

Daniel 11:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Also I in the first year of Darius the Mede, even I, stood to confirm and to strengthen him.

Analysis

The angel's declaration: 'Also I in the first year of Darius the Mede, even I, stood to confirm and to strengthen him.' This verse connects to chapter 6's events—during Darius the Mede's reign (immediately after Babylon's fall, 539 BC), the angel provided support. The phrase 'stood to confirm and to strengthen' indicates angelic involvement in establishing the new Persian administration that would allow Jewish return to Jerusalem. This reveals God's sovereign orchestration of geopolitical transitions: angels influence earthly rulers to accomplish divine purposes. The Medo-Persian empire, replacing Babylon, would fulfill God's plan by decreeing Jewish return under Cyrus (Ezra 1:1-4). This teaches that God works through apparently secular political changes, using even pagan empires to accomplish redemptive purposes for His covenant people. Reformed theology emphasizes God's absolute sovereignty over nations—He 'removeth kings, and setteth up kings' (Daniel 2:21), working through both angelic activity and human decisions to fulfill His eternal counsel.

Historical Context

Darius the Mede's first year (539/538 BC) marked the crucial transition from Babylonian to Medo-Persian rule. Within this period, Cyrus the Persian issued his famous decree allowing Jewish exiles to return and rebuild Jerusalem's temple (2 Chronicles 36:22-23, Ezra 1:1-4), thus fulfilling both Jeremiah's 70-year prophecy (Jeremiah 25:11-12, 29:10) and Isaiah's remarkable predictions that named Cyrus by name more than 150 years before his birth (Isaiah 44:28-45:1). The angelic

strengthening of Darius may relate directly to ensuring this benevolent policy toward the Jewish people. Ancient Near Eastern rulers typically imposed their culture and religion on conquered peoples; Cyrus's unprecedented policy of allowing exiles to return home and rebuild their temple was highly unusual. This demonstrates God's providence: working behind the scenes through angelic activity and influencing human rulers' decisions to fulfill His covenant promises. The historical sequence—Babylon falls, Persia rises, decree issued, Jews return, temple rebuilt—all unfolded exactly according to prophetic word and divine predetermination, demonstrating that God orchestrates history's major movements for His redemptive purposes.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does angelic activity in strengthening human rulers demonstrate God's sovereign control over geopolitics and international affairs?
2. What does this verse teach about God working through pagan empires and secular governments to accomplish His redemptive purposes?
3. Why does God reveal behind-the-scenes angelic involvement in historical events to Daniel and Scripture's readers?
4. How should recognizing God's sovereign orchestration of political transitions affect Christian political theology and expectations?
5. In what ways might angels be active today in influencing governmental decisions that affect God's kingdom purposes?

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