Haman and authorized the Jews to defend themselves.

Xerxes returned to Persia was also a return to a life of indulgence, with numerous sexual encounters with beautiful women of his court and even wives of his chief officials other than Ester.

This also led to his own down fall in the end.

An enraged court official killed him 465BC

Its interesting to note that God's vision to Daniel provided all this prophetic history of the Persian Empire summarized in one sentence.

But history reveals the trust worthiness of God's word.

+ - 72 years of Persian history accurately fulfilled Gods word.

Behind the Persians attack on the greeks was the love of money, power and the desire for revenge.

History tells you that these four kings were known for murder, deceit , vengeance, blame shifting, sexual morality and the love of money and power.

BUT as you may recall ,behind the earthly empire, Dan 10:13 had revealed lay the influence of Satan through the demonic prince of Persia.

One can see how he impacted these kings, manipulating the decisions in the persian court even to the point of the last king xerxes signing the decree to kill all the Jews under Persian captivity.

This fulfilled of what the angel's prediction that Israel would face great conflicts.

| Daniel 10:1 (ESV)

| ¹ In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a word was revealed to Daniel, who was named Belteshazzar. **And the word was true, and it was a great conflict.** And he understood the word and had understanding of the vision.

Application

You and I need to comprehend the following:

True History accurately reveals the trustworthiness of God's word.

1. God is true and therefore His word is true.
2. What God predicted about Israel during the Persian empire was fulfilled in every detail.
3. The implication : God's word can be trusted.
4. You should trust it.

You should also note how in this vision, God exposes the sinful condition of the rulers hearts.

Deep down the riches of the empire, led to it mobilizing to attack Greece.

Thousands of Persians and Greeks died because the king felt empowered by his wealth to attack Greece.

The NT warns you ,

1 Timothy 6:10 ESV

¹⁰ For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs.

History also exposed the hearts of all the wicked Persian kings which led to murder, deceit, vengeance and sexual immorality.

The Book of Ester tells us how with the last king Xerxes, how close the Jews were to being exterminated, yet it also recalls God's providential care of his people and delivering them.

AS you look at the news on the moment, once again we see Iran(Ancient Persia) is intent on destroying Israel.

But know this, God's word will be fulfilled, Israel will not be destroyed.

Why because God's plan includes a future tribulation period for Israel, but it also includes:

Israel's redemption.

Daniel 12:1-2 ESV

¹ "At that time shall arise Michael, the great prince who has charge of your people. And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never has been since there was a nation till that time. But at that time your people shall be delivered, everyone whose name shall be found written in the book.

² And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

Watching the News and you would notice how dictators are empowered by money and riches to attack other countries, exactly what Xerxes did.

Ch 10 of Daniel reminded you however that behind all of these great wars, is spiritual battles, but also God, providentially moving His plans forward.

God's is sovereign about all of history.

You can know that even if bad things happen to you tomorrow, God is sovereign over everything, and ultimately his plans will happen for His glory.

Currently God is growing His church.

Every person responding to the Gospel through repentance and faith is included into God's kingdom.

Every person repent and trusting in Christ death and resurrection is forgiven and will join the great company of those who placed their faith in the promised Messiah eventually in His millennial kingdom

But remember God has a plan for Israel.

A plan that includes great conflicts, but ultimately a plan to deliver them.

The next verse introduces the reader to the next empire.

2. Vision of the Greek history preparing for the the anti Christ)vs 3-4

Daniel 11:3-4 ESV

³ Then a mighty king shall arise, who shall rule with great dominion and do as he wills.

⁴ And as soon as he has arisen, his kingdom shall be broken and divided toward the four winds of heaven, but not to his posterity, nor according to the authority with which he ruled, for his kingdom shall be plucked up and go to others besides these.

³ Then a mighty king shall arise, who shall rule with great dominion and do as he wills.

The ill feelings continued between the Persians and the Greeks for another 150 years.

Alexander was the son of Philip II Macedon after his father was assassinated.

Stone bust of Alexander

In 334BC Alexander the Great set out with his treasury empty and about 35000 soldiers and attacked the Persian empire.

He set out for vengeance, but also for the lust of conquest.

He planted Greek colonies around the Mediterranean pushing into Asia and Africa and soon had carved out trading and cultural islands in the kingdoms of Egypt, Syria, Mesopotamia and Judea.

Soon the coast-lands were Hellenized.

Places like Tyre, Sidon, Gaza, Straton's Tower, Byblos and Tripoli soon had Greek culture infused.

With his army he brought along historians, geographers and even botanists to transmit the Greek culture.

Part of his plan included spreading the Greek language and culture.

God was providentially preparing the world for the NT Scriptures which were written in Greek.

Alexander continued his conquest over Asia minor and at the battle of Issus in Anatolia(Turkey) he defeated the Persians

In just three and half years he had conquered the Persian empire.

The wealth of the Persians enriched Alexander as he plundered cities like Susa and Persepolis.

He was given the title of Basileus, the Great king.

God's word reveals Alexander's mindset.

who shall rule with great dominion and do as he wills.

God's described Alexander as having a great dominion, yet with this indictment.

He did as he wills.

He did what pleased himself

He did not submit to God's authority in his life.

To such an extent that history tells us, He claimed deity.

