

Q – When you think of Jesus’ ministry beginning, when do you think it took place? (At the Creation of the world. It is clearly stated in John 1 and Hebrews 1.)

Q – What does it mean to you to know that Jesus has always been involved in mankind’s creation, development and protection?

Read Daniel 10:21-11:1

1. Who is talking about protecting King Darius? (*Either the Lord or an angel of the Lord. Most likely the Lord since it is the same person who was described in verse 10 with linen and a golden belt, seeming to be almost blazing with glory like at the transfiguration. Isn’t it interesting to think that the Holy Trinity was at work in the Old Testament, that Jesus was not sitting back and waiting for the time of His birth?*)

Read Daniel 11:2-4

- 2. How many kings will rise up in Persia?** (*Remember that this vision comes in the 3rd year of King Cyrus. 3 more kings, meaning after Cyrus the first king of Persia. Then a 4th who will be richer than all the others. These events are foretelling what will happen in world history between approx. 500-175BC.)*
- 3. What will the 4th king do?** (*He will rule with great power and by his wealth. He will stir everyone up against the Kingdom of Greece.)*
- 4. What happens to this 4th King?** (*A mighty king will appear and rule with great power and do anything he wants. However, his empire is broken up and parceled out to the 4 winds of heaven. His descendants do not get it. His empire is broken up and given to others.)*

Paul Butler points out a list made by Edward J. Young. After Cyrus came:

King 1 – Cambyses, son of King Cyrus. One historical account records that Cambyses was returning home from a long war against Egypt and Ethiopia when he accidentally stabbed himself while mounting his horse and eventually died from the wound. The Persians claim he committed suicide because he suffered epileptic fits.

King 2 – Smerdis was also known as Bardiya. He was the younger son of Cyrus the Great and (full or half) brother of Cambyses. According to Ctesias, on his deathbed Cyrus appointed Bardiya as satrap (governor) of some of the far-eastern provinces. According to Darius the Great, Cambyses, after becoming king of Persia but before setting out for Egypt, killed Bardiya and kept this secret. However according to Herodotus who gives two detailed stories, Bardiya went to Egypt with Cambyses and was there for some time but later Cambyses sent him back to Susa out of envy, because "Bardiya alone could draw the bow brought from the Ethiopian king." Herodotus then states that "Cambyses had a dream in which he saw his brother sitting on the royal throne. As a result of this dream Cambyses sent his trusted counselor Prexaspes from Egypt to Susa with the order to kill Smerdis", which he did.

King 3 - Darius Hystaspis – was the emperor who protected the Jews from their Samaritan enemies who were trying to prevent the rebuilding of the temple and the walls of Jerusalem. Darius had found the decree of Cyrus allowing the Jews to rebuild the temple and demanded that the decree must be honored. You can read about him

in Ezra 6:7-8. He conquered large portions of India and Egypt and then turned his attention to Greece. The army of Athens gave him a serious defeat. At the same time Egypt had enough of the Persian taxes and was attacking Persia while he was off trying to conquer more. Before the revolt ended, Darius died in October of 486BC. However, Persia was the most powerful it had ever been under his rule.

King 4 – Xerxes was the son of Darius Hystaspis. His mother was a daughter of King Cyrus. He was very rich, self-indulgent and acted at times like a spoiled child. He was defeated by Greeks and 14 years later he was assassinated. Xerxes concentrated his efforts on making larger and grander monuments and completing greater building projects than his father. In doing so, he depleted the royal treasury to an even greater extent than his expedition to Greece already had. He maintained the roadways throughout the empire, especially the Royal Road by which messages were carried (the precursor to the Roman mail system and, later, the modern-day postal system) and devoted both time and funds to expanding sites such as Susa and Persepolis. Although Darius' palace still stood, Xerxes' commissioned an even more elaborate building project to raise his own opulent palace nearby and also commanded the construction of the Hall of a Hundred Columns and the building which has been designated 'The Harem' by archaeologists (because of the duplication of identical rooms in a row) which may have actually served as Xerxes' treasury. The exorbitant cost of these projects, coupled with the expense of the expedition to Greece, put a tremendous strain on Xerxes' subjects through heavy taxation. Xerxes, however, appeared not to notice a problem and continued to do as he pleased; because of this, his rule marks the beginning of the decline of the Persian Empire. He died in 465BC in Persepolis, now in Iran.

