

THE WISE TAKE A STAND

Dan. 10:20-11:35

Passage contains information we could study for weeks & not exhaust historical movements described—*400 yr history between NT & OT*

Yet scarcely enough for 1 lesson with application to God's people today.

Hope study whets our appetite to dig deeper into history, while telling us what God wants us to hear for our lives in 21st C.!

So specific & *accurate* that people who don't believe God reveals prophetic predictions can't accept this was written centuries in advance.

It's like abbreviated historical commentary on Inter-Testamental period!

Many details fulfilled to the letter—*until you get to 11:35.*

Book says it was written in 3rd yr Darius the Mede ruled = 536

Reason to doubt: assumption God can't reveal details in advance.

PROPHECY CONCERNING ISRAEL 9-12

Detailed View: Prophetic History of 70 Weeks 10-12

Affirms importance of remaining faithful to God; faithful win in end,

whatever it looks like short-term

Preparation of the Prophet 10:1-19

God sends messenger to teach Dan. nature of spiritual battle

First 69 Weeks 10:20-11:35

Details concerning events.

Preservation of Israel 10:20-11:1

God protects Israel before enemies that want to destroy them.

Protection extends into spiritual sphere in heavenly places.
Even angels have active part in this spiritual battle!

Messenger has to get back to the battle.

He's going to struggle with authority in charge of conflict with Persia.

Soon he'll have new opponent in Greece.

Before leaving, messenger leaves affirmation **10:20b-21**
"I will return to fight against the prince of Persia; & when I go out, behold, the prince of Greece will come. ²¹But I will tell you what is inscribed in the book of truth: there is none who contends by my side against these except Michael, your prince."

Messenger helps Darius accomplish God's purposes. **11:1** *"As for me, in 1st yr of Darius the Mede, I stood up to confirm & strengthen him."*

Messenger will continue intervention in events still to take place
11:2 *"Now I will show you the truth. Behold, 3 more kings shall arise in Persia & 4th shall be far richer than all of them. When he's become strong through his riches, he'll stir up all against the kingdom of Greece."*

There's still more here than meets the eye.

Detailed History 2-35

2nd & 3rd empire= Persia & Greece

Persia 2 Summary of rest of historical period: 3 more kings:

539-30 Cyrus –present ruler (Darius the Mede = Gov under Cyrus)

530-22 Cambyses II (Cyrus' son)

Kills brother Smerdis so he can't take the throne

People don't know Smerdis is dead.

On way back from Egypt, Cambyses hears Smerdis has taken throne. Imposter has taken his place.

Cambyses kills himself (?)

522 Pseudo-Smerdis (6 months)**522-486 Darius I**

Darius has been loyal to Cambyses

Returns from battle, kills Gaumata, establishes dynasty.

Changes leave throne unstable; nations try to break loose.

4th king, much greater, goes after Greece => Xerxes.

486-65 Xerxes I (Ahasuerus)**Son of Darius**

Xerxes known for Esther;

better known in history for this conflict

Becomes great, decides to extend kingdom & take Greece.

He loses battle;

his kingdom never recovers.

Conflict ends Persian Empire

–decline is irreversible;

Greek Empire grows.

483 Vashti deposed (Esth. 1:3 ff)

483 Initial attack against Greece

480 Xerxes defeated at Salamis (Sept. 480)

478 Esther chosen (Dec. 479; Jan. 478) Esth. 2:16

After Xerxes' reign, others follow;
none restore former power.

465-23 Artaxerxes I

Xerxes' son—only remaining king to enjoy any power.

He authorizes return of Ezra, & later, of Nehemiah

423-331 Period of Decline—Additional minor kings

6 less significant kings reign over decline & destruction.

331 Alexander conquers Persia

Greece 11:3-35

Alexander 331-23 3 *“A mighty king shall arise, who shall rule with great dominion & do as he wills.”*

Mighty king = Alexander the Great (365-23)

After slow start, gradually taking over Persian Empire,
Alexander quickly establishes kingdom, greater than any
before

He dies young under mysterious circumstances.

Division of Empire 323-01 4 *“As soon as he has arisen, his kingdom shall be broken & divided toward the 4 winds of heaven, but not to his posterity, nor according to the authority with which he ruled, for his kingdom shall be plucked up & go to others besides these.”*

Daniel foresees spirit that dominates after Alexander's death.

His son is not capable of governing;

4 generals who collaborated to take over empire **fight for power.**

Kingdom divided;

none has strength of previous empire.

Conflict between Descendants 11:5-17 301-198

Daniel's interest in 2 generals closest to Holy Land.
Continually fighting, marching through Israel.

