

Daniel 06-04-23a

This is Sunday morning, the 23rd of April, 2006. We continue together this morning, our investigation of the book of Daniel, picking up in chapter 11. Let's take a moment at this point in our morning worship to individually exercise our priesthood.

Go to the Lord in prayer and ensure that our time of fellowship in the word is well-spent. Shall we pray? Father, we know that no good thing comes from us. Every good and perfect gift comes down from you.

We know that you are unchangeable, that you are the same yesterday, today, and forever. Like the Lord Jesus, you are at the beginning and at the end. You are the first and the last.

Our lives are meaningless, if not viewed in the context of your plan and purpose. We thank you so much for the Lord Jesus Christ who entered into our world, who through his faithfulness, through his obedience, and because of his love has rescued us from a lost and hopeless condition and given us privileges beyond compare. We ask your blessing on our nation, on our leadership, particularly those believers who recognize their accountability to you for their labors and their endeavors in the service of our country.

We pray for those who are in the military, those who are in law enforcement, all of those who by their diligence and by their faithfulness help to preserve the fabric of our nation and endeavor to line it up with those principles of your word that ought to guide our American life. We pray for those who cannot assemble, who are not able to take in fresh portions of your word this morning, wherever they may be, and for whatever reasons that you will grant them fresh inspiration and fresh motivation and fresh comfort and encouragement from the word that is already present in their souls, that God the Holy Spirit will minister it afresh and will vitalize them and give them the impetus and the viewpoint to continue to seek, to reflect your glory and the glory of our savior. We ask the same for ourselves as we look at these things from your word this morning in Jesus name.

Amen. Our scripture reading this morning is Daniel chapter 11. We need to survey this material in anticipation of both our first and second lessons this morning.

I generally just surprise you with what I'm going to say, but I'll actually give you something of an outline of how I at least plan to cover this chapter. This chapter is unusual in the word of God. You will note as we read it together that it is essentially an account of historical events surrounding the Middle East.

It's going to talk about the progress of the kingdoms that then exist and which are about to come. Daniel, of course, is in the time of Cyrus, the king of Persia. We know that this is the second of the four great kingdoms predicted by the vision of Nebuchadnezzar in Babylon and in other symbolic images that we've had in the first 10 chapters of this book.

Now what we're going to get in chapter 11 is a prediction of what's going to happen for the remainder of the Medo-Persian empire into the Greek empire down to and through the time of the Maccabees. This is somewhat unique. There aren't very many places.

The closest parallel you might find would be the chronicles or portions of the book of Kings where the specifically Israelite or Judean monarchies are traced with certain salient events that take place. But this is different because it speaks of the civilized world as it was known to the people of God in the time of Daniel and looking forward a couple of hundred years. It is intriguing to look at this chapter and figure out why it's in the word of God.

Why does Daniel or anyone in and after the time of Daniel, need this information? So that is going to be part of what we look at this morning. What we're first going to do, we're going to read this chapter. Then we're going to look at the fulfillment of these prophetic words in history.

That's not going to take us too long and I hope we don't glaze over in that phase. It's kind of tough to hang ancient history on hooks in our mind when we don't typically think much about such things. Once we have seen how these words played out in history, we're going to come back after the break and answer that question.

Why is it here? What is its purpose? The obvious answer is, well, it shows that God is God because he tells us what's going to happen before it is fulfilled. Of course, to verify that we need to ascertain that these are in fact prophetic words. They are widely understood as not being prophetic, but as being retrospective written after the fact to give the book a false authority.

They are ascribed to Daniel, but they weren't written by Daniel. They were written by essentially a historian and the reason this chapter stops in the time of the Maccabees is that's the time of the writing of the book of Daniel and he didn't continue forward because he didn't know the future. This is the standard sort of secularist view of the book of Daniel.

Well, we need to take that into account. It's a question worth asking. We don't want to stick our head in the sand and blindly accept something if there's evidence to the contrary.

