



THE PROPHECY OF DANIEL

Lesson Number 37



TRANSLATION LEGEND: ASV=American Standard Version (1901), BBE=Bible in Basic English (1949), DRA=Douay-Rheims (1899), ESV=English Standard Version (2001), KJV=King James Version (1611), NKJV=New King James Version (1982), NAB=New American Bible, NASB=New American Standard Bible (1977), NAU=New American Standard Bible (1995), NIB=New International Bible, NIV=New International Version (1984), NJB=New Jerusalem Bible, NLT=New Living Translation, NRSV=New Revised Standard Version (1989), RSV=Revised Standard Version (1952), TNK=JPS Tanakj (1985), YLT=Young's Literal Translation (1862).

----- Bible Translation Codes with Identification -----

THE FUTURE IS UNFOLDED TO DANIEL, #6

“ 11:36 And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvelous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done. ³⁷ Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all. ³⁸ But in his estate shall he honor the God of forces: and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honor with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things. ³⁹ Thus shall he do in the most strong holds with a strange god, whom he shall acknowledge and increase with glory: and he shall cause them to rule over many, and shall divide the land for gain. ⁴⁰ And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over. ⁴¹ He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon. ⁴² He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries: and the land of Egypt shall not escape. ⁴³ But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt: and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps. ⁴⁴ But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many. ⁴⁵ And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him” ^{KJV} (Daniel 11:36-45)

INTRODUCTION

An angel from heaven is revealing things to Daniel that have been written in “the Scriptures of Truth” – the book of Divine determinations. These are matters that pertain to the purpose of God, and He is working them together for the ultimate good of those who love Him, and are the called according to His purpose (Rom 8:28). From yet another view, the angel is making known to Daniel future things that will befall his people, the Jews. **Apart from these people – a chosen people – all of the events that**

are mentioned are incidental. They obtain significance only because they touched the people of God. It is imperative that we keep this in the foreground of our thought. If we do not, we will be drawn aside by the precision of these promises, and caused to marvel at the wrong thing.

A third perspective is that these events represent Satan’s attempt to remove the people from whom the promised Messiah would come. His ultimate objective was to thwart that

coming, and he began to pursue it with zeal immediately after God told him the woman’s “Seed” would bruise, or crush, his head (Gen 3:15). The zeal with which he pursued this objective is a sort of backdrop to much of the history of God’s people. A brief retracing of his initiative will serve to introduce this particular text. In all of the following circumstances two things can be seen. First, that Satan was craftily going about to stop the Messiah from entering into the world. Second, that he was impotent to fulfill that objective.

OUTLINE

- ▶ THE KING SPEAKS AGAINST THE GOD OF GODS (11:36)
- ▶ HE WILL MAGNIFY HIMSELF (11:37)
- ▶ HE WILL HONOR THE GOD OF FORCES (11:38)
- ▶ A STRANGE GOD (11:39)
- ▶ THE KINGS OF THE SOUTH AND NORTH (11:40)
- ▶ HE WILL ENTER THE GLORIOUS LAND (11:41)
- ▶ THE LAND OF EGYPT WILL NOT ESCAPE (11:42-43)
- ▶ TROUBLOUS TIDINGS FROM THE EAST AND THE NORTH (11:43)
- ▶ HE WILL COME TO AN END (11:45)

- ▣ Wicked Cain slays righteous Abel (Gen 4:8).
- ▣ The rapid spread of iniquity in the earth, caused by the intermarriage of the sons of God with the daughters of men (Gen 6:2-5).
- ▣ The unity of the people set to build the tower of Babel, thus departing from God and seeking to make a name for themselves (Gen 11:4-6)
- ▣ The barrenness of Sarah (Gen 11:30).
- ▣ The barrenness of Rebeckah (Gen 25:21).
- ▣ The barrenness of Rachel (Gen 29:31).
- ▣ The slaughtering of the Israelite innocents by Egypt (Ex 1:22).
- ▣ The murmuring of the Israelites en route to Canaan (Ex 15:24; 16:2; 17:3; Num 14:2; 16:41).