Alexander issued a decree that the Greeks were to worship him as a **living god**.

God's word is clear to Cyrus.

Isaiah 45:5-6 ESV

⁵ I am the LORD, and there is no other, besides me there is no God; I equip you, though you do not know me,

⁶ that people may know, from the rising of the sun and from the west, that there is none besides me; I am the LORD, and there is no other.

God's killed Alexander the great and gave his kingdom away to others.

1 Samuel 2:6 ESV

⁶ The LORD kills and brings to life; he brings down to Sheol and raises up.

God used a fever, possibly from malaria exacerbated by heavy drinking to end the most powerful Greek Emperor who claimed to be a living god at the age of 32

What followed were 4 generals who served as kings over a divided Greek empire.

⁴ And as soon as he has arisen, his kingdom shall be broken and divided toward the four winds of heaven,

Alexander's kingdom was broken

The term broken = shabar = Niddotte = break, smash, shatter, Logos = forcefully separated into pieces or The grammar tells us the kingdom received this shattering.

but not to his posterity,

It's like God killed and squashed this first Greek emperor.

Alexander's wife Roxana and his son was captured by Cassander, imprisoned and executed, leaving no posterity (descendant).

After a few years of struggle four generals called the diadochi, or successors arrived.

1. **Antigonus** ruled from the Mediterranean sea to central Asia
2. **Cassander** ruled Macedonia
3. **Ptolemy** ruled Egypt
4. **Lysimachus** ruled Thrace

Ptolemy's general was Seleucus.

Ptolemy demanded that Antigonus hand over the Asian territory to Seleucus so he could rule Babylon.

Antigonus refused and Ptolemy and Seleucus joined forces to attack Antigonus and defeated his army at Gaza 312 BC

Ptolemy and Seleucus pressed on into Antigonus territory and took Syrian cities and Sidon.

Ptolemy also took Jerusalem.

Ptolemy chose to enter Jerusalem on a Sabbath, when he knew the law forbade Jews to fight.

Thus began a century of hardship for Judah under a cruel master.

The letter of Aristeeas details what happened.

A History of Israel: From the Bronze Age through the Jewish Wars (Revised Edition) (The Diadochi "Successors")

He had overrun the whole of Coele-Syria (Israel) and Phoenicia, exploiting his good fortune and prowess, and had transplanted some and made others captive, reducing all to subjection by terror; it was on this occasion that he transported a **hundred thousand persons from the country of the Jews** to Egypt. Of these he armed some thirty thousand chosen men and settled them in garrisons in the country.

In the end of the day only four generals remained

The bible described the four generals/kings as the four winds of the heaven.

The Greek empire was ruled by

- (1) Lysimachus: Thrace and Bithynia (and much of Asia Minor)
- (2) Cassander: ruler of Macedonia and Greece
- (3) Seleucus I Nicator: Syria, Babylonia, and the lands to the east
- (4) Ptolemy I Lagi: Egypt, Israel, and Arabia Petrea¹

nor according to the authority with which he ruled, for his kingdom shall be plucked up and go to others besides these.

None of these generals came close to exercising the same authority Alexander the great had.

Dan 11: 5-20 we will discover next week is a seesaw of battles between two of these houses.

The southern kingdom of Ptolemy with the Northern kingdom of Seleucid.

A large section of the vision details the conflicts happened between these two kingdoms.

Why is that important.

In the middle these conflicts was a place called by the Greeks (Coele Syria) as we know Israel.

Daniel's vision of the Ram and the goat predicted the coming of Alexander the Great

He also predicted the four horns which referred to the four generals that would carve up the empire.

Daniel 8:8 ESV

⁸ Then the goat became exceedingly great, but when he was strong, the great horn was broken, and instead of it there came up four conspicuous horns toward the four winds of heaven.

Dan 11:5-20 zooms in on two of these horns as it depicts the platform, and the preceding history to Antiochus IV Epiphanes, who would serve as a picture of the future anti Christ.

He would be the little horn that Dan 8:9 describes.

As you study the history of these kings, you are exposed to a history of sin, deception, murder, pride idolatry...the character of Satan, the character of His people, and the character of the anti Christ that would precede Jesus Christ.

You also again see History confirming the perfect trustworthiness of God's word.

You see God sovereignty over all kingdoms and ultimately sovereign over what will happen to his chosen people.

Daniel 2:21 ESV

²¹ He changes times and seasons; he removes kings and sets up kings; he gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding;

Application

You and I are reminded that like Alexander the great you cannot do as you decide.

When you sin you reject God as authority in your life.

When you seek to build up self, you are idolize yourself.

Pride is nothing else than idolatry of self.

Anything that captures the affections of your heart more than God is idolatry.

You also learn that you reap what you sow.

When Alexander claimed deity, soon after God killed him and even his descendants were killed.

At the root of all sin, is the deifying of man and the rejection of God's will.

Satan had tempted Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden with the fact that they would become like God.

| Genesis 3:4–5 (ESV)

| ⁴ But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die.

| ⁵ For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and **you will be like God, knowing good and evil.**"

And as John wrote

1 John 5:21 ESV

²¹ Little children, keep yourselves from idols.

If your heart has been captured by something other than God:

Trust God's word

run to the Savior for forgiveness

repent and worship Jesus alone.