So we're going to take a look at all of that here in our first session. So let's address ourselves as the golfers say, you know, you come up and address the ball. Hello wall.

Well here, we're going to address ourselves to the chapter before us. Chapter 11, it's subtitled in your new King James overthrow of Persia by the King of Greece, Kings of the North and South invasion and tyranny of the King who blasphemes God. Daniel chapter 11 verse one.

Also in the first year of Darius, the mead, I even, I stood up to confirm and strengthen him. As I mentioned, when we covered chapter 10, this actually ought to be the last verse of that chapter. It's a bizarre chapter division.

It ought to have either been divided before verse 21 or after verse one here, but the chapter itself begins in earnest in verse two. Now I will tell you the truth. Who is I? This is the messenger angel, Gabriel speaking to Daniel.

This was all introduced in chapter 10. We've reviewed that. I will tell you the truth.

I Gabriel, here we go. Behold, three more Kings will arise in Persia and the fourth shall be far richer than them all. By his strength through his riches, he shall stir up all against the realm of Greece.

Then a mighty King shall arise who shall rule with great dominion and do according to his will. And when he has arisen, his kingdom shall be broken up and divided toward the four winds of heaven. But not among his posterity nor according to his dominion with which he ruled for his kingdom shall be uprooted even for others beside these.

Also, the King of the South shall become strong as well as one of his princes. He shall gain power over him and have dominion. His dominion shall be a great dominion.

And at the end of some years they shall join forces for the daughter of the King of the South shall go to the King of the North to make an agreement, but she shall not retain the power of her authority and neither he nor his authority shall stand. But she shall be given up with those who brought her and with him who begot her and with him who strengthened her in those times. But from a branch of her roots, one shall arise in his place who shall come with an army, enter the fortress of the King of the North and deal with them and prevail.

Now, just so we don't get totally lost in the fun house here, we see that after the four Kings of the Medo-Persian Empire, you have the rise of Greece, Alexander the Great, his kingdom is going to be split into four parts. The two primary parts are going to be up North and down South. And this last few verses has been talking about the defugalese between those two great sections of the, uh, formerly united Alexandrian conquest.

Why is it the North and the South that are mostly in view? Well, they make a sandwich out of Israel, don't they? Israel's right in the middle and this is contested ground and contested authority. And that's why this information is pertinent for the people of God and for Daniel. Now, verse eight, he shall also carry their gods captive to Egypt with their princes and their precious articles of silver and gold.

And he shall continue more years than the King of the North. So ultimately in this struggle between the North and the South, the Southern kingdom is going to prevail. And the King of the North shall come to the King of the South, the kingdom of the King of the South, but shall return to his own land.

He's going to try to get his gods back, but it's not going to work. However, his sons shall stir up strife and assemble a multitude of great forces. And one shall certainly come and overwhelm and pass through.

Then he shall return to his fortress and stir up strife. The King of the South shall be moved with rage and go out and fight with him, with the King of the North, who shall muster a great multitude with the multitude shall be given into the hand of his enemy. When he has taken away the multitude, his heart will be lifted up and he will cast down tens of thousands, but he will not prevail for the King of the North will return and muster a multitude greater than the former.

And she'll certainly come at the end of some years with a great army and much equipment back and forth, back and forth. But you notice the King of the South down in Egypt keeps prevailing. The King of the North rises up and gets smacked down.

He rises up and gets smacked down. Tens of thousands are raised, smacked down. Now verse 14, in those times, many shall rise up against the King of the South.

Also violent men of your people. Now this is the first time in 12 or 13 verses that we've kind of gotten back to Israel proper, right? All of this is context. All of this is surroundings.

It's environment for Israel. Now, in those times, many shall rise up against the King and violent men of your people shall exalt themselves in fulfillment of the vision, but they too shall fall. So the King of the North shall come and build a siege mound, take a fortified city.

The forces of the South shall not withstand him. Even his choice troops shall have no strength to resist. But he who comes against him shall do according to his own will and no one shall stand against him.