Ptolemy vs. Seleucus 301-260 BC

5 *"The king of the south shall be strong, but one of his princes shall be stronger than he & shall rule, & his authority shall be a great authority."*

1st Ptolemy based in Egypt, is strongest.

He controls Palestine.

Focus on battles between Ptolemy & Seleucus' descendants.

Strong king arises who *"does as he wills."*

No one can stand against him." => 11:3, 16, 36

It *looks like* he's in control, like he's calling the shots!

God lets him destroy His house and trample His people

2nd Syrian War 11:6-8 260-55 B.C.

3rd Syrian War 11:9 246-41 B.C.

4th Syrian War 11:10-12 219-17 B.C.

Battle of Paneas 11:13-17 **202-198 B.C.**

Fifth war decisive

—permanently changes Israel's situation.

Many participate, thinking it'll achieve independence from Egypt

14 *"In those times many shall rise against the king of the south, & the violent among your own people shall lift themselves up in order to fulfill the vision, but they shall fail."*

They get free from Egypt, but jump *"out of frying pan; into fire!"*

Antiochus III controls Palestine; able to do whatever he feels like. No one is strong enough to resist him (11:16).

Conflict with Rome 11:18-20 198-175 B.C.

Antiochus III makes the mistake of going after Rome.

They force him to back off Egypt & weaken power in Palestine.

Antiochus IV 11:21-35 175-163 B.C.

Eventually Antiochus IV, "Epiphanes," takes his father's throne

He controls Palestine from 175-163 B.C.

Antiochus attacks & persecutes faithful in Jerusalem.

He is "little horn" in Dan. 8; type of Antichrist yet to come.

He wants to unite kingdom under one banner, tries to institute cultural program, to hellenize subjects.

He replaces High Priest twice with puppet priests, loyal to him, who promise to help establish his program.

Provokes resistance spurred by those faithful to Yahweh alone.

Final trip against Egypt, runs into Romans; force him home.

Stops off in Palestine to vent frustration

30a *"Ships of Kittim shall come against him; he shall be afraid & withdraw; shall turn back & be enraged & take action against the holy covenant. He shall turn back & pay attention to those who forsake the holy covenant."*

To protect against Rome, Antiochus tries to establish unity by destroying Judaism.

Epoch of intense persecution follows.

Those who are faithful suffer for their faith

31-32 *"Forces from him shall appear & profane the temple & fortress, & shall take away the regular burnt offering. They shall set*

up the abomination that makes desolate. ³²He shall seduce with flattery those who violate the covenant, but the people who know their God shall stand firm & take action. ³³The wise among the people shall make many understand, though for some days they shall stumble by sword & flame, by captivity & plunder.”

Many turn from faith to save skin, betraying God & people
(32a)

Those who are faithful teach the rest to remain faithful
Popular military movement born in conflict, under
Maccabees.

Movement grew; exactly 3 years later break free **34-35**
“When they stumble, they shall receive a little help. Many shall join themselves to them with flattery, ³⁵some of the wise shall stumble, so that they may be refined, purified, & made white, until the time of the end, for it still awaits the appointed time.”

When the wise resist & fall because of loyalty to Yahweh,

SUFFERING PRODUCES PURIFICATION

Purification & repentance fulfilled as promised; it's temporary
Antiochus can't carry out plan; end times weren't here yet.

Neither is it hour for restoration of God's people

In the end God will deliver His people from this great affliction.

But it won't be complete until the end time God has
established.

What lessons should this passage teach us?

“What difference does all this prophecy stuff make in our lives?”

1. From angel's message 10:20-11:1

“Do you know why I've come?”

Informs Daniel of spiritual battle—that Daniel can't see.

"There's more here than meets the eye."

We're at war. Suffering of God's people is part of the war

"I'm off to fight the war. But before I go, let me assure you, I'll be back.

We know who wins.

We've read last chapter! Written here. => 12:1-3

2. God not only KNOWS what's going to happen in our life this week, He's in control of it.

We can trust Him with our future.

He has a plan for us, & it's GOOD!

No matter how bleak things seem,

He uses our affliction for good.

Even the "downfall" of the righteous is in His hands;

He uses it to refine, to purify, to make spotless.

"If God is for us, WHO can stand against us?"

3. Message resounds. Hang in there! Be faithful!

Prophecy ends with call to faithfulness by wise among God's people who understand events taking place

In end, those who are wise shine like brightness of the heavens.

those who are righteous will shine like the stars for ever!

When we're in midst of the battle,

...we can't see spiritual & eternal nature of conflict

...we can't see angels fighting on our side

...we can't see end of the conflict

...we can't see victory, or the glory to come.

*But it's real! God says hang in there!
Be wise, understanding what the will of the Lord is.
You will shine like the heavens!
you will shine like the stars for ever and ever!*