

## Sermon to the Saints which are at Topeka, Kansas -- Sunday, April 13, 2025

For the past two sermons, I have begun the work of examining this last great event of the book of Daniel – covering chapters ten through 12.

Having examined these preliminary things, I want to now turn to the structure of the main vision that John beheld, about which we are told ***“the thing was true, but the time appointed was long” (Daniel 10:1)***. The thing, you will recall, is separate from the vision itself. The ***“thing”*** is later explained to be ***“what shall befall [the Jews] in the latter days” (Daniel 10:14)***. There is a small point that I feel compelled to draw out to greater length regarding these visions to Daniel – and I believe all of the Old Testament prophets, if we take the words of their prophecies in their clearest sense. The frame of reference for these prophets is the effectual implementation ... or execution ... of the promises they all knew were presented by God to their fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Those promises are what they grew up learning about. Those promises were the structural foundation of even the apostate Jews – those majority of Jews who had taken up the lying practices that have been imbedded in the Talmudic writings or the Mishna writings – by whatever name they were called through the generations. Even today, the Jews land heavily on the promises made to their fathers, even while they grievously mistreat any who put the clear terms of those promises in front of them, as Christ described:

***“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers. Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?” (Matthew 23:29-33)***

As I have emphasized in many of my discussions on these matters related to our coming Christ, the interest that we in this generation have – as glorious as it is – is due to the Gentile Christians being grafted into the Olive Tree – i.e., Christ ... the Messiah ... the King of the Jews. The significance of this point was thoroughly examined by Paul in Romans chapter 11. Indeed, for the fullness of the promises to the Gentiles to be completed, there has to be a complete fulfilling of the promises made to the Jewish remnant through the covenanting words to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This is why Paul so cautiously warns:

***“Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee.” (Romans 11:18)***

That is, do not presume that we will have righteousness while the Jew is left in his apostacy. We will have it only because God Almighty determined to take some of the Gentiles and graft them into the joyous promises made to Abraham and his seed ... and without the fulfillment to that Jewish seed, there will be no fulfillment with which the grafted Gentiles may join. It is primarily about the fulfillment of the promise to Abraham’s natural seed (through the redemption of the

144,000). It is by extension of the Spirit (though with full enjoyment) applicable to the Gentile saints.

So, when we read in the prophecies of the Old Testament – and to the extent related, the prophecies of the New Testament Apostles – we should be careful about what liberties we take in applying those prophecies too literally to the Gentile saints. Yes, they apply as a type and if you take your enjoyment from them as a type, you are using the words as they are provided to us – **“for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness” (2 Timothy 3:16)**. But these prophecies are most literally about the actual fulfillment of the promises to elect saints of Jewry at the return of Christ as their Messiah.

We will now begin taking up the question of what these things appointed to befall the Jews consist of. It begins with this introductory assurance from our friend, Gabriel:

\*\*\*\*\*

**“And now will I shew thee the truth” (Daniel 11:2)**

Gabriel here points back to the initial promise that **“the thing was true”**. This is not speculative. Clarence Larkin accurately declares **“Prophecy then is HISTORY WRITTEN IN ADVANCE. And the ‘Spirit of God’ can write History beforehand as well as afterward. ... This makes Prophecy a ‘LIGHT IN A DARK PLACE.’ 2 Pet. 1:19. That is, Prophecy illuminates the future by forecasting it.”**

What we are about to consume was as certain to have happened as if it had been perfectly recorded and then afterward perfectly reported. I’ve said before – but it bears repeating each time we lay our eyes and hearts upon such remarkable writings – when we witness such precision in prophecy that (to us) history has revealed as 100% accurate, it gives us unshakeable certainty that those prophecies that have yet to be revealed will also come to pass with 100% accuracy. Gabriel is going to show Daniel what is *actually going to happen*.