- ▣ The sin of Israel that was so grievous God said He would utterly destroy them (Ex 32:10).
- ▣ Israel believes the ten unfaithful spies, and refuses to take the promised land (Num 13:31-14:23).
- ▣ The barrenness of Manoah's wife, mother of Samson (Judges 13:2).
- ▣ The barrenness of Hannah, Samuel's mother (1 Sam 1:5-6).
- ▣ The frequent departures of Israel from God during the times of the Judges (Judges 2:11; 3:7,21; 4:1; 6:1; 10:6; 13:1).
- ▣ The sin of David with Bathsheba (2 Sam 11:1-5)
- ▣ The times when various kings led Israel into grievous sins (1 Kgs 21:25-26; 2 Kgs 21:11; 2 Chron 24:17-18).
- ▣ The practice of idolatry among the Israelites (2 Kgs 17:7-12).
- ▣ The frequent times the Israelites intermarried with the heathen (Judges 3:5-6; 1 Kgs 11:1-5; Ezra 9:11; Neh 13:23-27).
- ▣ The barrenness of Elizabeth, mother of John the Baptist (Luke 1:5-7).
- ▣ The slaughter of the innocents by Herod (Matt 2:16).

In these, and other, cases, Satan craftily sought to undermine the purpose of God, focusing his attention on the nation through whom the promised Seed would come.

Now, Daniel is being told of other strategies of the devil to remove this chosen nation. Kings and nations will come against them – and that according to Divine intent.

For example, in the Babylonian captivity, God was punishing Israel. Yet, Satan sought to work in this circumstance to gain the advantage. He had seventy years, so to speak, to either liquidate the Jews, or so neutralize their strengths that they could never recover. He also had a time to remove the name of God from the earth – **if he could do so.** He failed miserably on every side. Instead of succeeding, two kings (Nebuchadnezzar and Darius) made global proclamations of the God of Israel, extolling Him and declaring His Person and ways (Dan 3:29-4:3; 6:25-27). The Lord also raised up Cyrus the Persian to rebuild the Temple of God in Jerusalem (2 Chron 36:22-23).

In the prophecy of the Grecian Empire and its demise (8:5-11:45), Daniel is told repeated attacks will be made against the land of Israel (8:9; 11:16,41). The Temple will be plundered several times (8:11,13; 11:31). From a human point of view, this would be enough to liquidate the Jews and obliterate the Temple service. However, God is the Governor among the nations. **His purpose will not be thwarted. His people will not be eliminated. The Temple and its service will not be removed until a better sacrifice has been accomplished, and a sanctified and justified people become His dwelling place.**

Even though the people of God would, because of their own iniquity, suffer many things, yet God's blueprint for humanity will continue on schedule. The Messiah will come in the fulness of the time (Gal 1:4). He will come from the very nation that has endured such grievous assaults. He will stand in the Temple, even though it was destroyed multiple times, and its services eliminated for seasons of time. **Satan will not succeed. It is his purpose that will be cast down to the ground. God's**

FOR EXAMPLE, IN THE BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY, GOD WAS PUNISHING ISRAEL. YET, SATAN SOUGHT TO WORK IN THIS CIRCUMSTANCE TO GAIN THE ADVANTAGE.

counsel will stand, and His will be fulfilled (Isa 46:10). Those are matters on which you can reckon!

THE KING SPEAKS AGAINST THE GOD OF GODS

“^{11:36} And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvelous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done.”

Some are of the opinion that this section speaks of a new personality, and is no longer speaking of Antiochus Epiphanes. They feel this is the “*Antichrist*” of whom John speaks (1 John 2:18), the “*man of sin*,” of whom Paul speaks (2 Thess 2:3), and “*the false prophet*” mentioned in the book of the Revelation (Rev 16:13; 19:20; 20:10). Some are persuaded it is also “*the beast*” of Revelation (Rev 13:11-18), and still others believe it refers to the Romans, who supplanted the Greek Empire. ^{CALVIN}

There may very well be a type of “*the man of sin*” seen in this king, but

having left off speaking of Antiochus. The heavenly messenger has always made clear when he begins speaking of another personality: “*and another shall rise after them . . . shall one stand up in his estate . . . Then shall stand up in his estate . . . And in his estate shall stand up a vile person . . .*” (7:24; 11:7,20,21).