He shall stand in the glorious land with destruction in his power. Always previously, these back and forths, the King of the South prevailed, but finally you got a King in the North that prevails. He's the one that will stand in the glorious land with destruction in his power.

He will set his face to enter with the strength of his whole kingdom and upright ones with him. Thus shall he do. He shall give him the daughter of women to destroy it, but she shall not stand with him or before him.

Verse 18, after this, he shall turn his face to the coastlands and shall take many, but a ruler shall bring the reproach against them to an end. And with a reproach removed, he shall turn back on him. This all seems kind of vague and Nostradamus like, but we'll, we'll decode it here shortly.

Verse 19, then he shall turn his face toward the fortress of his own land. But he shall stumble and fall and not be found. So he comes down, he stands in the glorious land.

He turns toward the coast land. Where's the coast land? What direction? West. He's going to do a bunch of stuff down there, but when he turns his face back to his own land, he's going to stumble and fall.

There shall arise in his place. Another King of the North, one who imposes taxes on the glorious

kingdom. Notice after these dozen or so verses of just general back and forth.

Now we're getting the influence of the King of the North, whoever he may be on the glorious land on Daniel's people. He imposes taxes on the glorious kingdom, but within a few days he shall be destroyed, but not in anger, not in battle. 21, in his place shall arise a vile person to whom they will not give the honor of royalty, but he shall come in peaceably and seize the kingdom by intrigue with the force of a flood.

They shall be swept away from before him and be broken and also the Prince of the covenant. And after the league is made with him, he shall act deceitfully. He shall come up and become strong with a small number of people.

He shall enter peaceably even into the richest places of the province. He shall do what his fathers have not done, nor his forefathers. He shall disperse among them the plunder, spoil and riches.

He shall devise his plans against the strongholds for a time. He shall stir up his power and his courage against the King of the South with a great army. And the King of the South should be stirred up to battle with a very great and mighty army, but he shall not stand for they shall devise plans against him.

Yes, those who eat of the portion of his delicacies shall destroy him. His army shall be swept away and many shall fall down slain. Both these King's hearts shall be bent on evil and they shall speak lies at the same table, but it shall not prosper for the end will still be at the appointed time.

While returning to his land with great riches, his heart shall be moved against the Holy covenant. So he shall do damage and return to his own land. Now we have more of the same in the last half of the chapter.

I'm not going to read the whole thing. The first 28 verses gets us started. Let's take a look at what this all refers to.

Obviously we're starting in the third year of Cyrus, King of Persia. That is the starting point from which all the rest of this proceeds forward. Now, Cyrus has a son, Cambyses, who's going to come to the throne in 530 BC.

He's going to be followed by, I'd like to be known in history as Pseudo-Smyrδας. But Cyrus's grandson is Pseudo-Smyrδας. And he doesn't last very long around 522 BC.

The successor to Pseudo-Smyrδας, is Darius the first, Histaspes. He lasts quite a while. He goes almost 40 years, 521 to 486 BC.

Now 486 BC ought to ring a bell in your mind. 486 BC, 483 BC, the 470s BC, because that is the time of our study in the book of Esther. Remember, this is when Ahasuerus or Xerxes comes

into play.

So when Gabriel tells Daniel in verse two of chapter 11, I will tell you the truth. Three more Kings will arise in Persia and the fourth shall be far richer than them all. Who's he talking about? Three more Kings and then a fourth.

The first three, Cambyses, Pseudo-Smyrdis and Darius the first, Histaspes. The fourth, Esther's husband is by his strength through his riches going to stir up all against the realm of Greece. That's the setting of Esther chapter one that we've looked at in great detail.

He spends all this time whining and dining the 127 satraps of the provinces, right? Getting their support, gathering all to go avenge the defeat of his father by the Greeks. And we talked about the battle of Solomus. We talked about the naval engagements and the dalliance that he had while he was over there in Tyre or Sardis or somewhere, and then came back.