As we will ferret out, this truth can be categorized in nine periods – six have been realized in recorded history, the seventh period is presently in progress, and the last two articulate things related to the seventh and eight iterations of Antichrist during the final seven years that make up the Day of the Lord. They are simply revealed in this order:

1. Daniel 11:2-4 relates to the completion of the Persian Empire and its fall to the Grecian King Alexander the Great.
2. Daniel 11:5-14 relates to the ebb and flow of warfare between the dominant Grecian King of the South (Ptolemies) and King of the North (Seleucids) that was fought heavily across the cities in northern and southern Palestine – and created a lot of engagement with the Jewish people who were constantly trying to gain a foothold that would allow them to reclaim the Jewish state.
3. Daniel 11:15-19 relates to the multiple wars under the strong period of the Seleucid kingdom under Antiochus the Great (Antiochus III), when the Jews were heavily involved in the transition of dominant Grecian power from the King of the South (Ptolemies) to the King of

the North (Seleucids), and which also involved increased engagement by the emerging Roman Empire.

4. Daniel 11:20 relates to the brief reign of Seleucus Philopator – the eldest son of Antiochus III, older brother to Antiochus IV. He was poisoned, making the way for his younger brother to take the throne.
5. Daniel 11:21-31 relates to the rise of Antiochus Epiphanes (Antiochus IV) and how he demonstrates himself as the 5<sup>th</sup> iteration of Antichrist (including the abomination of desolation).
6. Daniel 11:32-33a relates to the remainder of the inter-testamentary period that follows the treachery of Antiochus Epiphanes and the temporary establishment of a Jewish state.
7. Daniel 11:33b – 35 relates to the New Testament period ... or more specifically the period between Christ's crucifixion and His return.
8. Daniel 11:36 – 45 relates to the activities contained in the first 3.5 years of the Apocalypse.
9. Daniel 12:1-13 relates to the activities contained in the second 3.5 years of the Apocalypse and transitions to the preparation of Christ's millennial reign.

For however many additional sermons it requires, we will move through these to identify what history and/or scriptural prophecy provides in other places, including the words of Christ Himself.

\*\*\*\*\*

***“[T]here 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 Grecia. And a mighty king shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will. 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 beside those.” (Daniel 11:2-4)***

I have combined two well-known periods of history into one for purposes of this sermon – the remaining relevant time of the Persian Empire and then its fall into the hands of Alexander the Great. They deserve attention, but are probably the least complicated for us to discern among those in the vision. Remembering again that the focus of this vision is the way the relevant kings of the earth are going to treat the Jews – i.e., ***“what shall befall [the Jews] in the latter days”*** – it should be no surprise that the only remaining kings of Persia who are to be referenced were the three found in the book of Ezra and the one found in book of Esther. In Ezra, you find the names ***“Ahasuerus”, “Artaxerxes”, and “Darius”*** (Ezra 4:1-24) because these are the kings who were in the seat of authority through the period of time that the Jews were in severe conflict with the ***“people of the land [who] weakened the hands of the people of Judah, and troubled them in building [the walls of Jerusalem and the temple]”*** (Ezra 4:4). These, in history, were more commonly known by the names Cambyses (BC 529-522), Pseudo-Smerdis (BC 521-485), and Darius Hystaspes (BC 521-485). The fourth king referenced in this vision – who was said to be ***“far richer than they all”*** – is the Persian king who issued this ignoble decree:

***“And the letters were sent by posts into all the king's provinces, to destroy, to kill, and to cause to perish, all Jews, both young and old, little children and women, in one day, even***

***upon the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month Adar, and to take the spoil of them for a prey. The copy of the writing for a commandment to be given in every province was published unto all people, that they should be ready against that day.” (Esther 3:13-14)***

Dr. Gill, after examining the various hints of historical writings on the identity of this king who took Esther as his bride, concludes thusly: *“I rather think, with Vitringa and others, that Xerxes is the Ahasuerus that was the husband of Esther here spoken of [ ] and as he was the son and successor of Darius Hystaspis, if he is meant by Artaxerxes in the preceding books, the history of which is carried to the thirty second year of his reign, [Nehemiah 13:6] and who reigned but four years more; this book of Esther stands in right order of time to carry on the history of the Jewish affairs in the Persian monarchy”*. The glorious example found in the book of Esther, of God’s deliverance of His elect people – seen in the type here of the mostly-rebellious and then-subjugated Jewry – was turned into the vile celebration of Purim. This is because of the reference in Esther 3:7 where this enemy of the Jews is recorded to have ***“cast Pur, that is, the lot”*** to decide what month of the year would be the best to destroy all of the Jews.

