

Daniel 11:2-20
March 16, 2025



CONVERSATION STARTERS

What are some highs or lows you experienced this past week?

What Scripture has been shaping you recently?

Where have you seen God moving in your life this week?

What did you hear in today's sermon OR read in today's passage that you would like to discuss?

What did you learn about yourself in today's sermon/passage?

What did you learn about God in today's sermon/passage?

What convicted you as you listened to today's sermon OR read in today's passage?

MAIN POINT

Last week, Daniel encountered an angel on the banks of the Tigris River who came in response to his prayers and petitions on behalf of the Jewish people. This week, we'll study what the angel had come to tell Daniel.

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

What have we learned so far in the book of Daniel about God's role in government and political affairs?

Can someone recap the events we talked about in last week's study?

We are tackling more prophecy today. What types of prophecy have we learned about so far in our study of Daniel?

Last week, Daniel wrote about an encounter he had on the banks of the Tigris River in the third year of King Cyrus's reign (536 BC). In response to Daniel's mourning, fasting,



and prayer, the Lord sent Daniel an answer. Daniel spoke to an angel who said he had come to tell Daniel what was recorded in the book of truth. Today, we'll study what the angel revealed.

UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

 ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ DANIEL 11:2-4.

The angel told Daniel about four Persian kings who would rise to power. When Daniel spoke to the angel on the banks of the Tigris River, the Persian king Cyrus was in power (10:1). The first three Persian kings that the angel mentioned are: Cambyses (son and successor of Cyrus the Great, 529–522 BC), Pseudo-Smerdis (522–521BC), and Darius I Hystapes (521–486 BC). Cambyses's life and reign was filled with war, murder, and political intrigue. He was ousted by a Persian priest (Pseudo-Smerdis).

The most important king mentioned in this verse, though, is Xerxes, or Ahasuerus (496–465 BC). You may recognize his name from the book of Esther. As the angel referenced, he was the wealthiest of the four kings mentioned and ruled a huge empire that spanned from Ethiopia to India. He hoped to conquer Greece, but when he tried to invade in 480, he was defeated. (This happened between Esther chapters 1 and 2.)

What did the angel say would happen?

Daniel had received prophecy about the “warrior king” previously. Does anyone remember what we learned from that prophecy?

How do prophecies like these being fulfilled in very specific ways help build your faith in God's Word?

The “warrior king” the angel mentioned in verse 3 is Alexander the Great, the legendary Greek conqueror (336–323 BC). In previous visions, Daniel learned of the passing of power between nations, and he received previous prophecy about the “warrior king” (Daniel 7–8).

Alexander the Great's conquest of much of the civilized world was swift, and his untimely death resulted in his kingdom being split into four pieces, divided among four of his generals.

 ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ DANIEL 11:5-20.



The rest of our passage today deals with the kingdom of the north, Syria, and the kingdom of the south, Egypt. In both, the rulers change regularly. Egypt was ruled by the Ptolemy line, and Syria by the Seleucid line.

This is a lot to take in, but these details remind us of God's sovereign power and intimate knowledge of all of human history.

The events described here can be hard to understand, but it is important we don't bypass them. What do these passages teach us about God's understanding and control of human history?

What do these verses help you remember about the passing nature of human authority, no matter how great it appears in the moment?

How does this give us hope in difficult circumstances?

As Daniel said in 2:21, God "removes kings and establishes kings." We see this in incredible detail in the passage we studied today. Nothing lasts forever, except the Lord's kingdom. These events and their fallout would have touched the Israelite people who were caught in between these kingdoms. Daniel was worried about the fate of his people, and the Lord sent an angel to tell him future happenings in precise detail. The story isn't over. We'll continue our march through history next week.

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

What do you notice about the detail in this prophecy? What does this tell us about God's care for the details of life on earth?

What does this teach us about God's authority and control? Why do we need to know this?

Considering Daniel's prayers, why do you think this prophecy, or truth (v.2) was important for Daniel to know?

PRAYER

Close your time together by sharing prayer requests, praying for each other, and the group.

Praise God for his sovereignty and might. He controls all, knows all, and sees all. He isn't surprised by anything. Thank Him for the truth found in His Word and for allowing



us the opportunity to understand it, just like Daniel did with the help of the angel in our reading today. Ask God for help and understanding as you continue your study of Daniel.

LOOKING AHEAD

Encourage your group to look ahead to next week's scripture passage as we continue our study of Daniel.

March 23, 2025 --- Daniel 11:21-12:4

COMMENTARY

Daniel 11:2-20

Daniel 11:2–35 outlines the course of Palestinian history from Daniel's time to the time of Antiochus Epiphanes. Verse 2 refers to the four Persian rulers who would succeed Cyrus: Cambyses (530–522 BC), Pseudo-Smerdis (522), Darius I (522–486), and Xerxes (486–465). It alludes to Xerxes' campaign against Greece. Verses 3–4 then refer to Alexander the Great (336–323) and the division of his kingdom. Verses 5–20 outline the relationship between the Seleucids ("the king of the North"), who ruled Syria, and the Ptolemies ("the king of the South"), who ruled Egypt during the period 321–175.

