

Come to Understanding

**They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding,
and they that murmured shall learn doctrine. — Isaiah 29:24**

July 14, 2012

Volume 11 Number 14

The King of the South (Part 2)

The prophecies in the first portion of Daniel Chapter 11 read much like they are part of a book on the ancient history of the Middle East. After the Medes conquered Babylon, they soon joined forces with the Persians, who became dominate in their partnership. The Persians, however, were conquered by the Greeks, led by their powerful Macedonian king, Alexander the Great.

- 1 Also I in the first year of Darius the Mede, even I, stood to confirm and to strengthen him.
- 2 And now will I show you 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 Greece.
- 3 And a mighty king shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will. -Daniel 11

At first glance, this prophecy appears to be about a physical struggle between the kings of the Persians and the Greeks. However, when we study Daniel Chapter 10, we learn that this battle is actually being fought in the spiritual world, which is operating through these kings. In the third year of Cyrus, the King of Persia, Daniel fasted for twenty one days and then saw a supernaturally-appearing man who told him that he came to show him what was going to happen in the “latter days.” However, the “prince of the kingdom of Persia” stood against the man, keeping him among the kings of Persia for twenty one days, until Michael, “one of the chief princes,” came to help:

- 11 And he said to me, O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak to you, and stand upright: for to you am I now sent. And when he had spoken this word to me, I stood trembling.
- 12 Then said he to me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that you did set your heart to understand, and to chasten yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come for your words.
- 13 But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia.
- 14 Now I have come to make you understand what shall befall your people in the latter days: for yet the vision *is* for *many* days. -Daniel 10

It is Michael, the leader of an army of angels, that fights against Satan and his army of angels:

- 7 And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels,
- 8 And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven.
- 9 And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceives the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. -Revelation 12

Our battles are spiritual, even when they manifest themselves in the physical realm. Paul explains:

- 12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high *places*. -Ephesians 6

The man that appeared to Daniel said that he was going to fight against the “prince of Persia,” allowing the Greeks to come and take the empire:

- 19 And said, O man greatly beloved, fear not: peace *be* unto you, be strong, yes, be strong. And when he had spoken to me, I was strengthened, and said, Let my lord speak; for you have strengthened me.
- 20 Then said he, Know you why I come to you? and now will I return to fight with the prince of Persia: and when I have gone forth, lo, the prince of Greece shall come. -Daniel 10

Alexander the Great miraculously conquered most of the known world. From 334 to 331 B. C., he conquered lands that included Persia, Tyre, Egypt, Libya, Syria, India, Afghanistan and more. Then he suddenly died of a fever in Babylon at the age of thirty three. After his early death, his vast empire was divided into four parts, each led by one of his generals (see Hutton Webster, *Ancient History*, Boston: D. C. Heath & Co., 1913, pp. 272-281):

- 4 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 besides those. -Daniel 11

Of these four divisions of Alexander’s empire, the most notable two that are found in Daniel’s prophecies belong to the “King of the South” and the “King of the North.” These prophecies begin as follows:

**So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense,
and caused them to understand the reading. — Nehemiah 8:8**

Come to Understanding

- 5 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.
- 6 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 begot her, and he that strengthened her in *these* times. -Daniel 11

Historically, Ptolemy became the King of Egypt. He and his successors became known as the "King of the South." In addition to Egypt, he controlled Libya, Cyrenaicas, Arabia (Petraea), Palestine, Coele-Syria (a disputed land in southern Syria), most of the maritime provinces of Asia Minor, Cyprus, several islands in the Aegean Sea, and some cities in Greece (see Charles Rollin, *The Ancient History of the Egyptians, Carthaginians, Assyrians, Babylonians, Medes and Persians, Grecians, and Macedonians*, Vol. 2, New York: George Dearborn, 1836, p. 70). (According to modern maps, the geography of the land of the "King of the South" included the modern nations of Egypt, Libya, Cyprus, Jordan, and Israel, as well as southern Syria, the Sinai Peninsula, and northwestern Saudi Arabia.)

Queen Cleopatra VII, who was the high priestess to Isis, the Egyptian goddess (which became known as the "Queen of Heaven"), was the last Ptolemy to rule Egypt. Some thought her to be the goddess. During her reign, a temple to Isis was built in Rome and the relationship between Egypt and the Roman Empire grew strong and personal. The Roman Emperor, Julius Caesar, was the father of Cleopatra's child and had planned to marry her until he was assassinated in the Roman Senate on March 15, 44 B. C.. After Julius Caesar's death, Cleopatra later married his friend, Marc Antony. He was a triumvirate (one of the three rulers) of Rome, to whom she had born twins. After Cleopatra and Marc Antony died, the Egyptian empire of the "King of the South" formally became part of the Roman Empire and its people eventually became Roman citizens (see Desire de Bernath, *Cleopatra: Her Life and Reign*, London: Arthur L. Humphreys, 1907).

Seleucus became the King of Syria. He and his successors became known as the "King of the North." In addition to Syria, he controlled an even larger area than the "King

of the South." It included all of the East, from mount Taurus (in southern Turkey) to the River Indus (which flows through Pakistan), as well as other provinces in Asia Minor, to which he later added Thrace and Macedonia (see Rollin, p. 70). (According to modern maps, the geography of the land of the "King of the North" includes the modern nations of Syria, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan.)

The Romans took Syria from the Seleucid kingdom in about 64 B. C. However, they were unable to take the rest of the land of the "King of the North," much of which was then controlled by the Parthians. A major offensive by Marc Anthony to take Parthia for the Roman Empire in about 36 B. C. ended in failure (see Lucile Craven, *Antony's Oriental Policy Until the Defeat of the Parthian Expedition*, Vol. 3, No. 2, Columbia: University of Missouri, 1920, pp. 14, 84). Thus, Parthia escaped becoming part of the the Roman Empire. Later conquered by the Sasanians and then the Arabs (see E. Yarshater, ed., *The Cambridge History of Iran: Vol. 3, The Seleucid, Parthian and Sasanian Periods*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983, pp. 3, 542). This was the ancient land of Persia, which is now known as Iran.

Having a brief historical sketch in our minds concerning the lands of the "King of the South" and the "King of the North," we can understand that many of the prophecies given in the first part of Daniel Chapter 11 have already been fulfilled. However, understanding that much of the biblical prophecy that has already been fulfilled is a "type" of things to come, it would be wise to study the prophecies about the "time of the end" more carefully:

- 40 And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over.
- 41 He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many *countries* shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, *even* Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon.
- 42 He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries: and the land of Egypt shall not escape.
- 43 But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt: and the Libyans and the Ethiopians *shall be* at his steps.
- 44 But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many.
- 45 And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him. -Daniel 11

These are hard sayings, but there is great hope. Michael, who stood against the "prince of the kingdom of Persia," will again stand up for God's people in the "time of trouble:"

- 1 And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which stands for the children of your people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation *even* to that same time: and at that time your people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. -Daniel 12

Come to Understanding is sent out twice per month free of charge. To add someone to our list of readers, please contact us at:

Institute for Biblical and Historical Studies
P.O. Box 12, 114 East Main Street
Addison, Michigan 49220 U.S.A.
biblical@ibiblical.org

You may view this and past editions online at: www.ibiblical.org
Scriptures are from the:
Proper Name Version of the King James Bible.



©2012 Institute for Biblical and Historical Studies. All rights reserved.
You may freely copy this publication, provided you acknowledge its source and inform us of your use.