This Ahasuerus (Xerxes) took all of the massive Persian forces to go and destroy the emerging military power of Greece – while it was still seen as an infant in the swaddle of the Aegean. This military campaign was around BC 480. It failed, and king Xerxes only remained on the Persian throne for another 15 years. The kings that served Persia between BC 465 and the time of Alexander the Great’s taking of all Persia and beyond are not referenced in the vision given Daniel. During this period of approximately 130 years Jewry was left alone by the Persian kings mostly as a functionally autonomous, though vassal, religious government within the kingdom, so long as the sovereignty of the Persian King was never directly challenged. The Jews had a peaceful existence and therefore were only marginally engaged in what was to come next.

The ***“mighty king [that] shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will”*** is the Grecian ruler Alexander the Great. He took his ***“stand”*** upon the death of his father, when he was about 18 years old. In a 13-year span of time, he spread from the small empire of Macedon, along the west side of the Aegean Sea all the way South to Egypt and East to the Indus River of today’s Pakistan. It was a kingdom that was larger than the Persian Empire ... a ***“great dominion”*** indeed. He completed this work in approximately BC 323 and died at the age of 30.

We have previously examined the rise and fall of the Persian and Grecian kingdoms by the vision of King Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel chapter two – ***“breast and [ ] arms of silver, [ ] belly and [ ] thighs of brass,” (Daniel 2:32)***. We’ve also considered the ferocity with which the Grecian Empire came into existence, when we looked at the vision given Daniel, recorded in chapter eight:

***“And as I [Daniel] was considering [the vision of the Persian Empire], behold, an he goat came from the west on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground: and the goat had a notable horn between his eyes. And he came to the ram that had two horns, which I had seen standing before the river, and ran unto him in the fury of his power. And I saw him come close unto the ram, and he was moved with choler against him, and smote the ram, and***

***brake his two horns: and there was no power in the ram to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground, and stamped upon him: and there was none that could deliver the ram out of his hand. Therefore the he goat waxed very great: and when he was strong, the great horn was broken; and for it came up four notable ones toward the four winds of heaven."***  
(Daniel 8:5-8)

As you can see in the vision of chapter eight, we have the same reference to the end of the rule of Alexander as we have in Chapter 11 – when that rule is replaced with four kingdoms spread out to the ***"four winds of heaven"***. When Alexander was travelling back from the eastern border of his conquered territory, and had landed in the ancient city of Babylon, he contracted a disease and died. He had one child, who died shortly thereafter. The effects of this was that no heirs existed to take up the authority over the great dominion of the newly formed Grecian Empire. History demonstrates that a large void resulted and four of the most powerful of Alexander's top military leaders bubbled up to rule over segments of that kingdom. Two of them were mostly contented to occupy the furthest northern (called Thrace, taken by Lysimachus) and western (called Macedonia, taken by Cassander) regions of the kingdom. The remaining areas were much larger and considered the dominant regions of Greece. These were the greater regions of Syria with the eastern portions and Egypt with the southern portions. Syria went to Seleucus and Egypt to Ptolemy.

Historians who focused on Jewish experiences seem to agree that Alexander the Great was – and still is – considered a benign conqueror and ruler in the hearts of the Jews. Other than a brief and mild uprising in Samaria and a conflict with the Phoenicians in the area of modern Gaza, the area of Palestine was left undisturbed by his conquering armies. Having enjoyed relative autonomy under the Persians, the calm waters through that portion of new Greece remained that way.