- ☐ Nothing in the text indicates there has been a conclusion in considering the Grecian Empire.
- ☐ The “*king of the South*” is later said to come against him (v 40), thus substantiating we are still speaking of Egypt and Syria).
- ☐ It is more reasonable to consider the conclusion of this passage (v 45) as speaking of the ultimate fall of Epiphanes. If this is not the case, then one of the key opponents of the people of God is not declared to have been overthrown. This does not fit in

king who so viciously opposed the city, Temple, and people of God.

Template Theology

Right here I say a word about, what I choose to call, “*template theology*.” **This is a theology, or view of God and His work, that is constructed by men.** Some will use scattered and vague texts to build their view. Others construct it from implications, verb tenses, and even hoary church traditions. Once such a “*template*” is formed, it is, so to speak, placed upon the Bible. The Scriptures are then read through this theological template. In the view of the reader, this causes the Bible to conform to the human view that has been adopted.

There is more of this sort of thing within the professed church than we dare to imagine. Wherever such a practice is found, great damage is done to the souls of men. **This is so because the attention of the heart is turned from what God has said to what men think He has meant** – and there is a vast difference between the two.

When it comes to the subject of “*the Antichrist*,” “*the man of sin*,” “*the false prophet*,” and “*the beast*,” very little specific information has been revealed by God. Most will agree with this.

☐ There are four verses in all of the Bible that mention the term “*Antichrist*” (1 John 2:18, 22; 4:3; 2 John 1:7). None of those texts dwell on the Antichrist himself, but also declare the presence of “*many antichrists*” and “*the spirit of antichrist*,” and those who do not confess Jesus Christ is come in the flesh as being a “*deceiver and an antichrist*.”

☐ There is a single reference in all of the Bible to “*the man of sin*” (2 Thess 2:3). We are told he will be revealed in connection with a “*falling away*,” and that he will exalt himself above all

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this does not seem to be the thrust of the passage. For the following reasons, I will consider this passage to refer immediately to Antiochus Epiphanes. It also contains several principles that may be applied to opponents of the body of Christ.

☐ There is no noticeable shift in the subject. Nothing in the text suggests the angel is speaking of another king,

with the rest of the revelations given to Daniel. The “*notable horn*” (Alexander the Great) was broken (8:8; 11:4). a “*king of fierce countenance*” (a previous reference to Antiochus Epiphanes) is said to be “*broken without hand*” (8:25). It is, in my opinion, unreasonable to have a sudden change of subjects without accounting for the overthrow of a

that is called God, showing himself to be God.

- ▣ *“The false prophet,”* as a single individual, is mentioned three times in Scripture (Rev 16:13; 19:20; 20:10). Demonic spirits and miraculous workings are said to come from him. He also deceives those who received the mark of the beast, and is eventually cast into the lake of fire.
- ▣ *“The beast”* is Revelation is particularly the *“second”* beast which had *“two horns like a lamb,”* but *“spake as a dragon”* (Rev 13:11-18; 14:9-11; 15:2; 16:2,10-13). This beast does great wonders, deceives the world by miracles, and causes *“all”* to receive a *“mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads.”* Another beast is mentioned in Revelation that is particularly distinguished from *“the false prophet”* (17:7-17; 19:19-20; 20:4,20).

No inspired man has ever put all of these concepts together, then formulated a concise end-time doctrine. **There is a certain vagueness that pervades all of these texts, and it appears to me that this Divinely intentional.** Yet, an astounding amount of humanly-developed theology is being promulgated in the Christian community about *“the Antichrist”* – just as though a precise and clear revelation had been given on the subject.

It is my opinion that much of this theology is a sort of mold into which men attempt to pour the book of Daniel. Too much of this sort of theology has been adopted by people who have little knowledge of the text of Daniel. In fact, they know their canned theology far better than they know the Word of God. Such things ought not to be.

God Desires to Be Known

I am deliberately taking care to avoid such a handling of the Word of God. I will gravitate to the most obvious meaning, and seek to declare the principles made known in the text as best as I am able. Some of the details of this text may very well remain rather mysterious. **However, we cannot afford to allow the glimpses of God, His manner, and His purpose, that**

are revealed in this text to remain obscure.