And that's why he and Vashti were on the outs. And Vashti winds up torturing that woman and cutting her tongue out and flaying her and so on. And that is the setting in the background for the book of Esther.

That's what you have in verse two. He Ahasuerus Xerxes will stir up all against the realm of Greece. Now verse three, it says, then a mighty King shall arise.

And in between verse two and verse three, you have about a century that goes by. Because once Ahasuerus is defeated by the Greeks and pushed back into his own country, that's really the definitive ending point for the power and the expansion of the Medo-Persian empire. It is going to wither over the next hundred years.

And there are going to be a succession of minor guys who basically do nothing. And in verse three, the mighty King is Alexander the Great. Now this was foreshadowed back in chapter two, verse 32 and explained in 39.

You remember when Nebuchadnezzar has his vision and he says, the image's head is a fine gold, the chest and arms is silver, the belly and thighs are bronze. Head of gold, Nebuchadnezzar. Shoulders and chest of silver Medo-Persian empire.

And it's a guy with a little bit of a one shoulder higher than the other. Now the belly and thighs of bronze. This is where we are in the progress of history as it is communicated through that great vision, the belly and thighs.

People in the ancient world and down to the present talk about strength. Some of the strongest muscles in your body are in your thighs. That's where there's great strength.

But it's also where your body and its foundation divides to go down and give us bipedal locomotion and the ability to stand on two feet. We're not a mono pedal. We don't hop around on one foot like pogo sticks.

We have two feet. And at the point of the belly and thighs, there is this idea of division. And that's what happens with the kingdom of Alexander the Great.

The mighty king shall arise who shall rule with great dominion. The empire, the conquest of Alexander the Great are legendary. He does according to his will.

Problem with that, and of course, we saw this also with the winged leopard. Remember the speed, rapidity with which he accomplished this conquest, because Alexander accomplishes all this in four years. 334 BC.

Remember, Hasuerus is 480s, 470s, the time of Esther. And he continues down to like 464, and then he's assassinated by Vashti and she puts her son on the throne. And from the 460s down to the 330s, you have the gradual wilting, withering and disintegration of the Medo-Persian Empire.

And in 334 BC, Alexander the Great, the winged leopard, the belly and thighs of brass, and that prominent horn of the goat that we saw back in Daniel chapter 8, verses 5 through 8, the notable horn. All of that is referring to Alexander. Between 334 and 330, he conquered Asia Minor, Syria, Egypt, and everything that was in the Medo-Persian Empire.

His conquest, remember he pushed to the east and to the south, he got all the way to India. And of course, in 323, he dies from what they believe to be malaria. Some people thought he was poisoned.

Most historians agree that the symptoms described by history indicate that he contracted malaria. And it didn't help any that he seems to have been a party boy and was something of an alcoholic. Maybe he thought he could kill the bugs, you know, by medicating himself, but it didn't work.

So he dies in 323. So, in the space of about a decade, Alexander conquers the world and then dies at the age of 32. Live fast, die young, nobody knows what his corpse looked like.

So, a few years after Alexander's death, and this is one of Dr. Krizzle's favorite stories, it's somewhat apocryphal, but Alexander lays on his deathbed and his generals come and say, well, who is your successor? Whose is the kingdom? And Alexander rises up out of his alcoholic fog and his malarial fever and he says, it's for him who can take it. Then he falls back and dies. Well, however it actually happened, the kingdom gets split four ways, just as this passage predicts.

Verse four, when he has arisen, his kingdom shall be broken up and divided toward the four winds of heaven. Now, if you plot this on a map, it's not a perfect compass point, north, south, east, and west. And the four winds, you know, you don't get out there in the desert or out on the sea and say, which way is north? Well, let's see which way the wind is blowing.

That'll tell us. I mean, we don't determine direction by the winds. When it says the four winds, it means that they're in four different directions, not necessarily the compass points of north,

east, south, and west.