As appointed by God, however, all of that was about to take a dramatic and centuries-long shift as the two largest of the kingdoms within Grecian territory would begin their squabbles. Or, as expositor Clarence Larkin described it: *"Gabriel told Daniel that the Prophecy belonged to Daniel's PEOPLE. And as the 'Glorious Land' (Palestine – verses 16, 41, 45) lay between Syria on the North and Egypt on the South, so the Prophecy narrows down to a description of the wars between the 'Kings of the North' and the 'Kings of the South,' whose marching ground and battlefield would be the 'Glorious Land,' where for centuries [] Daniel's People would be ground between the Upper and Lower Millstones."* I have attached a roughly prepared picture of the conflicting areas at the end of the outline. It shows the Seleucid and Ptolemaic territories and the functional land bridge between them where when the southern kingdom sought to conquer more northern territory – or the northern kingdom sought control of more of the southern kingdom – it was necessary to pass through Palestine, or the ***"glorious land"***. With that introductory information, we are prepared to begin examining the second great period captured in this vision of Daniel – covering verses 5-14.

\*\*\*\*\*

***"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."*** (Daniel 11:5)

As I initiate this efficient examination of this cluster of verses, I want to emphasize that my goal is not to exhaustively expound the history that surrounded the fulfillment of these prophecies – because to do so would create mental exhaustion and confusion. And because most of the historical accounts, by the expositions we have, bring very little to the table respecting the impact or relevance of the prophecies to resolve the question on Daniel’s mind: **“what shall befall thy people in the latter days:”** That statement from Gabriel to Daniel has to be kept in our mind as we look at what is available to us in historical writings. That is true whether the accounts we read flow from the Apocryphal writings or academic writings, which presume to provide historical accounts with respect to the Jewish people. We have chiefly the Word of God, through the expression of this angel – to have confidence that every account given in the prophetic record is saturated with the influences of Jews. To paraphrase the words of Abraham Lincoln in his *Gettysburg Address*: This prophecy needs to be seen uttered as a pre-historical statement “of the Jews, by the Jews, and for the Jews” for the period of time from Daniel’s day to the day when the Messiah returns and the relationship between God and the Jewish remnant is restored. Having some historical accounts to assist us in some nuancing of the view of this prophecy does not serve as our primary authority for this proposition ... the prophetic words of Gabriel do.

This initiating verse is actually a simple description of how the full Ptolemaic and Seleucid kingdoms were created. You notice that we begin with **“the king of the south shall be strong”**. That is, the drama begins with focusing on the king of the south, which was the first of the two kingdoms to get cemented and unsurprisingly, where the Jews of the time saw their proverbial bread being buttered. Ptolemy Soter established the southern kingdom. At near the same time Seleucus Nicator, another of Alexander’s generals, was attempting to cement his appointment to the kingdom north of Palestine. Nicator’s rival, one Antigonus (An-teeg’-gon-us), succeeded in driving him out of the territory. Being a friend of Ptolemy Soter, Seleucus Nicator went south and joined his kingdom as one of the princes. These two put together a strategy to retake the northern kingdom. And when they accomplished this feat, it actually grew to be a larger and militarily stronger kingdom than that of Ptolemy Soter. Hence: **“O]ne of his princes [ ] shall be strong above him, and have dominion; his dominion shall be a great dominion”** was fulfilled.

**“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 begat her, and he that strengthened her in these times.” (Daniel 11:6)**

In these early years of the two kingdoms south and north of Palestine, their squabbling created an unstable vacuum within the Palestinian territories. The effect of this was that nominative ownership over the region changed five times between about BC 323 and BC 246 ... nearly 80 years, or four generations. Two realities for the Jewish people came to pass during this period. One was that they enjoyed a degree of autonomy since they were a well-established and tightly managed society. This made them easy to oversee as long as no conflict started. Second, the Ptolemaic kingdom created what was called *cleruchies* – or military colonies – within Palestine to

serve as a buffer or early alarm system for Seleucid invasions. These soldiers married native Jewish women and established homesteads and thereby developed a natural “filter” neighborhood to catch indicators of invading Syrian forces. This began to develop natural affinities among the Jews toward the king of the south. The result was a strong Ptolemaic kingdom in those early decades and generations of Grecian dominance within the region.