God primarily desires that He Himself be known (Jer 9:24-25). If that is not accomplished, all other knowledge is voided, and eternal benefits are forfeited. In *“flaming fire,”* the returning Christ will *“take vengeance on them that know not God”* (2 Thess 1:8). There is no greater resource in appropriating this knowledge than the Scriptures in general, and the Gospel of Christ in particular. As elementary as it may appear, the Scriptures are more of an index to God

text is a continuation of thoughts regarding Antiochus Epiphanes, the *“king of the North.”* The Contemporary English Version reads *“This king”* (versus *“another”* king). In addition to the clear implications of the text, these translations suggest that even the grammar of the text indicates it is proper to apply it to the king previously mentioned – Antiochus Epiphanes.

According to His Will

As soon as we read these words, regardless of the mortal to whom they apply, we know that a wicked person is

TO BE SURE, THEY DO SPEAK OF THINGS THAT ARE COMING UPON THE EARTH – BOTH EVENTS AND PERSONALITIES. HOWEVER, THEIR INCLUSION IN SCRIPTURE IS INTENDED TO ACQUAINT US WITH THE LIVING GOD HIMSELF, NOT MERELY THE AFFAIRS OF THIS PRESENT EVIL WORLD.

and His purpose than to future events that will take place in this world. To be sure, they do speak of things that are coming upon the earth – both events and personalities. **However, their inclusion in Scripture is intended to acquaint us with the Living God Himself, not merely the affairs of this present evil world.**

The “knowledge of God” is the appointed means through which spiritual resources are administered to us (2 Pet 1:3). Thus it is written, *“For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings”* (Hosea 6:6). A failure to know God is serious beyond all imagination.

HE WILL DO ACCORDING TO HIS WILL

“And the king shall do according to his will . . .” Other versions read, *“THEN the king shall do according to his own will,”*^{NKJV} *“THEN the king will do as he pleases,”*^{NASB}

The use of the word *“then,”* or *“and”*^{KJV, DARBY, DOUAY, Septuagint} confirms this

the subject. The Persian Empire, portrayed as a pushing and forceful ram, is said to have done *“according to his will”* (Dan 8:4). A mighty Persian king, Xerxes, is said to have stood up, did *“according to his will,”* and his kingdom was *“broken”* (Dan 11:3). **The essence of sin is selfwill.** This is the exact opposite of the incarnate Word who prayed, *“NOT my will”* (Luke 22:42).

We will find that when this king, whom I take to be Antiochus Epiphanes, did *“according to his will,”* it was never anything good, noble, helpful, or commendable. In the beginning Satan exalted his own will above that of God (Isa 14:12-13; Ezek 28:13-17). **His children all have this same trait, seeking their own will above the will of the Lord.** The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life (1 John 2:15-16) are all expressions of self will – and they are all condemned.

The will of this king will result in opposition to God, His Law, and His people. It is the prelude to an attack against godly ordinances, and the

vaunting of false gods. A person who seeks their own will eventually must oppose God, His ordinances, and His people.

In Our Day

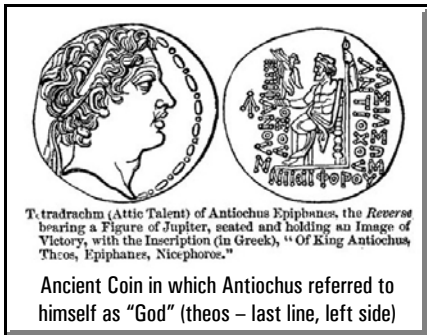
The time in which we are living is one that cries out for a generation of people to arise who will shout, *“The will of the Lord be done”* (Acts 21:14), and that will fervently pray, *“Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven”* (Matt 6:10).

