

“The World Seems Out Of Control, But God Is Bringing About His Will”

Daniel 11:1-12:3

Sermon Series: “The World Seems Out Of Control, But...”

Introduction:

James Boice writes, “Even though the eleventh chapter is difficult, it calls for a detailed explanation....This is the last, longest, most detailed, and therefore most important, prophecy in the book.”

Sinclair Ferguson writes, “What is at stake then is a vital issue: Does God so rule history and can He so communicate with us that His future purposes may be disclosed to us before the events?”

11:1- “Also in the first year of Darius the Mede, I, *even* I, stood up to confirm and strengthen him.)

Isaiah 44:28- Who says of Cyrus, ‘*He is My shepherd, And he shall perform all My pleasure, Saying to Jerusalem, “You shall be built,”*’
And to the temple, “Your foundation shall be laid.” ’

11:2-12:3- And now I will tell you the truth: 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. **These kings were Cambyses II (530-522), Gaumata (522), Darius the Great (522-486), and Xerxes (486-465). Xerxes attacked Greece, but the unified Grecian city states defeated the Persians at the Battle of Salamis in 480 BC. This marked the rise of the Greek empire.**

3 Then a mighty king shall arise (**Alexander**), who shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will. **4** 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 besides these. **Cassander took Macedonia and Greece, Lysimachus took Thrace and portions of Asia Minor, Ptolemy took Egypt and Israel, and Seleucus took Syria and Mesopotamia.**

Danny Akin gives this intro to the next section. “In the grand scheme of world history, Egypt and Syria don’t amount to much during this period of time (ca. 323-163 BC). The more significant global power is Rome, the new “bad boy” arising in the background.

However, the reason Egypt and Syria receive all the press here is because they are important in their relationship to Israel and the people of God. They will play political

ping-pong with the nation of Israel for almost 175 years until the evil, antichrist-type figure Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175-163 BC) comes on the scene. That is the subject of verses 20-45. Until then, ongoing civil war takes place between Egypt and Syria with Israel tragically caught in the middle.” Wade Burleson writes, “For the rest of Daniel 11, the ‘king of the North’ represents the king leading the northern Seleucid people, also known as the Syrian kingdom...The ‘king of the south’ refers to the king leading the southern ‘Ptolemy’ people, also known as the Egyptian kingdom.”

5 “Also the king of the South shall become strong, as well as *one* of his princes; and he shall gain power over him and have dominion. His dominion *shall be* a great dominion. **6** 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 [**Berenice, Ptolemy’s daughter (the daughter of the king of the south) was arranged to marry Antiochus (the king of the north) to make an agreement between the kingdoms, but Antiochus was already married to Laodice, who wasn’t too happy about being scorned and deposed so she murdered Antiochus, Berenice, and their child**]. **7** But from a branch of her roots (**Berenice’s brother, Ptolemy III Euergetes**) *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 (**he attacked Syria to avenge his sister’s murder**). **8** And 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 (**Euergetes means Benefactor, and he was called this because of returning their gods and getting all this gold and silver**). **9** “Also *the king of the North* shall come to the kingdom of the king of the South, but shall return to his own land (**Seleucus II tried this unsuccessfully because his fleet was destroyed in a storm**). **10** (**these verses details the wars and conflicts between Syria and Egypt**) 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. **11** “And 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; but the multitude shall be given into the hand of his *enemy*. **12** 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. **13** For the king of the North will return and muster a multitude greater than the former, and shall certainly come at the end of some years with a great army and much equipment. **14** “Now in those times many shall rise up against the king of the South. Also, violent men of your people shall exalt themselves in fulfillment of the vision, but they shall fall. **15** So the king of the North shall come and build a siege mound, and take a fortified city; and the forces of the South shall not withstand *him*. Even

his choice troops *shall have* no strength to resist. **16** 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. **17** “He shall also set his face to enter with the strength of his whole kingdom, and upright ones with him; thus shall he do. And he shall give him the daughter of women to destroy it; but she shall not stand *with him*, or be for him. **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 the reproach removed, he shall turn back on him. **19** Then he shall turn his face toward the fortress of his own land; but he shall stumble and fall, and not be found. **20** “There shall arise in his place one who imposes taxes *on* the glorious kingdom; but within a few days he shall be destroyed, but not in anger or in battle (**this is Seleucus IV Philopater who was poisoned by his minister, Heliodorus**).

21 (Antiochus Epiphanes) And 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. **22** With the force of a flood they shall be swept away from before him and be broken, and also the prince of the covenant (**Jewish high priest Onias III replaced by Jason in concert with Antiochus who then double crossed him with Menelaus who became high priest**). **23** And after the league *is made* with him he shall act deceitfully, for he shall come up and become strong with a small *number of* people. **24** He shall enter peaceably, even into the richest places of the province; and he shall do *what* his fathers have not done, nor his forefathers: he shall disperse among them the plunder, spoil, and riches; and he shall devise his plans against the strongholds, but *only* for a time. **25** “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 shall be stirred up to battle with a very great and mighty army; but he shall not stand, for they shall devise plans against him. **26** 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. **27** Both these kings’ 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 (**these verses describe him taking by guile at times and military victory at others Egyptian provinces and part of Egypt itself**). **28** 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 (**while he was in Egypt a rumor spread that he was killed so he came back and did the things we talked about in chapter 8**). **29** “At the appointed time he shall return and go toward the south; but it shall not be like the former or the latter. **30** For ships from Cyprus shall come against him; therefore he shall be grieved, and return in rage against the holy covenant, and do *damage*. “So he shall return and show regard for those who forsake the holy covenant (**he goes to war against Egypt again but they appeal to Rome for help and they comply; Poplillius, the Roman ambassador, delivered the Roman Senate’s demand that he withdraw from**

