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# The Amazing God of History

Historical fulfillments in Isaiah and Daniel



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# God declares the end from the beginning

**God revealed these future events to His prophets for a reason:**

- They confirm the inspiration, inerrancy, and authority of God's Word.
- They give hope and comfort to believers.
- They result in worship and praise to the Creator.
- They promote personal purity and perseverance.
- They point us to God's ultimate goal for human history.
- They create a sense of urgency for sharing the gospel.



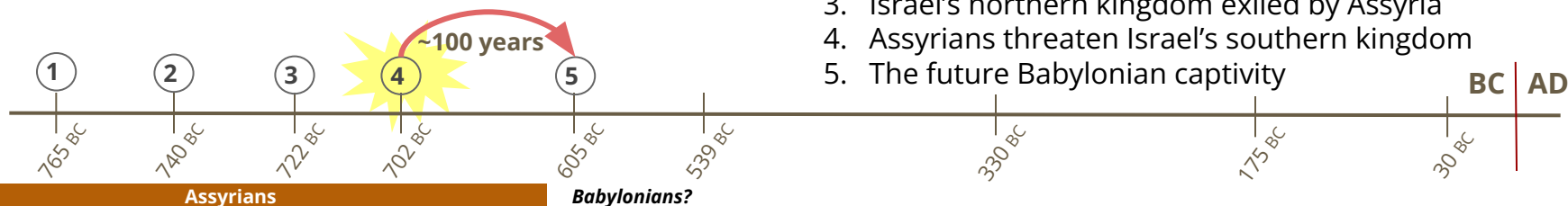
# The Assyrian Superpower

- The northern kingdom of **Israel** opposed Assyria and was taken captive in 722 BC.
- In 702 BC God spared the southern kingdom of **Judah** from Assyria, but king Hezekiah welcomed envoys from Babylon.
- Isaiah declared their future **Babylonian** captivity as a consequence (Isaiah 39:6-7).



Assyrian king Tiglath-Pileser III

1. Birth of Isaiah
2. King Uzziah died; Isaiah called to ministry
3. Israel's northern kingdom exiled by Assyria
4. Assyrians threaten Israel's southern kingdom
5. The future Babylonian captivity



# Isaiah named Cyrus to end the Babylonian captivity

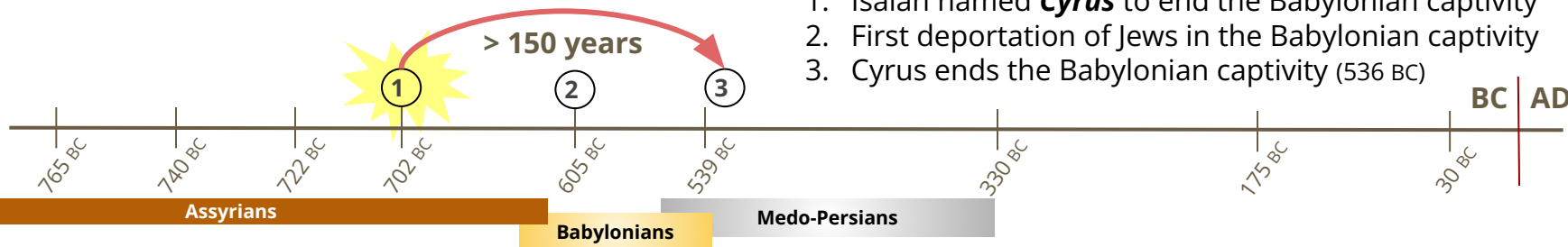
- Cyrus had not yet been born and would be neither Assyrian nor Babylonian.

