

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

**Lee Swor, Pastor**

# 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- Dan 11:2

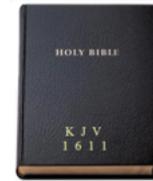


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## CAMBYSES II (cont'd)

- They were right that he later regretted his decision, because Cambyses was pleased to find out that Croesus was still alive; however, he had the servants who spared Croesus' life killed for their disobedience
- Cambyses also desecrated Egyptian tombs and mocked their gods on multiple occasions (*The Histories*, 3.36-37)
- The time then came for Cambyses to reap what he had sown
- When Cambyses set out for Egypt in 526 BC, he appointed a Median Magi named *Patizeithes* (pronounced PAY-TIE-ZEE-THEEZ) as Comptroller of his household in Persia
- When Cambyses had his brother Smerdis killed, Patizeithes was one of the few who knew that he was dead and that his death was being kept secret from the Persians
- Sometime around 523 BC- 522 BC, Patizeithes plotted a revolt against Cambyses in order to seize the throne
- Patizeithes had a brother and fellow Magi who bore a striking resemblance to Smerdis, Cambyses' slain brother
- Patizeithes informed his brother that Cambyses murdered Smerdis and kept this truth from the people; and convinced him to conspire in the revolt by posing as Smerdis since the people of Persia thought he was still alive

# The Medo-Persian Empire- Dan 11:2

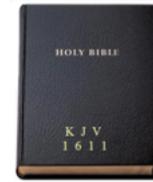


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## CAMBYSES II (cont'd)

- Since Cambyses' madness was a matter of public knowledge, they believed he would not disclose the truth that he murdered Smerdis in an effort to put down the revolt because the people would not believe him
- Since Cambyses' wicked behavior to his own people was also a matter of public knowledge, they believed the people and military would gladly support the revolt since it would be led by the one they thought was the next in line to the throne, his younger brother Smerdis
- One other important detail Herodotus provides about the revolt was that Patizeithes' brother not only looked like the real Smerdis, but his name was SMERDIS (although other history sources say his name was *Guamata*-pronounced GAW-MAH-TUH)
- Patizeithes had his brother Smerdis sit upon the royal throne and sent heralds throughout the empire, proclaiming to the troops that Smerdis, the son of Cyrus was on the throne and they should now obey him and not Cambyses (*The Histories*, 3.61)
- The herald going to Egypt found Cambyses and his armies at Ecbatana Syria and issued the proclamation right in the middle of them
- When Cambyses heard the proclamation, he believed it was true and that Prexaspes had lied to him about slaying Smerdis

# The Medo-Persian Empire- Dan 11:2



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## CAMBYSES II (cont'd)

- Cambyses confronted Prexaspes and asked him if this was the way he fulfilled his orders, to which Prexaspes replied that there was no truth to the tidings because he killed Smerdis with his own hands and buried him with his own hands
- He advised Cambyses to interrogate the herald to determine if he received this message directly from Smerdis himself or from a proxy (*The Histories*, 3.62)
- Cambyses agreed and had the herald pursued and brought back to him
- Prexaspes led the questioning and promised the herald that he would be released unharmed if he only told the truth
- Prexaspes asked him if he was summoned to Smerdis' presence and directly given these orders by him or were they given to him by one of his officers
- The herald, Sirrah by name, replied that he had not laid eyes on Smerdis son of Cyrus since the day Cambyses set out for Egypt but the man who gave him the orders was the Magi Cambyses put in charge of his house, and he said that the message was from Smerdis son of Cyrus
- Cambyses told Prexaspes that he was free from blame and asked him who he thought could have taken the name of Smerdis and revolted against him
- Prexaspes told him that he believed it was the two Magi, Patizeithes Cambyses' Comptroller and his brother Smerdis (*The Histories*, 3.63)

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## CAMBYSES II (cont'd)

- When Cambyses heard Prexaspes utter the name “Smerdis”, he immediately recalled his dream and realized it was being fulfilled before his eyes- a herald had come from Persia proclaiming that “Smerdis” sat on the throne
- He also realized that, in assuming the Smerdis in his dream was his own brother, he had unnecessarily killed him and he began to weep and wail
- He then mounted his horse intending to lead his army to Susa against the Magus, but as he did so, the button on the sheath of his sword fell off and the bare blade drove into his thigh, wounding him exactly where he had once wounded the Egyptian Apis calf (*The Histories*, 3.64)
- Just like the Apis calf pined away and died of its wound, so did Cambyses
- 20 days later, as gangrene set in his limb, Cambyses sensed his death was near so he summoned the chief Persians of his army to his presence
- He told them he was going to reveal something to them that he had kept secret, and then told them about the dream he had in Egypt of Smerdis seizing the throne and how he had his brother Smerdis killed because of it
- He informed them that the Smerdis of his dream was actually Smerdis the Median Magi and warned them that Smerdis could revert the throne back to the Medes

# The Medo-Persian Empire- Dan 11:2



## CAMBYSES II (cont'd)

- He told them that the facts they faced were that Smerdis his brother was gone and that the Magi held the throne
- He charged them that after his death they should do whatever they needed to do to regain the throne from the Magi; that whether by force or by fraud, the throne be passed to a descendant of Achaemenes
- Cambyses ceased speaking and bewailed all his misfortunes (*The Histories*, 3.65)

"Persians, needs must I tell you now what hitherto I have striven with the greatest care to keep concealed. When I was in Egypt I saw in my sleep a vision, which would that I had never beheld! I thought a messenger came to me from my home, and told me that Smerdis sat upon the royal throne, and with his head touched the heavens. Then I feared to be cast from my throne by Smerdis my brother, and I did what was more hasty than wise. Ah! truly, do what they may, it is impossible for men to turn aside the coming fate. I, in my folly, sent Prexaspes to Susa to put my brother to death. So this great woe was accomplished, and I then lived without fear, never imagining that, after Smerdis was dead, I need dread revolt from any other. But herein I had quite mistaken what was about to happen, and so I slew my brother without any need, and nevertheless have lost my crown. For it was Smerdis the Magus, and not Smerdis my brother, of whose rebellion God forewarned me by the vision. The deed is done, however, and Smerdis, son of Cyrus, be sure is lost to you. The Magi have the royal power - Patizeithes, whom I left at Susa to overlook my household, and Smerdis his brother.