Egypt, when he requested time to think Popillius drew a circle around him and told him not to leave the circle until he gave his answer and Antiochus submitted to their demand but to ease his humiliation he took out his anger on the Jews as we talked about previously). **31** And forces shall be mustered by him, and they shall defile the sanctuary fortress; then they shall take away the daily *sacrifices*, and place *there* the abomination of desolation. **32** Those who do wickedly against the covenant he shall corrupt with flattery; but the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out *great exploits* (**the priest Mattathias and his five sons, including Judas Maccabee**). **33** And those of the people who understand shall instruct many; yet *for many* days they shall fall by sword and flame, by captivity and plundering. **34** Now when they fall, they shall be aided with a little help; but many shall join with them by intrigue. **35** And *some* of those of understanding shall fall, to refine them, purify *them*, and make *them* white, *until* the time of the end; because *it is* still for the appointed time.

36 (Anti-christ) “Then the king shall do according to his own will: he shall exalt and magnify himself above every god, shall speak blasphemies against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the wrath has been accomplished; for what has been determined shall be done. **37** He shall regard neither the God of his fathers nor the desire of women, nor regard any god; for he shall exalt himself above *them* all. **38** But in their place he shall honor a god of fortresses; and a god which his fathers did not know he shall honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and pleasant things. **39** Thus he shall act against the strongest fortresses with a foreign god, which he shall acknowledge, *and* advance *its* glory; and he shall cause them to rule over many, and divide the land for gain. **40** “At the time of the end the king of the South shall attack him; and the king of the North shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter the countries, overwhelm *them*, and pass through. **41** He shall also enter the Glorious Land, and many *countries* shall be overthrown; but these shall escape from his hand: Edom, Moab, and the prominent people of Ammon. **42** He shall stretch out his hand against the countries, and the land of Egypt shall not escape. **43** He shall have power over the treasures of gold and silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt; also the Libyans and Ethiopians *shall follow* at his heels. **44** But news from the east and the north shall trouble him; therefore he shall go out with great fury to destroy and annihilate many. **45** And he shall plant the tents of his palace between the seas and the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and no one will help him.

James Hamilton Jr. points out the similarities between Antiochus Epiphanes and the anti-christ in Daniel. “The elements of this pattern are straightforward: (1) at the time of the end (2) a king of exaggerated wickedness arises (3) who attacks God’s people and (4)

tries to keep them from worshipping him, (5) setting up instead an abomination of desolation, (6) thereupon a horrible time tribulation will continue for three-and-a-half years (7) before the wicked king meets sudden, irreversible destruction, (8) resulting in deliverance for the righteous.”

12 “At that time Michael shall stand up, The great prince who stands *watch* over the sons of your people; And there shall be a time of trouble, Such as never was since there was a nation, Even to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered, Every one who is found written in the book. **2** And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, Some to everlasting life, Some to shame and everlasting contempt **3** Those who are wise shall shine Like the brightness of the firmament, And those who turn many to righteousness Like the stars forever and ever.”

Christ Connection: (adapted from Danny Akin)

Antiochus/Antichrist

Deceitful (11:23)

Hates the holy covenant (11:28)

Desecrates the temple (11:31)

Abolished sacrifices (11:31)

Persecutes and murders God’s people (11:23-33)

Willful (11:36)

Exalts himself (11:36)

Magnifies himself as god (11:36)

Blasphemes God (11:36)

Worships the god of war (11:38)

His kingdom will end (11:45)

King Jesus

Truthful

Loves God’s holy covenant

Cleanses the temple

Made a sacrifice once for all

Purifies God’s people

Submissive

Humbles himself

Incarnated himself as God

Glorifies God

Is the God of Peace

His kingdom endures forever

Conviction: The world seems out of control, but despite our sin, God is bringing about His will and establishing His eternal Kingdom.

Applications:

1. The sinful choices of human beings and human government do not thwart the sovereign plan of God.

-The background is the creation account and man being given authority over the beasts. James Hamilton Jr. writes, “Man enjoyed that dominion until he was tempted by a beast- the serpent- and sinned (Gen. 3:1-7). God then placed enmity between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent (Gen. 3:15). The serpent, a beast, usurped the

dominion given to man. Identifying human kingdoms of the world with beasts contrasts them with the 'one like a son of man' (Dan. 7:13)."

-Government was instituted because of the fall to protect people from the acts of evil people, but it is also a consequence of the fall because they are led by sinful people who do evil things. We should expect this type of behavior from governments led by fallen people and realize that we will only be perfectly governed when Jesus comes back.

2. We can base our lives on Scripture because these fulfilled prophecies demonstrate that it is the Word of God.

3. We can face the future with confidence because God is sovereign and powerful enough to bring about His will.

-How can God predict the future? It is because He is bringing about what happens in the future. Nothing happens that He doesn't cause or allow to happen.

-Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones: "The Christian is a man who can be certain about the ultimate even when he is most uncertain about the immediate."

4. We will experience trials and persecution, but God will use them for our spiritual growth (v.35).

John 16:33, 2 Timothy 3:12, James 1:2-3

Action: We will stand firm in Christ, know God, and do great things for God (v.32- Those who do wickedly against the covenant he shall corrupt with flattery; but the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out *great exploits*.).

1. Know God in salvation through Jesus (John 17:3, Matthew 7:21-23).

2. Get to know God better and better relationally through daily communion with Him (John 15:5).

3. Because we know God, we will be used by God to do great things for Him.

Conclusion: What are you trusting in? Do you know God through Jesus? Are you getting to know Him better day by day? Are you standing in and for Him? Are you serving Him and investing your life in advancing His eternal Kingdom?