“It is I who says of Cyrus, ‘He is My shepherd! And he will perform all My desire.’ And he declares of Jerusalem, ‘She will be built,’ and of the temple, ‘Your foundation will be laid.’ Thus says the LORD to Cyrus His anointed, whom I have taken by the right hand” (Isaiah 44:28-45:1 given ~700 BC)



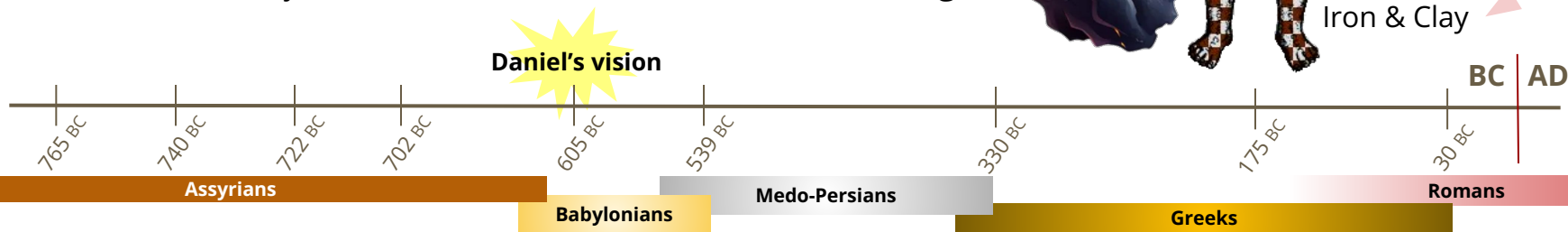
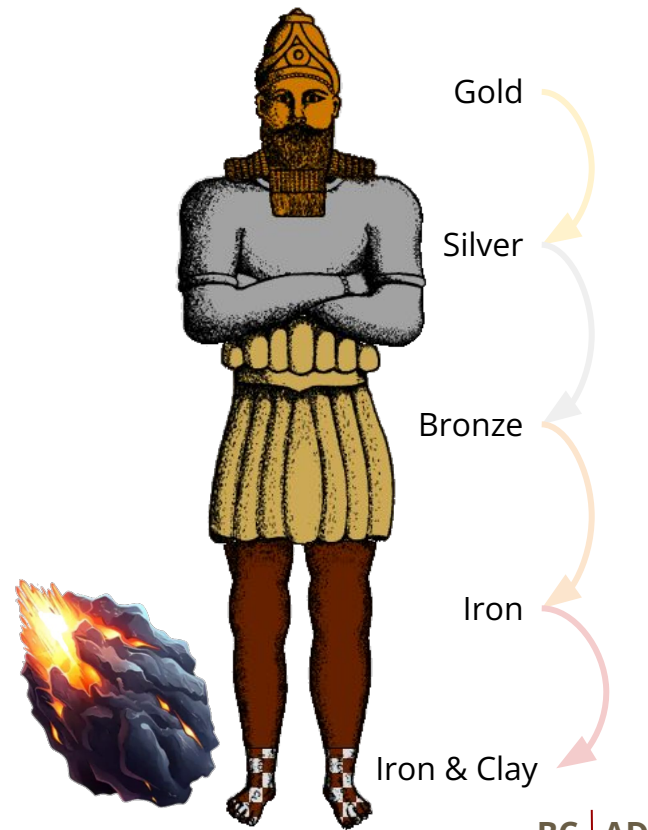
Cyrus restoring the Temple treasures to the Jews

1. Isaiah named **Cyrus** to end the Babylonian captivity
2. First deportation of Jews in the Babylonian captivity
3. Cyrus ends the Babylonian captivity (536 BC)



# Daniel interprets the king's dream

- Daniel deported to Babylon (605 BC).
- Interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the great statue (~ 603 BC).
- A succession of future kingdoms:
  - Neo-Babylonian empire (until 539 BC)
  - Medo-Persian empire (until 330 BC)
  - Grecian empire (until ~ 30 BC)
  - Roman empire (ongoing influence)
  - *"Times of the Gentiles"* (until Christ's Second Coming)