HE WILL EXALT AND MAGNIFY HIMSELF

“ . . . and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god . . . ” Other versions read, *“consider himself greater than any god,”* ^{NRSV} *“lifting himself over every gods,”* ^{BBE} *“magnify himself against all that is god,”* ^{GENEVA} ^{Septuagint} and *“claiming to be greater than every god there is.”* ^{NLT}

Contrary to the practices of all conquerors before him, Antiochus commanded that those over whom he ruled abandon their gods, serving the ones he dictated they were to serve. This even applied to the Jews. The book of First Maccabees records, “Moreover king Antiochus wrote to his whole kingdom, that all should be one people, And every one should leave his laws: so all the heathen agreed according to the commandment of the king.” ^{1 Macc 1:41-42} Second Maccabees refers to him as *“the murderer and blasphemer.”*

^{2 Macc 9:28}



HE WILL SPEAK AGAINST GOD

“ . . . and shall speak marvelous things against the God of gods . . . ” Other versions read, *“shall speak blasphemies against,”* ^{NKJV} *“speak monstrous things against,”* ^{NASB} and *“say unheard things against.”* ^{NIV}

Drunk with power, Antiochus

chose to speak against the God of heaven. Earlier in Daniel, Gabriel spoke of this very king as standing *“up against the Prince of princes”* (8:25). Like the *“little horn”* of Daniel 7:25 and *“the beast”* of

decrees as words spoken against “the God of gods,” for whoever opposes what God has said, opposes God Himself. An Inevitable Action for the Godless

A person who seeks their own will eventually must oppose God, His ordinances, and His people.

Revelation 13:5, he was given *“a mouth speaking great things.”* Like Israel in a state of great decline, his words were *“stout against”* the Lord (Mal 3:13).

I understand these words to have been addressed specifically to Israel – particularly in Antiochus’ prohibitions of the worship of God. First Maccabees records the following concerning his edicts. “For the king had sent letters by messengers unto Jerusalem and the cities of Juda that they should follow the strange laws of the land, And forbid burnt offerings, and sacrifice, and drink offerings, in the temple; and that they should profane the sabbaths and festival days: And pollute the sanctuary and holy people. Set up altars, and groves, and chapels of idols, and sacrifice swine’s flesh, and unclean beasts: That they should also leave their children uncircumcised, and make their souls abominable with all manner of uncleanness and profanation: To the end they might forget the law, and change all the ordinances. And whosoever would not do according to the commandment of the king, he said, he should die. In the selfsame manner wrote he to his whole kingdom, and appointed overseers over all the people, commanding the cities of Juda to sacrifice, city by city. Then many of the people were gathered unto them, to wit every one that forsook the law; and so they committed evils in the land; And drove the Israelites into secret places, even wheresoever they could flee for succour. Now the fifteenth day of the month Casleu, in the hundred forty and fifth year, they set up the abomination of desolation upon the altar, and builded idol altars throughout the cities of Juda on every side; And burnt incense at the doors of their houses, and in the streets. And when they had rent in pieces the books of the law which they found, they burnt them with fire. And whosoever was found with any the book of the testament, or if any committed to the law, the king’s commandment was, that they should put him to death. Thus did they by their authority unto the Israelites every month, to as many as were found in the cities.” ^{1 Macc 1:44-58}

This is an inevitable action for those who exalt themselves and seek their own will. Because such an attitude is contrary to reality, they must eventually oppose and speak against the God of heaven. It may take the blasphemous form of Pharaoh’s words: *“Who is the Lord that I should obey His voice”* (Ex 5:2). It may take the form of a challenge, like that of Sennacherib: *“Who are they among all the gods of the countries, that have delivered their country out of mine hand, that the LORD should deliver Jerusalem out of mine hand?”* (2 Kgs 18:35).

The Character of Satan
In this matter, the character of Satan is seen in his children – “the children of the wicked one” (Matt 13:38). They think nothing of speaking against God and the things related to Him. That covers everything from His Law and His people, to His Son, and the Gospel, also called *“the record He has given of His Son”* (1 John 5:10-11). **Such malignments are never innocent or inadvertent.** They always proceed from a puffed up mind, self exaltation, and self will.