Because as you know, the northern kingdom is actually north and somewhat west of Israel. The southern kingdom is south and somewhat west of Israel. And the area of Syria and so on is kind of north and east.

Asia Minor is up there. But the fact remains that you can pick a point and go in 90 degree angles and hit all four of these fragments divided toward the four winds of heaven, but not among his posterity or according to his dominion with which he ruled. His kingdom shall be uprooted for others besides these.

There's a short period of time where Alexander's son sat on the throne, but it really didn't last. And ultimately, you have the Seleucids, Seleucids, depending on how you want to treat that. You know, is it weenie weenie weekie or weenie weenie weesie? Is it Kikero or Cicero? We never know how to treat the C's in ancient Latin and Greek.

But Seleucus, I'm going to call him Seleucus. I'm going to call him the Seleucids or the Seleucids, depending on whether I'm concentrating or not. They get Syria and Mesopotamia, the ancient realm of Ur.

Those are the Seleucids. Ptolemy gets Egypt. Lysimachus, the third general, gets Thrace and chunks of Asia Minor.

And Cassander gets the original Macedonian empire that Philip had established and handed to his son Alexander. That's where Cassander hangs out. And that includes Greece or Helena proper.

Macedonian Greece, Cassander. Daniel had already gotten an inkling of this back in chapter 7, verse 6. He says, After this I looked, there was another like a leopard, which had on his back four wings of a bird. The beast also had four heads, and dominion was given to it.

Four heads. So, Seleucus, Ptolemy, Cassander, Lysimachus. Of course, a house divided against itself cannot stand.

It's going to become pieces of a house. And so, as soon as this empire divides, it weakens. And the parts are going to start squabbling.

The conflict that now is detailed here in Daniel chapter 11 is primarily between, as I said, the king of the north and the king of the south. Who's the king of the south? Ptolemy and his successor. Who's the king of the north? The Seleucids.

So, for the next 15 verses here, the warfare between the Ptolemies and the Seleucids is detailed, is predicted. So, this is primarily the area we call Syria and Egypt. There are a lot of details that you can go through in history and trace out.

The strong king of the south here in verse 5 that says he shall become strong as well as one of

his princes. This is Ptolemy I Soter. Soter means the savior.

He's the big savior. Ptolemy, the savior. He gets Egypt in 323 BC upon Alexander's death.

He's proclaimed king of Egypt about 20 years later in 304. He consolidates, he administrates, he organizes. He parts out his little chunk there over a couple of decades.

And he's officially the pharaoh, so to speak, in 304. The prince or commander that is with him in verse 5 is Seleucus Nicator, also one of Alexander's general, who goes up and rules in Babylon. This is what's going to become the king of the north.

It sounds like when you read verse 5 that the king of the south becomes strong as well as one of his princes, like he's got some helper down there. But this is talking about one of the other generals and it's a reference to the establishing of this second kingdom up in Syria. His dominion shall be a great dominion.

These are the Seleucids. The first one being Seleucus I, Nicator, and he starts out in 321 up there. But in 316, another one of the generals, Antigonus, comes up and attacks.

And so Seleucus comes down to Ptolemy and says, hey, old buddy, old comrade in arms, old fellow general with Alexander, I got Antigonus biting at my ankles here and I need some help. So they defeat Antigonus in 312 and Seleucus winds up being a whole lot better. He goes back to Babylon.

He's greatly strengthened. He rules over Babylonia, Media, and Syria, and he gets the title of king in 305. He becomes the big cheese up there and Ptolemy hears about it and says, well, I'll be the big cheese down here.

So 305, Seleucus claims the title of king. 304, Ptolemy claims the title of king. And so Seleucus ends up with a bigger chunk of the pie, real estate-wise.

This big area of Babylonia, Media, and Syria is much bigger than Egypt, but Egypt is richer and blessed with more resources and so on. So they more or less kind of balance out at the beginning. Well, now verse 6, at the end of years, they shall join forces for the daughter of the king of the south shall go to the king of the north to make an agreement.

