

Mt. Pleasant
Bible Institute
www.kjbstudy.com

Dr. Joseph Speciale, Instructor

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



Alt. Pleasant
Bible Institute

SMERDIS (cont'd)

- He first asked her to confront Atossa, the sister of Cambyses and the real Smerdis, and ask her if the king was indeed her brother
- Phaidime 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 Phaidime 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
- Phaidime agreed and confirmed her father's suspicions soon thereafter, and sent word to him (*The Histories*, 3.69)
- Otanes informed two other noblemen and trusted friends, Aspathines and Gobryas, of the truth he had confirmed
- They all agreed that each of them should also inform the man they trusted most; so Otanes told Intaphrenes, Aspathines told Hydarnes, and Gobryas told Megabyzus, bringing their company to six

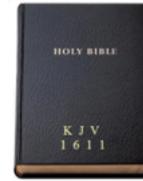
The Medo-Persian Empire- Dan 11:2



Alt. Pleasant
Bible Institute

SMERDIS (cont'd)

- As they began to plot their coup d'etat, a seventh nobleman named Darius Hystaspes, whose father was a Persian commander under Cyrus and present governor of Persia, arrived at Susa
- Darius met with the other six noblemen and told them he was convinced that Smerdis was the Magian imposter and that he had come to Susa to kill him, so the six men accepted him as the seventh member of their conspiracy
- Disagreement arose among the men regarding when the assassination should be carried out- Darius wanted to carry it out immediately because he feared word of a plot would eventually get to Smerdis but Otanes wanted more time to bring in additional conspirators and plan the operation (*The Histories*, 3.70-71)
- Otanes asked Darius to share how he planned to get by the guards to which Darius responded that the guards would probably not say or do anything since they were nobles; but if they did stop them from going directly into the king, he would simply tell them that he had a message for the king from his father the governor of Persia (*The Histories*, 3.72)
- Gobryas spoke up in favor of Darius' plan and the others agreed (*The Histories*, 3.73)



The Medo-Persian Empire- Dan 11:2

SMERDIS (cont'd)

- The Magians (i.e.- Smerdis and Patizeithes) sought an alliance with Prexaspes since he had been done wrong by Cambyses (i.e.- Cambyses killed his son before his eyes) and because he killed Smerdis the son of Cyrus and knew the truth about who was now on the throne
- The Magians promised Prexaspes riches if he would call the Persians together and declare from the tower that they were living under the rule of Smerdis the son of Cyrus and no other (*The Histories*, 3.74)
- Prexaspes agreed and the assembly was called together
- When the time came for him to make the declaration, he changed his mind and recited the descent of Cyrus on his father's side, beginning with Achaemenes
 - Achaemenes
 - Teispes
 - Cyrus I
 - Cambyses I
 - Cyrus II
- When he came to Cyrus, he reminded the people of all the great benefits he conferred upon them

The Medo-Persian Empire- Dan 11:2



Alt. Pleasant
Bible Institute

SMERDIS (cont'd)

- He then told them that he was compelled to reveal a truth to them that he had long kept secret
- He proceeded to tell them that he had slain Smerdis the son of Cyrus at the command of Cambyses and kept it secret out of fear of what would happen to him if the truth were known, and also told them that the Magians occupied the throne through Smerdis the Magi, posing as the true Smerdis
- He lastly charged the Persian people that many evils would befall them if they did not take the throne back and enact vengeance upon the Magians before ending his life by falling headlong from the tower (*The Histories*, 3.75)
- The seven conspirators had begun to execute their plan not knowing the circumstances surrounding Prexaspes
- When they heard about his confession and suicide, Otanes tried to convince the others to delay their plans due to the disturbance while Darius insisted they press on
- While they were contending, all of them looked up and saw seven pairs of hawks pursuing two pairs of vultures, plucking out their feathers and tearing at them

The Medo-Persian Empire- Dan 11:2



Alt. Pleasant
Bible Institute

SMERDIS (cont'd)

- They all interpreted this as a divine omen and agreed with Darius that they should carry out their plans immediately (*The Histories*, 3.76)
- When they came to the gates, the guards let them pass unquestioned just as Darius had supposed; but when they came to the court, they were met by messenger eunuchs who stopped them and asked what their purpose was
- When it was clear the eunuchs were not going to let them pass, the seven men drew out their daggers and killed them, and then proceeded to the king's chamber (*The Histories*, 3.77)
- Patizeithes and Smerdis were both in the king's chambers discussing how they should handle the crisis created by Prexaspes' confession and suicide when they heard the cries of the eunuchs being slain
- Knowing there were intruders in the palace, Smerdis grabbed a bow and arrows and Patizeithes a spear to defend themselves
- The seven conspirators charged into the king's chambers and attacked the Magians
- Patizeithes took his spear and incapacitated Aspathines by stabbing him in the thigh and Intaphrenes by stabbing him in his eye and permanently blinding him

The Medo-Persian Empire- Dan 11:2



Alt. Pleasant
Bible Institute

SMERDIS (cont'd)