Being, at least for a time, fatigued with the conflict, the two kings sought to ally themselves through the joining of their families. This was to be accomplished by Ptolemy II Philadelphus giving his daughter Berenice to the sitting king of Syria, named Antiochus – a common name used by the northern kingdom, as was typical of royal successions. To show the closeness of the Jews to Ptolemy Philadelphus, this king was credited with commissioning the Septuagint. This is the first official translation of the Old Testament writings from Hebrew to Greek. 72 renowned Jewish scholars were collected together, fully funded by Philadelphus, to make a credible translation. Septuagint literally translates to “seventy”, referencing the body of scholars who did the labor. The Jews enjoyed tremendous influence within the Ptolemaic kingdom, being considered part of the upper class landowners and slave owners within the kingdom rather than slaves themselves.

The adulterous arrangement between Berenice and Antiochus required him to kick his current wife Laodice (from whom the city named Laodicea from the book of Revelation originated) to the curb. Berenice had children with Antiochus ... but he also had two sons with Laodice. When Ptolemy Philadelphus died, the accord with Syria collapsed. King Antiochus removed Berenice from his bed and returned to Laodice. Not satisfied that her sons were sufficiently safe from the fickle passions of the man, Laodice had him poisoned. She then tracked down Berenice, her son, and all those who were involved with the scheme to replace her ... and had them killed so that her own son Seleucus Callinicus would take the Syrian throne.

***“But out of a branch of her roots shall one stand up in his estate, which shall come with an army, and shall enter into the fortress of the king of the north, and shall deal against them, and shall prevail: And shall also carry captives into Egypt their gods, with their princes, and with their precious vessels of silver and of gold; and he shall continue more years than the king of the north. So the king of the south shall come into his kingdom, and shall return into his own land.” (Daniel 11:7-9)***

The death of his Ptolemy II passed kingship of the southern kingdom to a militarily accomplished Ptolemy III, named Euergetes (Yoo-er-gee’-tees). He was the brother (“***a branch of her roots***”) of Berenice and when he learned that she was in danger in Syria, he was engaged in military activities north in the lesser Asia territories (today’s western Turkey region). He marched his army south and east in hopes to intervene and prevent her death. He was too late, but the resulting military campaign against Syria overran the new king Seleucus Callinicus and surged across the kingdom to near the eastern edge. This was a time during this prophetic historical period when the Egyptian territory nearly swallowed up all of the Syrian territory. But news came of an uprising in Egypt, so the attention of Ptolemy III had to shift to preserving his throne and he ended his campaign in Syria and returned home.

With his kingdom in jeopardy, in significant part because he was expending massive riches in pursuit of vengeance for the killing of his sister Berenice, the relationship between Ptolemy Euergetes and the Jewish leaders began to suffer. When he pushed for steep rises in taxes, the leaders in Judah resisted it. Historian Flavious Josephus records how he sent an ambassador to Jerusalem to express objection to the high priest Onias II refusing for several years to pay the tribute owed. This tension built to a boiling point, resulting in Ptolemy III arranging horrible displays of Jews being trampled by elephants for sport. The nephew of Onias II, a lad named Joseph, had a sufficiently strong relationship with some of Ptolemy Euergetes' friends of court, and he arranged a settlement of the disputed tribute.

