

Mt. Pleasant  
Bible Institute  
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*Dr. Joseph Speciale, Instructor*

A ministry of the  
***Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church***

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# THE FOUR GENTILE WORLD EMPIRES



## 1. Babylon

Head of Gold

Lion with Eagles' wings  
(606 BC- 537 BC)



## 2. Medo-Persia

Breast and Arms of Silver

Bear with three ribs in mouth  
(537 BC- 334 BC)



## 3. Greece

Belly and Thighs of Brass

Leopard with four heads and four wings  
(334 BC- 64 BC)



## 4. Rome

Legs of Iron

A dreadful and terrible beast  
(64 BC- Second Coming of Christ)

### *The Final Form of Rome*

Feet and Toes part Iron and part Clay  
10 horns on the beast



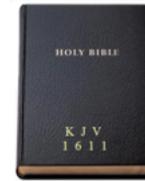


## The Medo-Persian Empire- Ezr 4:6-7

### CAMBYSES II (cont'd)

- It is reasonable to conclude that the AHASUERUS of Ezra 4:6 and the ARTAXERXES of Ezra 4:7-8,11,23 refers to the same Persian king, and that king is CAMBYSES II
- If so, then Cambyses is the one who ordered the work on the temple to cease and, by doing so, directly contradicted the decree issued by his father Cyrus
- Josephus supports this view by identifying the king in Ezra 4 who ordered the work on the temple to cease as Cambyses (*Antiquities* 11.2.21-30)

But **when Cambyses, the son of Cyrus, had taken the kingdom, the governors in Syria, and Phoenicia, and in the countries of Ammon, and Moab, and Samaria, wrote an epistle to Cambyses**; whose contents were as follow: "**To our lord Cambyses**. We thy servants, Rathumus the historiographer, and Semellius the scribe, and the rest that are thy judges in Syria and Phoenicia, send greeting. It is fit, O king, that thou shouldst know that those Jews which were carried to Babylon are come into our country, and are building that rebellious and wicked city, and its market-places, and setting up its walls, and raising up the temple; know therefore, that when these things are finished, they will not be willing to pay tribute, nor will they submit to thy commands, but will resist kings, and will choose rather to rule over others than be ruled over themselves. We therefore thought it proper to write to thee, O king, while the works about the temple are going on so fast, and not to overlook this matter, that thou mayst search into the books of thy fathers, for thou wilt find in them that the Jews have been rebels, and enemies to kings, as hath their city been also, which, for that reason, hath been till now laid waste. We thought proper also to inform thee of this matter, because thou mayst otherwise perhaps be ignorant of it, that if this city be once inhabited and be entirely encompassed with walls, thou wilt be excluded from thy passage to Celesyria and Phoenicia.



## The Medo-Persian Empire- Ezr 4:6-7

### CAMBYSES II (cont'd)

**When Cambyses had read the epistle, being naturally wicked,** he was irritated at what they told him, and wrote back to them as follows: “**Cambyses the king, to** Rathumus the historiographer, to Beeltethmus, to Semellius the scribe, and the rest that are in commission, and dwelling in Samaria and Phoenicia, after this manner: I have read the epistle that was sent from you; and I gave order that the books of my forefathers should be searched into, and it is there found that this city hath always been an enemy to kings, and its inhabitants have raised seditions and wars. We also are sensible that their kings have been powerful and tyrannical, and have exacted tribute of Celesyria and Phoenicia. **Wherefore I gave order, that the Jews shall not be permitted to build** that city, lest such mischief as they used to bring upon kings be greatly augmented.” When this epistle was read, Rathumus, and Semellius the scribe, and their associates, got suddenly on horseback, and made haste to Jerusalem; they also brought a great company with them, and forbade the Jews to build the city and the temple. Accordingly, these works were hindered from going on till the second year of the reign of Darius, for nine years more; for Cambyses reigned six years, and within that time overthrew Egypt, and when he was come back, he died at Damascus- *Antiquities*, 11.2.21-30.

- Josephus also refers to Cambyses as being “naturally wicked” (*Antiquities* 11.2.26), which is a suitable description for someone who would directly oppose the work of God, deliberately contradict his father’s royal decree, and possibly murder his own brother
- Herodotus records the latter atrocity as part of the history of Cambyses and Smerdis leading up to the ascension of Darius Hystaspes (*The Histories*, 3.1-79)

# The Medo-Persian Empire- Dan 11:2



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## CAMBYSES II (cont'd)

- Egypt was made a vassal state to Babylon when Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians invaded it around 572 BC- 571 BC at the beginning of the reign of Pharaoh Amasis II (i.e.- Ahmose II)
- Almost all secular history states that Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians NEVER conquered Egypt; yet the Bible states differently even specifying that the land would be destroyed and filled with the slain (Eze 30:11)
- The destruction of the land and the dispersion of the people were to render Egypt a desolation for 40 years, after which it would be a base kingdom (Eze 29:9-15)
- Amasis II ruled Egypt for this entire 40-year period of time from 571 BC- 531 BC
- When Babylon fell to the Medes and Persians in 537 BC, Egypt temporarily gained some independence but was still a “base kingdom” living in fear of imminent subjection to the Persians
- Cyrus brought stability to the new empire so when he died in 530 BC and Cambyses assumed the throne, he turned his attention to Egypt
- Amasis II took a fellow Egyptian, who was a gifted eye physician, from his family and gave him to the Persians