Wouldn't it be great if we could all be one big happy metroplex, a big continuum here? Well, Ptolemy, the savior, Ptolemy, the first big cheese down in Egypt, he dies in 285 BC. Ptolemy II, Philadelphus, brotherly love boy, the first one is the savior, the second one is brotherly love boy, rules in Egypt. He's going to be there about 40 years, 285 to 246.

Seleucus, up there in Babylon, gets murdered a couple of years after Ptolemy dies in 281. And his son, Antiochus the savior, Antiochus Soter, is going to rule for about 20 years. He shuffles off his mortal coil there in 262, and Seleucus' grandson, Antiochus II, Theos.

Now, do you notice anything about the names that these people are picking? I'm the savior. I'm

Philadelphia, brotherly love. Now, this is Seleucus' grandson, Antiochus Theos.

He's going to be up there from 262 to 246, another 15 years or so. Well, Ptolemy II and Antiochus II, the son of Ptolemy and the grandson of Seleucus, are bitter, bitter enemies. I'm the savior.

Well, I'm God. Well, I'm brotherly love. Well, you know, they hate each other for a lot of reasons.

But in 250, this is a few years before Antiochus Theos dies. I wonder what they thought about that Theos thing when he died. But about 250 BC, 250 years, 250 years before Christ, they enter into an alliance.

These bitter enemies bury the hatchet. They do it by sending Ptolemy II's daughter, Bernice, up there to Antiochus II. It kind of makes sense, doesn't it? Because they're in the same generation.

Bernice is the granddaughter of Ptolemy and Antiochus II is the grandson of Seleucus. So, this is sort of a Romeo and Juliet kind of a deal, warring houses, but we can heal the breach when these two get married. Well, you will not be shocked to discover that the marriage did not last because Antiochus had already been married.

He was married to Laodicea. Remember the Laodiceans, the church of Laodicea? Well, her name, this is well before that, but her name is Laodicea. He had to divorce her to marry Bernice to seal this political alliance and she was kind of cheesed off about that.

And so, she had Bernice killed, unsurprisingly. Now, you have this mentioned in verse 6. The king of the south should go to the king of the north and make an agreement because the daughter is going to be involved. But she shall not retain the power of her authority and neither he nor his authority shall stand.

You have a note there. This is literally arm. You know, the arm of the Lord is not shortened that it cannot save.

This is power, ruling authority, ability to get things done in a particular realm. So, it says she shall be given up with those who brought her and with him who begot her and with him who strengthened her in those times. Well, this begins to unravel when Laodicea has Bernice killed.

Laodicea, not content with the death of Bernice, poisons her erstwhile husband Antiochus II for divorcing her and she gets her son Seleucus II. She says, boo on Antiochus and boo on his new wife and boo on his father. I'm going to go back to the source.

Seleucus, I'm going to name my son Seleucus II. So, this is a covenant. Callinicus.

Seleucus Callinicus, he's the king. He's going to last about 20 years, from 246 down to 227. Okay.

Now, verses 7 and 8, but from a branch of her roots, one shall arise. I remember Bernice got assassinated. but a branch of her roots is going to give rise to one who's going to come up with an army, enter the fortress of the king of the north and deal with them and prevail.

You can imagine this didn't go over real big in Egypt when they poisoned the king's daughter and went a different direction with the whole monarchy. So what happened? Bernice's brother, Ptolemy III, Euergetes, he succeeds his father down there in Egypt. Old, lost my daughter to the murderers.

So he succeeds his father and he says I'm going to go avenge the death of my sister. So he goes up there and fights a big battle with the Syrian army, the king of the north. He grabs Laodice, that murdering queen up there, queen mother, puts her to death, grabs a bunch of spoils and goes back to Egypt.

So that's what you have in verse 7 and 8. All of this is documented in secular history. So now in verses 9 and 10 it says the king of the north will come to the king of the south but shall return to his own land. Well, this was a humiliating defeat up there because old Seleucus Callinicus figured he's the rightful guy for the throne but he got his helmet handed to him on the battlefield.