UNTIL THE INDIGNATION IS ACCOMPLISHED

“ . . . and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished . . . ” Other versions read that he will prosper *“till the wrath has been accomplished,”* ^{NKJV} *“until the indignation is finished,”* ^{NASB} and *“until the time of wrath is completed.”* ^{NIV}

This is the time of God’s indignation with wayward Israel. **Their sin and indifference toward God has brought on this terrible judgment.**

The angel views these various

This is the same language employed in the description of the Babylonian captivity. In that captivity, the Assyrians were instruments of God's indignation. As it is written, "*O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation. I will send him against an hypocritical nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge, to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets*" (Isa 10:5-6). The cessation of their oppression is depicted in these words, "*For yet a very little while, and the indignation shall cease, and mine anger in their destruction*" (Isa 10:25).

Again, God refers to the invasion

people, insomuch that He abhorred his own inheritance" (Psa 106:40).

- ▣ "*When God heard this, He was wroth, and greatly abhorred Israel: So that He forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh, the tent which He placed among men; and delivered His strength into captivity, and His glory into the enemy's hand. He gave His people over also unto the sword; and was wroth with his inheritance*" (Psa 78:59-62).
- ▣ "*And the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and he delivered them into the hands of spoilers that spoiled them, and He sold them into the hands of their enemies round*

knewest not the time of thy visitation" (Luke 19:43-44).

If any among the unlearned should rise and affirm God no longer reacts in such a manner, let the following be considered.

- ▣ God removed Ananias and Sapphira for lying to the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:1-10).
- ▣ God judged some at Corinth by sending sickness and death upon some who conducted themselves unacceptably at the Lord's table (1 Cor 11:30).
- ▣ Judgment begins with the house of God (1 Peter 4:17).
- ▣ Jesus told the false prophetess and her followers at Thyatira that He would "*kill her children with death*" (Rev 2:23).
- ▣ The Spirit challenges the churches to consider the futility of provoking the Lord to jealousy, for we are not stronger than He (1 Cor 10:21-22).

THE FEROCITY WITH WHICH JERUSALEM AND THE TEMPLE SERVICE WERE ATTACKED BY ANTIOCHUS EPIPHANES WAS OWING TO THE SPIRITUAL LETHARGY AMONG THE PEOPLE OF GOD.

of Babylon itself as a time of His indignation. "*The burden of Babylon, which Isaiah the son of Amoz did see . . . They come from a far country, from the end of heaven, even the LORD, and the weapons of His indignation, to destroy the whole land*" (Isa 13:1,5).

Isaiah further comments concerning a period of great distress brought upon Israel. Speaking to the elect within that nation, God says, "*Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast*" (Isa 26:20).

This is prophetic language describing God's reaction when flagrant sin and transgression is found in His people. There are so many examples of this that it should not be needful to provide a lengthy exposition of the subject. The following expressions will suffice to buttress this point.

- ▣ "*Therefore was the wrath of the LORD kindled against His*

about, so that they could not any longer stand before their enemies" (Judges 2:14).

- ▣ "*Therefore the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and He sold them into the hand of Chushanrishathaim king of Mesopotamia: and the children of Israel served Chushanrishathaim eight years*" (Judges 3:8).
- ▣ "*Of the Rock that begat thee thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed thee. And when the LORD saw it, He abhorred them, because of the provoking of His sons, and of His daughters*" (Deut 32:18-19).
- ▣ "*For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou*

This Must Be Seen
It is imperative that we learn from the text we are considering. **The ferocity with which Jerusalem and the Temple service were attacked by Antiochus Epiphanes was owing to the spiritual lethargy among the people of God.** This reaction of the Lord was not a strange one. From the very beginning of Israel's history, repeatedly His response to Israel's sin was made known in the wilderness by plagues, serpents, and pestilence.

The word of the Spirit to the churches is forthright, and we do well to take it into our hearts and minds. "*Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? For we know Him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto Me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God*" (Heb 10:29-

31). It seems to me that the modern church needs to hear this!

A spirit of lethargy has come over the church just as surely as it did over Israel. If people do not detect it and flee from it, they will not be able to avoid the judgment of the Almighty.

IT IS DETERMINED

“ . . . for that that is determined shall be done.” Other versions read, “for that which is decreed will be done,”^{NASB} “for what has been determined must take place”^{NIV} and “for what has been purposed will be done.”^{BBE}

Such language can only apply to the Lord Himself, for **unalterable**

determinations can only be made by Him. Also, it must be remembered that God does nothing “without cause” (Ezek 14:23). A time of indignation was appointed against Jerusalem and its inhabitants because of their indifference against their God. That indignation was to be carried out in part by Antiochus Epiphanes. **However, it would have an appointed conclusion** – a determined termination. Wicked rulers will not realize the fulfillment of their own ambition. It is God alone who without fail does “according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth” (Dan 4:35). The text before us is wrapped in that reality.