# The Medo-Persian Empire- Dan 11:2

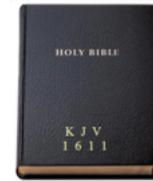


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## CAMBYSES II (cont'd)

- In retribution for tearing him away from his family, the Egyptian advised Cambyses on how to get the advantage over Amasis
- He advised him to send a herald to Amasis requesting his daughter's hand in marriage
- If Amasis refused, it would be an insult and offense to Cambyses that would justify an invasion
- If Amasis consented, it would be a humiliation to him and an act of public subjection to Cambyses
- Cambyses approved and sent the herald with the request; Amasis was conflicted on what to do, fearing the power of the Persians on one hand but not wanting the degradation of a princess of Egypt becoming a concubine to the Persian king
- Amasis took a tall and beautiful woman named Nitetis, the daughter of his predecessor Apries whom he killed, and presented her to Cambyses as his daughter
- Shortly thereafter, Cambyses addressed Nitetis by what he thought was her father's name and she proceeded to disclose the truth to him
- Cambyses was enraged by Amasis' deceit and made his expedition to Egypt in 526 BC (*The Histories*, 3.1)

# The Medo-Persian Empire- Dan 11:2

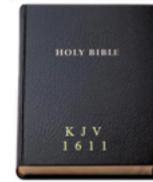


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## CAMBYSES II (cont'd)

- Amasis met with another betrayal through one of his own mercenaries named Phanes
- Phanes told Cambyses everything he knew about Amasis and counselled him on the best way to attack him
- He advised him to secure the approval of the king of the Arabs for safe passage through Arabia to attack Egypt (*The Histories*, 3.4)
- Cambyses reached out to the Arabs and secured their approval and cooperation (*The Histories*, 3.7)
- By this time, Amasis II had died having ruled 44 years, and his son Psamtik III (i.e.- Psammenitus), the last king of the 26th dynasty, assumed the throne
- Psamtik encamped his troops at the north of the Nile awaiting the arrival of Cambyses and the Persians (*The Histories*, 3.10)
- As the forces approached each other, the Egyptians brought the sons of Phanes forward and slew them before his eyes
- As the battle engaged, multitudes were slain on both sides but eventually, the Egyptians turned and fled (*The Histories*, 3.11)
- The Egyptians took refuge in a fortress in Memphis but Cambyses sent forces them to solicit their surrender

# The Medo-Persian Empire- Dan 11:2



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## CAMBYSES II (cont'd)

- Rather than surrendering, the Egyptians attacked and brutally slaughtered Cambyses' forces
- A total of just 6 months into the reign of Psamtik, Cambyses retaliated by besieging Memphis and forcing the Egyptians to surrender in 525 BC
- Neighboring Libya also surrendered at this time and agreed to pay Cambyses tribute (*The Histories*, 3.13)
- Cambyses sought to humiliate the Egyptians so he paraded the daughter of Psamtik and the other royal daughters through the streets wearing slave clothes
- He also captured all the surviving Egyptians who participated in the slaughter of his forces at Memphis and sent them on a death march wearing ropes around their necks and bridles over their mouths, this included the son of Psamtik
- Psamtik controlled his emotions at the sight of his daughter and son but broke down in grief when he saw an old friend begging for food at the feet of Persian soldiers
- Cambyses asked him why we reacted this way to a mere beggar but retained his emotions over his own daughter and son, and his response was so touching that Cambyses spared his life and brought him into his presence
- He also sought to spare the life of his son, but it was too late (*The Histories*, 3.14-15)

# The Medo-Persian Empire- Dan 11:2



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## CAMBYSES II (cont'd)

- The king of Ethiopia (*The Histories*, 3.17-25)
- Cambyses kills the Apis bull in Egypt (*The Histories*, 3.27-29)
- Herodotus refers to Cambyses as a “senseless madman”, a “harebrained person” and “not in his right mind” (*The Histories*, 3.25,29-30)

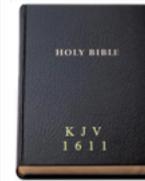
# The Medo-Persian Empire- Dan 11:2



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## CAMBYSES II (cont'd)

- Cambyses was smitten with madness following the slaying of the Apis bull
- His first outrage was to kill his younger brother Bardiya (called Smerdis by the Greeks and Tanaoxares by Xenophon)
- While in Egypt, Cambyses had a dream in which a messenger came to him from Persia with tidings that Bardiya (Smerdis) had taken the throne
- Fearing that the dream was a premonition that his brother planned to kill him and rule in his stead, Cambyses sent a trusted Persian named Prexaspes to Susa and had his brother killed
- Cambyses had the murder covered up, so only a few trusted insiders knew the truth, including his sister (*The Histories*, 3.30)
- Cambyses' second outrage was to kill his sister, whom he had taken as a wife
- She was one of the few who knew the truth that Cambyses had Bardiya killed
- She made a remark to Cambyses that he had made the house of Cyrus bare by his deeds
- Cambyses became enraged and killed her, causing her to miscarry their unborn child at the same time



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