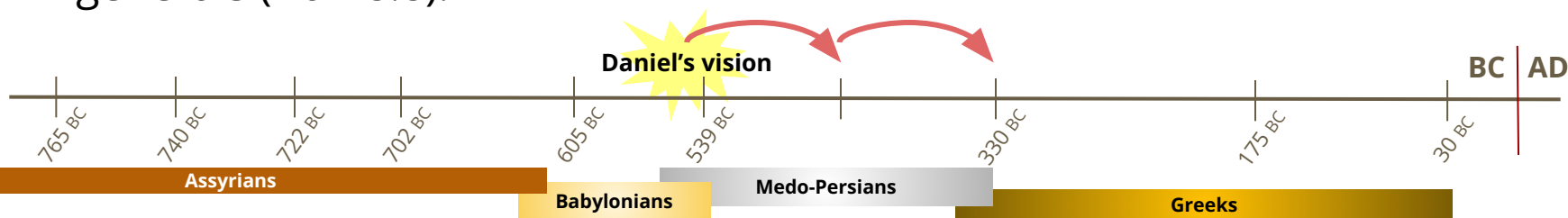
# God confirmed the sequence of Gentile kingdoms

- During the first year of the reign of Belshazzar, the final Babylonian king (~ 550 BC).
- The influence of the fourth beast would dominate the “Times of the Gentiles” (Dan 7:19-20, 23-25).
- One like a “Son of Man” was given “dominion, glory and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations and men of every language might serve Him” (Dan 7:13-14).

<b>The Statue</b> (Daniel 2)	<b>The Beasts</b> (Daniel 7)	<b>Historical Kingdom</b>
Head of Gold	Winged Lion	Babylonian Empire
Chest/Arms of Silver	Bear (3 ribs in mouth)	Medo-Persian Empire
Belly/Thighs of Bronze	Winged Leopard (4 heads)	Greek Empire
Legs of Iron / Feet of Iron & Clay	Terrifying Beast (10 horns)	Roman Empire
Stone cut without hands	Ancient of Days / Son of Man	God's Eternal Kingdom

# Daniel's vision of the ram and goat (550 BC)

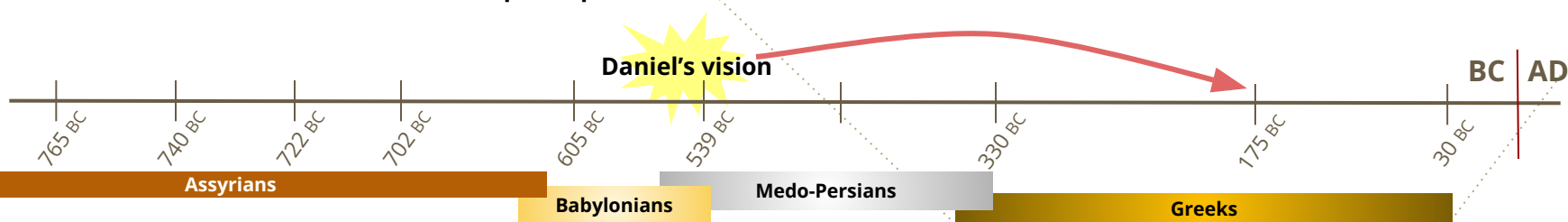
- While serving the Babylonian empire, Daniel saw a vision of a **ram** [Medo-Persia] being defeated by a one-horned **goat** [Greece] (Dan 8). This represented the conquest of Medo-Persia by Alexander the Great (330 BC).
- Alexander died shortly afterward, and his empire was divided among four of his generals (Dan 8:8).



# The little horn that grew

- A ruler will eventually rise to prominence from within the Seleucid kingdom north of Israel (Dan 8:9-14, 23-26).
- Antiochus IV (175-164 BC) will attack Egypt and ravish the land of the Jews, imposing Greek culture on the people.

Divisions of the Greek Empire



## Prophecy came to the humble seeker

- While serving Medo-Persian king Darius in 538 BC, Daniel saw that the 70 years of Babylonian captivity (Jer 25:11-12; 29:10) were about to end.
- He humbled himself (Dan 9:1-19), and God responded by giving Daniel one of the most important prophecies in the Bible (Dan 9:24-27).
- Daniel 10-12 contains the final revelation Daniel received while he was serving Medo-Persian king Cyrus shortly after Cyrus declared an end to the Babylonian captivity of the Jews in 536 BC.
- Daniel had fasted and prayed for insight into God's revelation, especially the predictions of more Jewish suffering to come as recorded in Daniel 8.