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## CAMBYSES II (cont'd)

There was one who would have been bound beyond all others to avenge the wrongs I have suffered from these Magians, but he, alas! has perished by a horrid fate, deprived of life by those nearest and dearest to him. In his default, nothing now remains for me but to tell you, O Persians, what I would wish to have done after I have breathed my last. Therefore, in the name of the gods that watch over our royal house, I charge you all, and specially such of you as are Achaemenids, that ye do not tamely allow the kingdom to go back to the Medes. Recover it one way or another, by force or fraud; by fraud, if it is by fraud that they have seized on it; by force, if force has helped them in their enterprise. Do this, and then may your land bring you forth fruit abundantly, and your wives bear children, and your herds increase, and freedom be your portion for ever: but do it not - make no brave struggle to regain the kingdom - and then my curse be on you, and may the opposite of all these things happen to you - and not only so, but may you, one and all, perish at the last by such a fate as mine!"- Cambyses' confession to the chief Persians as he lay dying (Herodotus, *The Histories*, 3.65)

- The Persians that were present rent their clothes and wept bitterly with Cambyses
- Shortly thereafter, Cambyses died having reigned 7 years and 5 months (i.e.- 530 BC- 522 BC)
- He had no son or daughter and, because he killed his only brother Smerdis, there was no male heir to the throne of the seed of Cyrus

# The Medo-Persian Empire- Dan 11:2

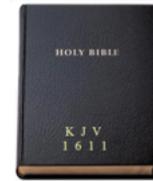


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## CAMBYSES II (cont'd)

- In spite of being moved to tears by his deathbed confession, the Persians did not believe what Cambyses said concerning the Magi
- They believed he spoke out of hatred towards Smerdis and made the whole thing up so they would rise up in arms against him
- After Cambyses died, Prexaspes denied that he had slain Smerdis out of fear of what the Persians would do to him for slaying a son of Cyrus
- So for about 7 months in 522 BC, the Persians were convinced that it was Smerdis the son of Cyrus who had rebelled and sat on the throne, even though it was actually Smerdis the Magi (*The Histories*, 3.66-67)
- Herodotus refers to Cambyses as a “senseless madman”; a “harebrained person”; “not in his right mind”; and “raving mad” (*The Histories*, 3.25,29-30,38)
- He was the opposite of his father Cyrus in so many ways and that is what can be gleaned from the few details provided about him in scripture (Ezr 4:6-24)

# The Medo-Persian Empire- Dan 11:2



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## SMERDIS

- Smerdis reigned a total of 7 months during 522 BC
- If the history recorded by Herodotus is correct regarding Smerdis (*The Histories*, 3.30,61-67), then the Smerdis that assumed the throne after Cambyses was not the younger son of Cyrus also known as Bardiya and Tanaoxares but a Magian imposter named Smerdis or Guamata
- Again, if Herodotus is correct, then in spite of Cambyses' deathbed confession, the Persians did not believe that a usurper sat on the throne in the place of Cambyses' murdered brother, and accepted the false Smerdis for about 7 months
- The false Smerdis took actions that began to raise suspicion, including transferring the seat of government to Media, something a descendant of Achaemenes would never do
- A number of Persian nobles became suspicious that Smerdis was an imposter, the first being Otanes (pronounced OH-TAYNZ), the son of Pharnaspes (pronounced FAR-NAS-PEEZ)
- He recognized that the king never left the citadel and would not include him when he summoned the Persian noblemen
- To confirm his suspicion, Otanes solicited help from his daughter Phaidyme (pronounced FAY-DIE-MUH), a member of the king's harem

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## SMERDIS

- He first asked her to confront Atossa, the sister of Cambyses and Bardiya, and ask her if the king was indeed her brother
- Phaidyme told her father that she could not get an audience with Atossa because as soon as Smerdis ascended to the throne, and separated all the women who lived in the palace into separate chambers and forbade their communion with each other (*The Histories*, 3.68)
- Otanes then instructed Phaidyme that the next time the king spends the night with her, that she should wait until he falls asleep and then check if he has ears
- This he said because he suspected this Smerdis was the same Smerdis the Magian who had his ears cut off by Cyrus the Great for committing heinous crimes
- Phaidyme agreed and confirmed her father's suspicions soon thereafter, and sent word to him (*The Histories*, 3.69)
- Otanes gathered five other Persian noblemen to inform them of what he knew, after which they began to plot a coup d'état
- A seventh nobleman named Darius Hystaspes, whose father was a Persian commander under Cyrus, arrived shortly thereafter and joined in the conspiracy (*The Histories*, 3.70)

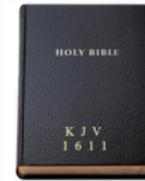
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## SMERDIS

- The seven conspirators charged into the king's chambers and while five of them dealt with the guards, Darius Hystaspes and another nobleman named Gobryas Megabyzus killed the false Smerdis and a companion (*The Histories*, 3.78)



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