But the dust up resulted in a severe straining of the relationship between Jews and the Egyptian court. Providence brought forth a series of changes across the Grecian Empire, setting the stage for a massive shift in the relative powers. Syria's leadership transitioned from Seleucus Callinicus to Antiochus III, who over time became known as Antiochus the Great in BC 221 – he was 18. Ptolemy Euergetes died and the kingship over Egypt passed to a perverted and lazy little soul titled Ptolemy IV in BC 223 – he was about 23. The northern Grecian kingdom of Macedon had a new ruler titled Philip V in BC 220 – he was 17. Meanwhile among the Jews, Onias II died and his son Simon II became the high priest. While he was not particularly known for his political disposition, he actually developed a greater relationship with the Syrian ruler than with the Egyptians. Simon II became high priest in about BC 198. The last cluster of verses in this period identified within Daniel's vision captures the relevant energy brought to pass through this season of change.

***“But his sons shall be stirred up, and shall assemble a multitude of great forces: and one shall certainly come, and overflow, and pass through: then shall he return, and be stirred up, even to his fortress. And the king of the south shall be moved with choler, and shall come forth and fight with him, even with the king of the north: and he shall set forth a great multitude; but the multitude shall be given into his hand. And when he hath taken away the multitude, his heart shall be lifted up; and he shall cast down many ten thousands: but he shall not be strengthened by it. For the king of the north shall return, and shall set forth a multitude greater than the former, and shall certainly come after certain years with a great army and with much riches. And in those times there shall many stand up against the king of the south: also the robbers of thy people shall exalt themselves to establish the vision; but they shall fall.” (Daniel 11:10-14)***

After suffering through the humiliating campaign that Ptolemy Euergetes waged across Syria, decimating the riches of the kingdom, Seleucus Callinicus died from a fall off of a horse. He had two sons – Seleucus Ceraunus and Antiochus III. They were young and spirited, with vengeance in their hearts. Since Ptolemy Euergetes had meddled with parts of the Macedonian kingdom during his fevered campaign, the new young Philip V joined the sons of Seleucus Callinicus in a military campaign against Egypt. The southern kingdom had resources and a strong military – but a self-indulgent and lazy leader (compared to his father). After repelling the attack from the north, he got a head of steam and invaded back north with a campaign that resulted in a great slaughter of the Syrian army. But when he had the opportunity to finish the job and take the



northern kingdom, he chose to return home and bask in his reputed glories. This included, historians say, a grotesque extreme of perverse orgies that wasted the wealth of the Egyptian kingdom and set the stage for a sea change in the Grecian power base.