# Amazing historical fulfillment of God's prophetic Word

- Scholars have identified over 100 separate predictions in Daniel 11:1-35, and all of them have been fulfilled in history exactly as foretold.
- The fourth Persian king was Xerxes I who reigned from 486-465 BC (Ahasuerus in the *Book of Esther*). Xerxes became famously wealthy and his powerful army provoked and unsuccessfully invaded Greece in 480 BC.
- The “mighty king” of Daniel 11:3 is Alexander the Great, and after his death his kingdom was divided among four of his generals (Dan 11:4).
- Starting in 11:5 is the detailed account of a 150-year struggle between the kingdoms of Syria to the north and Egypt to the south of Israel.
- We can clearly see how God is sovereign over time and history!

<b>Daniel's Prophecy (536 BC)</b>	<b>Historical Fulfillment</b>
11:5 - "The king of the South will grow strong, along with one of his princes who will gain ascendancy over him"	Ptolemy I, king of Egypt (S), gave refuge to Seleucus I (N), who would eventually defeat a rival general for control of Syria and all the eastern territories to the border of India.
11:6 - "they will form an alliance, and the daughter of the king of the South will come to the king of the North ... but she will not retain her position of power"	Berenice, daughter of Ptolemy II (S), married Antiochus II (N), but Antiochus' divorced wife Laodice had them both murdered.
11:7 - "one of the descendants of her line will arise in his place, and he will come against their army and enter the fortress of the king of the North"	Berenice's brother, Ptolemy III (S), defeated Seleucus II (N) to avenge his sister.
11:8 - "their gods with their metal images and their precious vessels of silver and gold he will take into captivity to Egypt"	Ptolemy III (S) returned to Egypt with the spoils of war.
11:9 - "then the latter will enter the realm of the king of the South, but will return to his own land"	Seleucus II (N) failed in his attempt to retaliate against the king of the south.
11:10 - "His sons will mobilize and assemble a multitude of great forces; and one of them will ... wage war up to his very fortress"	Seleucus III (N) and Antiochus III (N) retaliate against Egypt. Antiochus took Judea and Phoenicia from Ptolemy IV (S).
11:11-12 - "the king of the South will go forth and fight with the king of the North. Then the latter will raise a great multitude, but that multitude will be given into the hand of the former"	The Battle of Raphia (217 BC). Ptolemy IV (S) won the battle but did not pursue Antiochus (N) or subdue the northern kingdom. He returned to Egypt after the battle.

(N) = king of the north [Syria]

(S) = king of the south [Egypt]

<b>Daniel's Prophecy (536 BC)</b>	<b>Historical Fulfillment</b>
11:13-15 - "the king of the North will again...press on with a great army ... the violent ones among your people will also lift themselves up ... and the forces of the South will not stand their ground"	Antiochus III (N) was joined by pro-Greek Jews and attacked Egypt. They were victorious at the Battle of Paneas (200 BC).
11:16 - "he will also stay for a time in the Beautiful Land"	Antiochus III (N) gained control of Israel from the Ptolemaic (S) kings.
11:17 - "bringing with him a proposal of peace ... he will also give him the daughter of women to ruin it. But she will not take a stand for him or be on his side"	Cleopatra I (N), daughter of Antiochus III (N), married Ptolemy V (S) in a peace treaty. Antiochus intended for Cleopatra to weaken Ptolemy, but instead she supported him.
11:18 - "he will turn his face to the coastlands and capture many ... but a commander will put a stop to his scorn against him"	A frustrated Antiochus III (N) attacked Roman territory in the west, but in 190 BC he was defeated and forced to pay tribute.
11:19 - "he will turn his face toward the fortresses of his own land, but he will stumble and fall and be found no more"	While attempting to plunder a temple in the eastern territories, Antiochus III (N) was killed in 187 BC.
11:20 - "in his place one will arise who will send an oppressor through the Jewel of his kingdom; yet within a few days he will be shattered"	Seleucus IV (N), son of Antiochus III, sent Heliodorus to plunder the Jerusalem Temple, but Heliodorus would assassinate Seleucus IV in 175 BC.