Q – What lessons can we learn from the rise and fall of these great Persian kings? (*Our God is on the throne and He clearly tells us that pride comes before a fall. The prideful and arrogant rulers will come to an end!*)

Read Daniel 11:5-6

Alexander the Great ends up conquering Persia as was foretold in chapters 7-8. Shortly before beginning of the planned Arabian campaign, he contracted a high fever after attending a private party at his friend Medius of Larisa. As soon as he drank from the cup he "*shrieked aloud as if smitten by a violent blow*". The fever became stronger with each following day to the point that he was unable to move and speak. He finally died from the illness or some say poison on June 7, 323 BC. Alexander the Great, the Macedonian king and the great conqueror of Persian Empire, died at the age of 33 without designating a successor to the Macedonian Empire.

- 5. What happens to the Kingdom Alexander the Great conquered?** (*Divided into 2 kingdoms, the north and the south. The 2 sons of Alexander, Ptolemy who is the southern or Ptolemaic kingdom and Seleucus who is the northern or Seleucid kingdom.. It is amazing that 300 years before it happened in exact detail, Daniel is given this vision of the future. It is also important to remember that the king of the South and North were always changing in this account as the successors followed their deceased parents. It is not really one king for each region. This goes on until they fall in the future.)*
- 6. What does the daughter of the king of the South do to get power?** (*She goes to the king of the north to make an alliance. Ptolemy I has died. Seleucus is murdered. He is succeeded by his son, Antiochus I. Bernice was the daughter of Ptolemy II and married Antiochus II to consolidate kingdoms, who was already married to Laodice and had 2 sons. 2 years later, Ptolemy II dies so Antiochus II divorced Bernice. Bernice doesn't trust him so she has her son Seleucus II poison him and has Bernice and her infant murdered. Now Seleucus, her son ascends the throne. Only God knows the beginning, the end and everything in between and could have told this to Daniel!*)

Read Daniel 11:7-10

7. Who will arise to take Bernice's place and what will he do? (*One from her family line. He will attack the forces of the king of the North and conquer them. IN 245BC Ptolemy II died and Ptolemy III Euergetes took the throne. He was Bernice's brother. Again God told Daniel what happened long before it did. Again notice that this is history recorded long before it literally took place. This is why we know the hope only those following the true God have for certain! It is critical we know these truths.*)

Read Daniel 11:11-13

8. Describe the next war. (*King of South marches in a rage against King of the North. He wins and is filled with pride and slaughters thousands. But the king of the North raises another larger army and several years later goes after the king of the North. IN the spring of 217BC Antiochus III conquers all Palestine and part of Egypt. Ptolemy had 70,000 infantry, 5,000 calvary and 73 elephants and defeated Antiochus. It is recorded that 10,000 infantry, 300 calvary and 5 elephants died. 4,000 were captured and taken prisoner. Ptolemy was full of himself and was living it up and stopped building up his fortifications and his defenses deteriorated. Meanwhile Antiochus was making plans to annex Palestine.*)

Read Daniel 11:14-19

9. List the series of events in these verses. (*Many, even from among his own people will rise against the king of the South, but will not succeed. The king of the North, now Antiochus III, brother of Seleucus II who was poisoned retaliates and builds siege ramps and captures a great fortified city. He establishes himself in the Beautiful Land, meaning Palestine. He comes to make an alliance with the King of the South. He will give him a daughter in marriage but not to unite but to overthrow the Southern King. It does not work. So, he invades and conquers the coastlands. After this he heads back but falls and is no more. Antiochus the Great or the III plots to give his daughter to Egypt. In a treaty with Ptolemy V, he betrothed his daughter, Cleopatra, not the one we know, to him. The boy was only 7 years old. However, they grew close and she constantly sided against her father. Hannibal had fled to Antiochus III. There he convinced him to invade Greece. Rome then declared war on Antiochus. He lost and had to pay tribute and His son Antiochus IV Epiphanes, the evil ruler, was taken hostage to Rome. Antiochus III went after the Armenians to get some money since Rome cleaned him out. He and his soldiers were all slain by the Elamites. He died in disgrace and violence.*)

