

Daniel 11:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And a mighty king shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will.

Analysis

Gabriel's prophecy shifts dramatically: "And a mighty king shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will." This leaps forward from Persian kings to Alexander the Great. The phrase "mighty king" (Hebrew: melekh gibbor, מֶלֶךְ גַּבּוֹר) means warrior king or heroic ruler. "Great dominion" accurately describes Alexander's unprecedented empire stretching from Greece to India. "Do according to his will" portrays his absolute sovereignty—he conquered rapidly, reorganized territories extensively, and brooked no opposition.

The prophecy's selectivity teaches important interpretive principle: biblical prophecy doesn't exhaustively chronicle all history but highlights events significant for God's purposes and His people. Gabriel skips numerous Persian kings (Artaxerxes I, II, III, and others) to focus on Alexander because his conquests dramatically impacted Israel and prepared the world for gospel advancement. Prophecy serves redemptive purposes, not satisfying curiosity about all historical events. God reveals what His people need to know.

Alexander's doing "according to his will" contrasts subtly with earlier phrase about Xerxes. Both exercise sovereign power, yet prophecy's arc demonstrates that all human sovereignty remains subordinate to divine sovereignty. Alexander served God's purposes—spreading Greek language that became New Testament's medium, creating cultural unity facilitating gospel dissemination, and judging Persian pride. God uses even pagan conquerors to advance redemptive purposes,

pointing ultimately to Christ whose conquest through death and resurrection accomplishes eternal salvation.

Historical Context

Alexander III of Macedon (356-323 BC) conquered the known world by age 30, spreading Greek culture (Hellenization) that permanently shaped Mediterranean civilization. His empire stretched from Macedonia through Egypt, Persia, and into India—about 2 million square miles. Greek became the lingua franca, enabling New Testament writing and early Christian mission. His military genius and cultural impact created providential preparation for Christ's coming. Daniel's prophecy, given 213 years before Alexander's birth, demonstrated supernatural foresight validating Scripture's divine inspiration.

Related Passages

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. What does biblical prophecy's selectivity—highlighting some historical figures while omitting others—teach us about prophecy's redemptive purpose rather than mere historical cataloging?
2. How does Alexander's conquest 'according to his will' demonstrate that even absolute human power operates within God's sovereign purposes?
3. In what ways did Alexander's empire providentially prepare the world for gospel advancement, showing God's sovereignty over history?

Interlinear Text

וְעַמְּדָה	לְגָדְלָה	וְעַמְּלָה	מְלָאָה	מְלָאָה	בְּמָמְשָׁלָה	בְּמָמְשָׁלָה
shall stand up	king	And a mighty	that shall rule	dominion	with great	
H5975	H4428	H1368	H4910	H4474	H7227	
וְעַשְׂתָּה	כְּרָצְנוּ:					
and do	according to his will					
H6213	H7522					

Additional Cross-References

Daniel 11:16 (Parallel theme): But he that cometh against him shall do according to his own will, and none shall stand before him: and he shall stand in the glorious land, which by his hand shall be consumed.

Daniel 11:36 (Kingdom): And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done.

Daniel 8:21 (Kingdom): And the rough goat is the king of Grecia: and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king.

Daniel 5:19 (Parallel theme): And for the majesty that he gave him, all people, nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him: whom he would he slew; and whom he would he kept alive; and whom he would he set up; and whom he would he put down.

Daniel 7:6 (Parallel theme): After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it.