- Smerdis realized that his bow and arrows were useless in such close combat so he fled into a bedchamber, but before he could close the door, Darius and Gobryas rushed in
- The room was completely dark so none could see, but Gobryas and Smerdis were locked together in hand to hand combat
- Gobryas told Darius to quickly strike Smerdis while he held him down but Darius was concerned he would accidentally strike Gobryas
- Gobryas told him to smite anyway even if it killed both of them
- Darius then thrust with his dagger and killed Smerdis the Magi, while the other three unwounded conspirators killed Patizeithes (*The Histories*, 3.78)
- When they had killed and decapitated Smerdis and Patizeithes, the five unwounded conspirators temporarily left their two wounded partners behind to take immediate control of the palace
- They ran through the fortress displaying the heads of the Magians and called for the other Persians to join them, slaying every Magi that came across their path
- When the Persians learned what the seven men had done and of the deceit of the Smerdis and Patizeithes, they joined the cause and slew every Magi they could find
- The day was subsequently observed as a day of great festivity by the Persians and called “the festival of the slaughter of the Magians” (*The Histories*, 3.79)

The Medo-Persian Empire- Dan 11:2



Alt. Pleasant
Bible Institute

DARIUS I (HYSTASPES)

- Five days after the death of the Magi, discussions began on the succession of power
- Otanes argued for changing the entire form of government from that of single ruler (i.e.- monarchy) to one where the whole body of Persians ruled (i.e.- democracy): “Let the monarchy go and increase the power of the multitude; for in the many is contained everything” (*The Histories*, 3.80)
- Megabyzus argued for giving the power to rule to a few (i.e.- oligarchy) who were considered the best men (*The Histories*, 3.81)
- Darius argued that while all three forms of government, a good popular government, the rule of a few, and the rule of one, had their merits that the latter was by far superior to the others
- He argued that in an oligarchy, COMPETITION inevitably arises among the few to have the most power; and in a democracy, CORRUPTION inevitably arises
- He concluded by asking if the liberty the Persians possessed came from the people, an oligarchy, or a monarch, and that as they were set free by one man (Cyrus), so they should preserve that form of rule (*The Histories*, 3.82)

The Medo-Persian Empire- Dan 11:2



Alt. Pleasant
Bible Institute

DARIUS I (HYSTASPES) (cont'd)

- The other four nobleman agreed with Darius
- When Otanes realized that his proposal was defeated and that in some manner a king was going to be appointed to rule from among the seven Persian nobles, he told those who had assembled that he was removing himself from consideration on the grounds that he would not rule as one man nor be ruled by one man
- The other six nobles accepted Otanes' terms and he left the assembly, but the house of Otanes remained free among all Persian houses for the duration of the Achaemenid empire (*The Histories*, 3.83)
- The other six nobles agreed that whichever of their houses occupied the throne, they would send the most valuable gifts every year to Otanes and his descendants because it was he who first took action against the imposter Smerdis and it was he who brought all of the seven nobles together to carry out the plan
- They also agreed that regardless of which one of them became king, the other six would be able to pass freely in the royal palaces and have instant access to the king, unless he was with his wife; and that whosoever became king would not marry outside of their seven families

The Medo-Persian Empire- Dan 11:2



Alt. Pleasant
Bible Institute

DARIUS I (HYSTASPES) (cont'd)

- They also decided on a contest to determine who among them would be the next king- they would all mount their horses at sunrise and come to a chosen location and the man whose horse neighed first would be king (*The Histories*, 3.84)
- Darius then conspired with his horse-keeper Oibares on how they could make sure his horse was the first to neigh
- During the night before the contest, Oibares took the mare most favored by Darius' horse and brought her to the chosen place
- He then brought Darius' horse to the same place and allowed him to mount the mare (*The Histories*, 3.85)
- At sunrise, the six nobles mounted their horses and came to the chosen place for the contest, and Darius' horse was the first to neigh
- At the same time that Darius' horse neighed, there came thunder and lightning out of a clear sky
- The other nobles took this as a divine omen substantiating Darius' victory in the contest and claim to the throne, they all proceeded to dismount their horses and bow to Darius as their new king (*The Histories*, 3.86-87)
- So, according to Herodotus, Darius cheated to obtain the throne



The Medo-Persian Empire- Dan 11:2

DARIUS I (HYSTASPES) (cont'd)

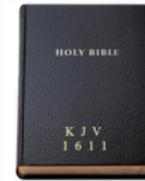
- Darius married two daughters of Cyrus, Atossa and Artystone; the former had been a wife of her brother Cambyses and then of Smerdis the Magi, while the latter was a virgin
- To further solidify his power, he also married Parmys a daughter of the real Smerdis (the son of Cyrus) and Phaidime the daughter of Otanes, who confirmed to him that Smerdis was an imposter (*The Histories*, 3.88)
- Darius I (i.e.- Darius the Great) was born in 550 BC and was the son of Hystaspes, a former military commander under Cyrus whom he appointed governor of Persia
- Darius was a PERSIAN king (Neh 12:22) and must be distinguished from Darius the MEDIAN (Dan 5:31; 11:1), who was Cyaxares II

Neh 12:22

The Levites in the days of Eliashib, Joiada, and Johanan, and Jaddua, were recorded chief of the fathers: also the priests, to the reign of **Darius the Persian**.

Dan 5:31

And **Darius the Median** took the kingdom, being about threescore and two years old.



Alt. Pleasant
Bible Institute

Please visit our website at:

www.kjbstudy.com

for access to over 1,500 audio lessons
as well as outlines, study guides, and presentations