As I have already said, there are

some who believe there is a massive time gap between verses thirty-five and thirty-six. It is also seen as the other imagined time-gap between the sixty-ninth and seventieth week of Daniel (Dan 9:24). Like this prophesy, the seventy week prophecy pertained to Daniel’s people, not the church. Those who embrace this view see this verse as applying to Rome, who ravaged the church for over three hundred years. If this was the case, the “wrath” or “indignation” would not be God’s wrath, but the wrath of Rome. This view, however, falls to the ground in view of this final expression. **This is something that has been determined by God. Also, the prophecy relates to Daniel’s people, who are not synonymous with the body of Christ.**

HE WILL MAGNIFY HIMSELF

“³⁷ Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all.”

This text is used by some to oppose the idea that Antiochus Epiphanes is the subject of the prophecy. The reason for this opposition is that Antiochus, they say, did not ignore the god of his fathers. In fact, he built temples to Jupiter and Zeus, both of whom were honored by the Greeks. In this regard, the following has been written of him.

“Jupiter (the Latin form of the Greek name Zeus, the principal deity of the Greek and Roman mythology, in which he is fabled to have been the son of Saturn and Ops. He is supposed to represent the fertilizing power of the heavens) . . . Antiochus Epiphanes, as related by Athenaeus, surpassed all other kings in his worship and veneration of the gods, so that it was impossible to count the number of the statues he erected. His especial favorite was Zeus. The Olympian Zeus was the national god of the Hellenic race (Thucydides, 3, 14), as well as the supreme ruler of the heathen world, and, as such, formed the true opposite to Jehovah, who had revealed himself as the God of Abraham. Antiochus commenced, in B.C. 174, the completion of the temple of Zeus Olympius at Athens (Polybius, Reliq. 26, 10; Livy, Hist. 41, 20), and associated the worship of Jupiter with that of Apollo at Daphne, erecting a statue to the former god resembling that of Phidias at Olympia (Amm. Marcell.

22, 13, 1).^{McClintok and Strongs}

On the surface, this does appear to rule out Antiochus Epiphanes as the subject of our text. However, the angel elaborates on his statement concerning the king’s disregard for the god of his fathers, which elaboration will clarify what is intended.

Having said this, I do not deny that Antiochus is a type of Satan’s oppression of the people of God, and of those rulers through whom he has and will work. Notwithstanding, this is not a matter about which I will be contentious.

HE WILL NOT REGARD THE GOD OF HIS FATHERS

“Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god . . .” Other versions

read, “he shall show no regard for the gods of his fathers.”^{NASB}

Throughout this prophecy, Antiochus is regarded as “the king of the North,” which was Syria. His “fathers” were also kings of Syria, one of the four divisions of the Grecian Empire. Ancient gods of Syria are identified as Baalim and Ashtaroath (Judges 10:6). Rather than honoring the Syrian gods, **Antiochus promoted the gods of the Greeks, doing even that with a measure of disdain.** He also thought nothing imposing other gods upon his own people.

The reference to “the desire of women” is quite vague. Some have taken it to mean that he shunned marriage. I take this to refer to his disregard for the gods. The Syrian deity Tammuz-Adonis, was called “the desire of women.”^{F.W Farrar}

RATHER THAN HONORING THE SYRIAN GODS, ANTIOCHUS PROMOTED THE GODS OF THE GREEKS, DOING EVEN THAT WITH A MEASURE OF DISDAIN. HE ALSO THOUGHT NOTHING IMPOSING OTHER GODS UPON HIS OWN PEOPLE.