## Details of the reign of Antiochus IV Epiphanes in Syria

(This expands upon Daniel's vision in 8:9-14 and 8:23-25)

Daniel's Prophecy (536 BC)	Historical Fulfillment
11:21 - "a despicable person will arise, on whom the honor of kingship has not been conferred, but he will come in a time of tranquility and seize the kingdom by intrigue"	Antiochus IV <i>Epiphanes</i> (N) usurped the throne, killed Heliodorus, and had his young nephew (the rightful heir) assassinated.
11:22 - "forces will be flooded away before him ... and also the prince of the covenant"	Antiochus IV (N) defeated Ptolemy VI (S). He deposed Onias III (the rightful Jewish high priest) and sold the office to Jason in 175 BC.
11:23 - "after an alliance is made with him he will practice deception, and he will go up and gain power"	Antiochus IV (N) pretended friendship with Ptolemy VI (S), but plotted to take over all of Egypt.
11:24 - "he will accomplish what his fathers never did ... he will distribute plunder, booty and possessions among them"	Antiochus IV (N) began to control the weaker cities of Egypt. He distributed money as bribes to gain favor.
11:25-26 - "he will stir up his strength and courage against the king of the South with a large army; so the king of the South ... will not stand, for schemes will be devised against him ... those who eat his choice food will destroy him, and his army will overflow, but many will fall down slain"	In order to gain complete control of Egypt, Antiochus IV (N) attacked Ptolemy VI (S) in 170 BC. Ptolemy was captured and his army defeated, partly because his own officials betrayed him.
11:27 - "as for both kings, their hearts will be intent on evil, and they will speak lies to each other ... but it will not succeed"	Antiochus IV (N) and Ptolemy VI (S) pretended to cooperate, but neither of their plans would succeed.

<b>Daniel's Prophecy (536 BC)</b>	<b>Historical Fulfillment</b>
11:28 - "he will return to his land with much plunder; but his heart will be set against the holy covenant"	While Antiochus IV (N) was at war in Egypt, the Jews revolted against pro-Greek rule. Antiochus marched north on his way home and plundered Israel, killing 40,000 Jews and quelling the revolt.
11:29-30 - "he will return and come into the South, but this last time it will not turn out the way it did before ... for ships of Kittim will come against him"	In 168 BC Antiochus IV (N) heard that his nephews, Ptolemy VI & Ptolemy VIII (S), agreed to co-rule Egypt, so he again attacked them. Roman warships were sent to stop Antiochus and he was forced to retreat.
11:31 - "forces from him will arise, desecrate the sanctuary fortress, and do away with the regular sacrifice. And they will set up the abomination of desolation"	On his way back to Syria, Antiochus IV (N) again plundered Israel, forcing the Jews to stop Temple sacrifices and to forsake the Mosaic Law. He desecrated the Temple by erecting an image of Zeus and sacrificing a pig on the altar.
11:32 - "by smooth words he will turn to godlessness those who act wickedly toward the covenant, but the people who know their God will display strength and take action"	Antiochus IV (N) would persuade many Jews to accept the Hellenization of their society, but many would remain loyal to their traditions (the Maccabees and their followers).
11:33 - "they will fall by sword and by flame, by captivity and by plunder for many days"	Many loyal Jews were persecuted and killed during the Maccabean revolt.
11:34 - "they will be granted a little help, and many will join with them in hypocrisy"	After the Maccabees had some success in opposing Antiochus IV (N), many of the apostates joined them.
11:35 - "some of those who have insight will fall, in order to refine, purge and make them pure until the end time"	God allowed this persecution in order to refine, purge, and purify His people. The same will be true in the end times.

# God is great and greatly to be praised!

- Dan 11:35 serves as a transition between prophecies about the Grecian kings and those of an even more wicked king who will arise during the last days. Daniel 11:36-45 details the activities of the future wicked ruler, of whom Antiochus IV was only a mild foreshadowing.
- The amazing God of history sits above time and is sovereign over the events of our lives.

***“But as for me, I trust in You, O LORD,  
I say, ‘You are my God.’  
My times are in Your hand”***  
(Psalm 31:14-15)