Again, we see that God is accurately telling history in great detail hundreds of years before the events took place. All the events will completely accurate. To back up a bit. Persepolis, meaning Persian city, was the capital city of the Persian Empire. Its remains are located north of Shiraz, Iraq. Inscriptions recognize Darius I (521-486BC) began construction of the city after having created a platform of 33 acres, 40 feet above the plain. He erected fortifications, a massive stairway to the platform, a palace, an audience hall and other buildings. The audience hall had 72 stone columns each 65' in height. 13 still stand today. Xerxes I (486-465BC) added a larger palace, a harem and treasury. He began the throne hall of 100 columns and built the "GATE OF ALL NATIONS" ornamented with colossal winged and human-headed bulls. Thousand of Elamite tables from the reigns of Darius, Xerxes and Arataxerxes I were recoverd in the treasury. Among them were Jewish names including Baruch, Zechariah, Abijah and Hezekiah. More was added by Artaxerxes I and Artaxerxes III. Alexander the Great destroyed most of the city in 330BC. Tombs of the Persian kings are located in the cliffs north of the city.

Read Daniel 11:20-24

10. Whose successor sends out a tax collector to get back to the good life of kings in those days?

(Antiochus III. Seleucus IV Philopater was brother of Antiochus IV who had been taken captive to Rome.

He is the one trying to rebuild the wealth of the North. He is quickly killed assumed to be by poison.)

11. Who succeed Seleucus IV? (The contemptible one who comes and takes the south by force. For 12 years Antiochus IV Epiphanes has been in Roman custody. Now he returns and when they least expect it he simply sets himself up as King. He was the epitome of evil. In 172 BC he had the Jewish High Priest Onias II killed. His brother was Joshua who changed his Hebrew name to the Greek name Jason and was appointed High Priest by Antiochus. He encouraged Palestine to embrace the Greek culture rather than the Hebrew. A gymnasium was built in Jerusalem was Jewish youth exercised in the nude. Greek names were adopted to replace the Jewish names for people and cities. Hebrew ways and doctrines were looked upon as behind the times, out of touch with today's modern society.)

Q – How familiar does that sound to America today? (I highly suspect that as our leaders look for more ways to collect revenues to spend, we will see more drugs legalized for taxes, prostitution legalized and taxed, etc.)

Read Daniel 11:25-28

12. What is the next move of the King of the North, Antiochus IV? (He stirs up the people against the King of the South, but the King of the South wages war with a very large army but cannot stand because of plots against him. He goes against the King of Egypt for the 2nd time. Some of the Southern king's own people committed treason and turned on him and he would be defeated. History confirms this in exact detail.)

13. What happens to the King of the North after this war? (He returns to His own country with great wealth but his heart is set against the holy covenant. He will take action against it. On his way back home he had to pass through the Holy Land. There was a burning in Antiochus IV heart for Jews. He was the first real Hitler. 1 Maccabees 1:20-28 records his plundering of the Holy Land. Although it would appear that evil is prospering under Antiochus IV, they were to understand from this prophecy that it was temporary and that at the appointed time of God it would come to an end. If Christ is our Lord, it has ended because we cannot be conquered! It is impossible for those who trust in Christ. However, we will still have attacks upon us.)

Read Daniel 11:29-35

14. Antiochus IV attacks Egypt for a 3rd time. How does that end? (Ships from the western coastlands get involved and he loses heart and turns back. He is so filled with hate and anger that he decides to go take it out on Palestine, particularly Jerusalem. He attacked on the Sabbath when he knew any orthodox Jew would not fight. He slaughtered large numbers of Jews. The city walls were destroyed. Greek gods were to be worshiped by all. They put a bearded replica of Jupiter on the Temple altar. The Jews called this the abomination of desolation. Pig were offered on the Temple altar where they held drunken orgies. The worship of Bacchus the god of wine and drunkenness was made mandatory. To observe the Sabbath or any Jewish feast meant the death penalty. Copies of the Hebrew Scriptures were ordered destroyed. This record is in the book of 1 Maccabees. Antiochus IV set himself up as the god above all gods.)

Read Daniel 11:36-45

15. What is the end of the story with Antioch IV, the King of the South? (He will pitch his royal tents between the seas at the beautiful holy mountain. Yet he will come to his end, and no one will help him. Frustrated from the constant attacks of the Jewish Maccabeans. Judas Maccabaeus regain possession of the holy land entered the temple and removed all signs of paganism. The altar to Jupiter was taken down and a new altar was erected to the God of Israel. The state of Zeus-Antiochus was ground to dust. Antiochus fled to Babylon, then from there to Tabae in Persia where he became mad and died in 164BC.)

Q – What do you think God wants us to take from this lesson?