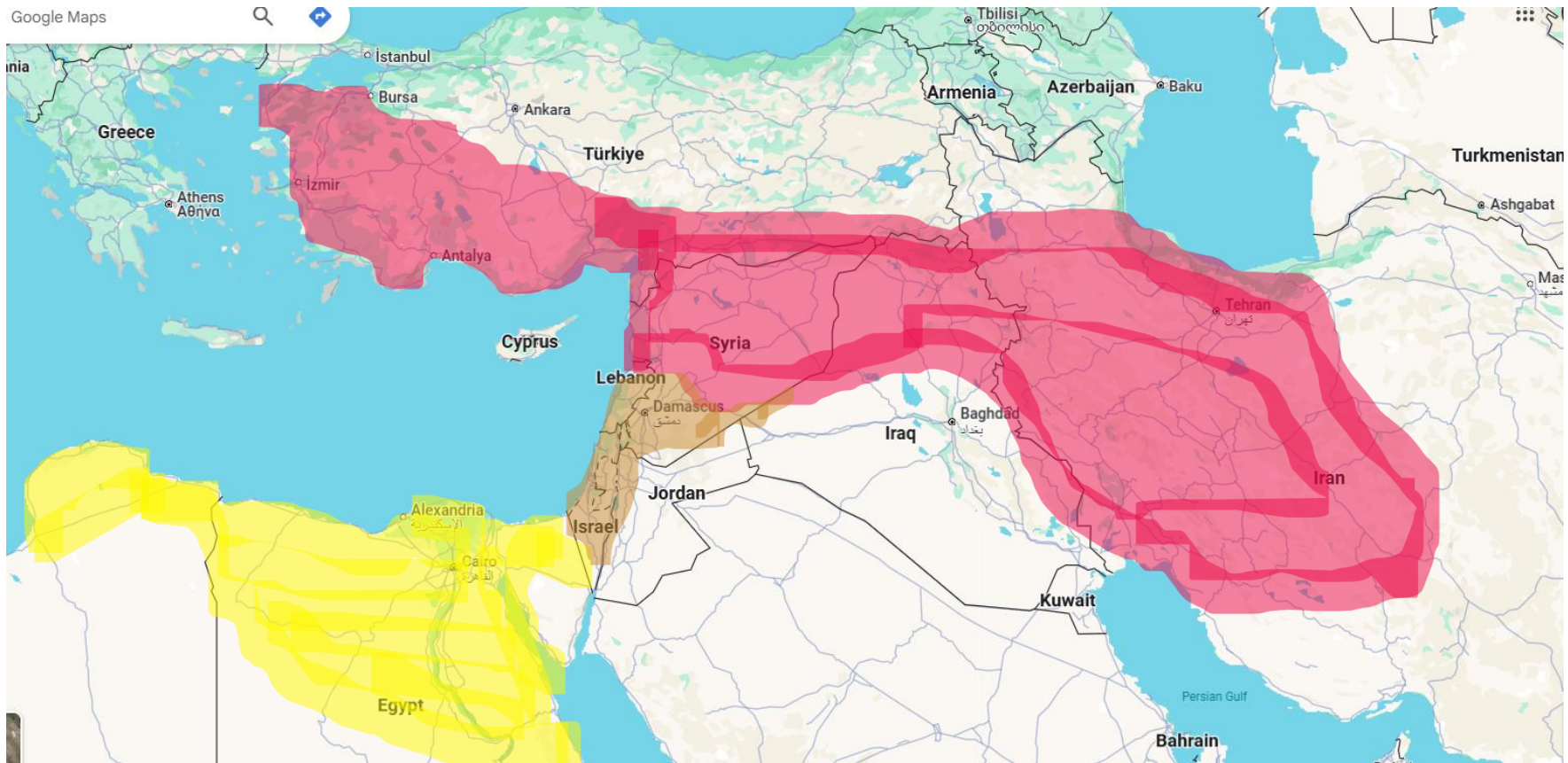
The Jews were in the thick of the conflict. This destabilization of the southern kingdom opened an opportunity for the leadership to begin making league with the Syrian leaders to mount a massive military campaign against Egypt. In exchange for their critical assistance, they wanted a removal of the tribute and stable autonomy to establish their own kingdom within Greece. They ***“exhalt[ed] themselves to establish the vision”*** that they longed for; of an independent kingdom to take the land promised by God to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Because of the relationship that developed between Antiochus III (the Great) and high priest Simon II, they got their tribute removed, but the emerging powerhouse Syrian king (of the north) was not receptive to the idea of complete autonomy. Syria wanted to keep the riches and strength of Judah and the Jews under their control, so the Jewish movement to gain their own land and leadership failed.

This summary treatment of the first two periods of time in this vision Daniel was given is far from comprehensive. More than a hundred pages of historical accounts have been reduced to a few to provide the basic structure of how the vision was fulfilled in history. When I next get an opportunity to speak, Lord willing, we will try to move equally efficiently through periods three through six of the vision.

It is really easy to get lost in the minutiae of all the interactions between these collections of humans on the world stage over centuries of providence. So many hundreds of millions of souls scattered about this globe – each with some self-delusion about their relative originality and value. Yet we have a record here, possessed in its own pages with its authenticity and divine authority. While all those humans crawl over each other – generation after generation – the ones who God Almighty has decreed relevant to the perfect expression of His glory among the sons of men will always shine forth. Not for their own righteousness – because we know we have no such beauty in ourselves – but for the glory of God in the expression of His power and His will. It is perfectly appropriate to close this point with the grand words from the prophet Daniel:

***“This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men.” (Daniel 4:17)***

I love you all. Amen.



- Seleucid Empire
- Ptolemaic Empire
- Disputed Area