So he decided, well, they took our gods, they took our stuff, they've embarrassed me so I'm going to go down there and try to rectify this, kind of put you in mind of what Hasuerus did to try to get the besmirching off of his escutcheon when his father got defeated. So he goes down to Egypt and tries to invade it but he's unsuccessful. He's repulsed, he gets beat again so now he's a two-time loser and he has to return to his own land so he's got his tail between his legs and all of the Seleucids up there are hanging their heads because the Ptolemies are making him look bad.

So in verse 10, his sons stir up strife and assemble a multitude of great forces and certainly come and overwhelm and pass through. Well, Seleucus didn't live to see this turn of events because he fell off his horse one day and died. Just riding around, fell off, died.

So his son, Seleucus II Soter, I'll deliver us, I'll save us from all this humiliation. He isn't only going to last but about four years, 227 to 223. He comes to the throne but before he can get much done, he gets killed, he gets assassinated, there's a conspiracy.

They don't think he's a good guy to be on the throne and so then his brother comes to the throne, Antiochus the Great. Antiochus III the Great. He becomes the ruler in 223 at 18 years of age and he's going to last nearly 40 years.

He's going to last all the way down into the 180s BC. Antiochus the Great. So these two sons, Seleucus III and Antiochus III, were the ones that tried to get Syria's prestige restored after the Egyptians stole their gods and hauled off all their stuff.

Seleucus III, Callinicus, he tried to go up to Asia Minor and win some victories since they

couldn't beat Egypt. It's kind of like when you lose an argument with your spouse where you go kick the dog. Well, he couldn't defeat Egypt so he tried to go conquer Asia Minor but he fell off his horse.

Antiochus III went back down to Egypt. Egypt had controlled a lot of territory all the way north to the borders of Syria including Israel. Antiochus drove the Egyptians all the way back down to their historic borders below Israel by a campaign that he mounted in 219 to 217 BC.

So all of this is taking place in the view of Daniel's people in Israel. So you can see that all of the things that Gabriel tells Daniel are taking place here. Now, why does God give this information? And this trend, you can see how this plays out.

We could go through in detail how history has borne out what Gabriel told Daniel here. If you want, from this point forward especially, this is where the books of Maccabees, 1 and 2 Maccabees, fill in a lot of first-hand observation of Antiochus and Antiochus' epiphanies and the things that are about to be detailed here beginning in verse 11. That's basically what the books of Maccabees are.

If you've never read them, it's interesting. And it's considered to be historically fairly accurate. It's not considered to be an inspired book because although there is some reference to God and some application made, especially in 2 Maccabees, it's largely all information like this that says, well, this happened and then that happened, and it's told from the Jewish perspective.

Well, we don't think Maccabees is inspired. It doesn't lend itself to observation, interpretation, and application for spiritual strength and doctrine of reproof, correction, and instruction. What about this? What do you think of this so far? We've observed it.

How would you interpret and apply it? Well, this is the question we're going to ask and attempt to answer when we come back from the break. But what I will tell you from this section so far is this. God controls history.

God knows ahead of time how history is going to turn out, and God knows what the turning points are. There is a huge omission that I'll leave you to think about over the break right there between verses 2 and 3 because the fourth king Ahasuerus rises up, and he's strong, he's rich, and he stirs up this big battle against Greece. What's missing here in the account of the reign of Ahasuerus? This is Gabriel, an angel of God, talking to Daniel, a prophet of God, about a king who's mentioned in a book from the Word of God, and what does he not mention? Esther, Haman, the potential obliteration of the entire Jewish nation, so big that a feast is established in Israel to commemorate it, Hanukkah, the Feast of Lights.

What is up with that? Well, you can muse on that while we take our break. When we come back, we'll ask and seek to answer that and other questions. The what? Oh yeah, not Hanukkah, the Feast of Purim.

Yeah, Purim's what I meant. Good call.

