***Daniel 11:1-10 “Also in the first year of Darius the Mede, I, even I, stood up to confirm and strengthen him.) 2And 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. 3Then a mighty king shall arise, who shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will. 4And 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. 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. 6And 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. 7But from a branch of her roots 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. 8And 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. 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. 10However 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.***

Tonight, we continue our study of Daniel. Chapter 11 picks up where chapter 10 left off. Gabriel is talking with Daniel, giving him the understanding that Gabriel was dispatched to give. There is no break in the action, even though we have flipped a page, turned a chapter. We have every reason to believe that we are still there at the junction of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, in what has often been called the cradle of civilization and is now known as modern Iraq, near the border with Kuwait and Iran. Let’s join Gabriel, as he brings the Truth and understanding he promised as we ended chapter 10.

Verse 1 *“Also in the first year of Darius the Mede, I, even I, stood up to confirm and strengthen him.)* Gabriel begins with a look backward. Recall that chapter 10 said we are in the third year of Cyrus. But also recall that, in chapter 9, Daniel set his face toward the Lord with regard to his people and his understanding of the book of Jeremiah. Verse 1 of chapter 9 says, *In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the lineage of the Medes, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans.* Gabriel is saying that, even from the moment that Daniel started to seek understanding, God was preparing Gabriel to come with the answer. Further, God was using the Persian empire to accomplish His purposes, so from the very beginning, God strengthened Darius and Cyrus for His purposes. God is not a God of last minute, ill planned events. He is a God with a plan and a purpose. It was true of Daniel, of Darius, and of Cyrus. It is true of us today. It’s deeply reassuring to know that God is moving perfectly, even as we stumble along. His purpose will be accomplished. His Word shall not return void.

Verse 2 *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.* In verse 21 of Daniel 10, Gabriel promised to tell Daniel what is noted in the Scripture of Truth. This is Gabriel keeping his promise. The Hebrew word translated behold or henceforth has the idea of after or from this time, so Cyrus is not included. *Three kings arise* *in Persia -* after Cyrus. These are Cambyses the son of Cyrus, pseudo Smerdis who ruled a very short time by pretending to be the real Smerdis who was killed by his brother Cambyses, (522 B.C.), Darius 1 who married a daughter of Cyrus (522-486 B.C.). *The fourth shall be far richer* - This is Xerxes, or the Ahasuerus, found in the Book of Esther. Son of Darius 1, Xerxes was far wealthier than all before him. *through his riches, he shall stir up all against the realm of Greece* – on account of this wealth, Xerxes is able to gather a large army against the Greeks. Greece, at this time, is a loose gathering of city states. The historian Herodotus records that the army numbered more than 5 ½ million men. He further records that Xerxes army defeated the Greeks at Thermopylea, lost at Salamis in 480 B.C. he lost at Platea.

Verses 3-4 *Then a mighty king shall arise, who shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will. 4And 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.* ***Then*** *A mighty king* – as we have studied in chapters 2, 7, and 8, this is Alexander the Great. Alexander defeats that Persians at the battle of Arbela in 331 BC and so begins his g*reat dominion,* extending to the borders of India and south through to Egypt. His dominion is far larger than Persia. *And when he has arisen* - When his kingdom is at the highpoint, it shall be broken and divided to the four winds. We know that Alexander died in a drunken state. Historians believe that he contracted a fever and his drunkenness allowed the fever to simply overwhelm his system. When asked who his successor would be, he replied the kingdom would go to the strongest. According to *Daniel and the Revelation by Uriah Smith -* Alexander died in 323 B.C. 36 generals scrambled for power. Seleucus took Babylon in 312 B.C. Lysimacus, Ptolemy, and Cassander declared themselves kings of parts of the Greek empire in 305 BC, In 301 BC, at the battle of Ipsus, these four defeated Antigonis and divided the kingdom into north, south, east, and west kingdoms, or the four winds. *But not among his posterity -* Alexander’s family was slain so none of the kingdom went to his posterity or descendants. *Nor according to his dominion* – There would not be one ruler like Alexander had been.

Verse 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. King of the south* - Ptolemy Soter, who had Egypt, Palestine and part of Syria in the south, was to strong and ruled almost 40 years. He is one of Alexander’s princes. *Strong above him, have dominion, great dominion* - Lysimacus later conquered Cassander, Then Lysimacus was conquered by Seleucus. This left Seleucus in the north with three quarters of the Greek kingdom and Ptolemy in the south with one quarter.

Verse 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. They shall join -* Ptolemy II of the south and Antiochus Theos of the north join together through the marriage of Ptolemy’s daughter Berenice to Antiochus Theos. Their son was intended to rule the entire newly joined kingdom. *but she shall not retain the power of her authority, and neither he nor his authority shall stand.* When Berenice’s father died, Antiochus divorced her, took back Laodice, his ex-wife, but she poisoned him and had her son Seleucus Callinicus pronounced king. *but she shall be given up, with those who brought her, and with him who begot her,* Antiochus’ son with Berenice and Berenice were both executed. *with him who strengthened her* - Ptolemy was the strength behind Berenice while he was alive.

Verses 7-9 “*But out of a branch of her roots shall one stand up in his estate, which shall come with an army, and shall enter into the fortress of the king of the north, and shall deal against them, and shall prevail:*8*And shall also carry captives into Egypt their gods, with their princes, and with their precious vessels of silver and of gold; and he shall continue more years than the king of the north.*9*So the king of the south shall come into his kingdom, and shall return into his own land.*” The b*ranch of her roots* – Out of Berenice’s roots or her father Ptolemy II, *shall one stand up,* Berenice’s brother, Ptolemy Euergetes. *Come with an army* - Euergetes, with his army, rushed to save his sister, but he was too late. *Enter into fortress of king of north and prevail* – But, Euergetes kept marching and many of the cities opened their gates and embraced him because they hated Seleucus Callinicus, the king of the north. Soon, Euergetes possessed Seleucia, the capital of Syria, a large part of Asia Minor, as well as much of Egypt. He carried away much booty. Because of trouble in Egypt, Euergetes, or Ptolemy III, returned to his kingdom.

Verse 10 *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.* The two sons of Seleucus will be stirred up over the lands conquered by Ptolemy III. They gather a great force. Antiochus Magnus overcame Seleucus other son and - *Overwhelm and pass through* - he took charge of the army, retaking Seleucia and Syria. *Stirring up strife* – Peace between the north and the south was not to be, as Antiochus continually stirred up strife and fought battles with the armies of the south. We’ll pick up that strife in verse 11 next evening service.

Gabriel is giving Daniel prophecy that we, in this day and age, can trace back with astounding accuracy. Detail by detail, we see that God knows the ending from the beginning. Can there be any doubt that He knows our life just as well? Daniel must become a great comfort to us when we face uncertainty. God hears us from our first faithful word. Daniel was Focused, Faithful, and Fearless, listening to Gabriel give understanding of the truth. May we be the same as God reveals His Truth and His Commandments to us through His Word.