The images on the coins above illustrate the official metamorphosis of Antiochus IV into a deity. The face of the first (a silver tetradrachma) bears the clean-shaven likeness of the king wearing the royal diadem. The reverse side portrays an enthroned bearded Zeus with scepter in his left hand & the figure of winged Victory (Greek: Nike) in his outstretched right hand (a slight modification of the mythical motif on the back of coins of Alexander the Great). The inscription (with top at left edge) reads: Basileos Antiochou, (continuing to left of throne) Theou Epiphaniou (concluding at bottom) Nikephorou ["of King Antiochus, God Manifest, Victory bearer"]. The face of the bronze coin at the right portrays a bearded Antiochus as Zeus laureate himself, wearing the victor's wreath. The reverse side (not shown) identifies the image: "of King Antiochus, God Manifest." Both coins were minted in Antioch. – Obtained from Rutgers University, Dept of Religion

I am not sure about the particulars of this prophecy, but take it to refer primarily to ancient idols. Some say this refers to the moon, referred to by idolaters as *“the Queen of heaven”* in Scripture (Jer 7:18; 44:17-19,25). In Syrian culture, this was female form of the idol Baal. ^{McClintok and Strong} To the Shemites this goddess was also known as Ashtaroth, mentioned in Judges 2:13, together with *“the gods of Syria.”* The Babylonian goddess Venus is also said to have had the title *“the mistress of heaven and earth.”* ^{McClintok and Strong}

There is an historical incident recorded in McClintok and Strong's *Cyclopedia of Biblical Knowledge* that also fits into this picture. *“Hearing not long afterward of the riches of a temple of Nanaea (‘the desire of women,’ (Daniel 11:37) in Elymais (1 Maccabees 6:1 sq.; see Wernsdorf, *Defide Maccab.* p. 58 sq.), hung with the gifts of Alexander, he (Antiochus Epiphanes) resolved to plunder it.”* ^{Page 170}

Some see this reference as applying to the promotion of celibacy within papal Rome. While there may be some element of truth to this, it seems to me to be forcing something foreign into the text. I view this as referring to the

refusal of Antiochus to honor the traditional gods of his own people. However, this is not a critical point. **It is enough to say that this king was not noted for personal religious devotion.** This will be made clear in the next expression.

HE WILL MAGNIFY HIMSELF

“ . . . for he shall magnify himself above all.” Other versions read, *“exalt himself above them all,”* ^{NKJV,NIV} and *“he will consider himself greater than all”* ^{NRSV}

The Essence of Religion

It is the peculiar prerogative of any religion to de-emphasize self. In fact, that is the essence of religion – **it is the acknowledgment of dependency on an entity greater than self.** By definition, “religion” is “the service and worship of God.” ^{MERRIAM-WEBSTER} As used in Scripture, the word *“religion”* has two meanings, taken from two different words. *“Religion,”* taken from the Greek word *ἰουδαϊσμός* (Ioudaismos) is used in Galatians 1:13-14, and means “the Jew’s religion, Judaism, and the Jewish faith and worship.” ^{STRONG’S} *“Religion”* is also used in Acts 26:5, and James 1:26-27.

There is taken from the Greek word *θρησκεία* (threskeia), which means “religious worship, especially external, that consists of ceremonies and religious discipline.” ^{STRONG’S and THAYER}

While many idolaters are noted for self-indulgence, they often do so in the name of their god, professing to be serving their god in their indulgent conduct.

But this king was not noted for his religion, or devotion to any god. While he built temples to Jupiter and Zeus, he exalted himself to the role of God – he *“magnified himself above all.”* On the mint of his kingdom, he place an image of himself on one side (portraying himself as Zeus), with an image of the false god Jupiter on the other side holding the goddess Nike (victory), adding the titles **“Of King Antiochus, THEOS** (meaning “god”), **Epiphanes** (meaning “the manifest, light, and splendid one” – a title normally ascribed to heathen deities) and **Nicephoros”** (meaning “bearing victory”).

History confirms that this wicked king magnified himself to the position of deity, demanding the honor accompanying that claim. Because of this, the Jews were particularly reprehensible to him, for they were known for worshiping the one true God. Thus, they represented a particular threat to his boastful claim. His conduct toward them and their worship is representative of the conflict between Satan and the God who has cursed him.

In order to confirm the wickedness of this king, I provide the perspective of the modern Jews themselves. This quotation is taken from the Jewish Encyclopedia, and was written by Louis Ginzberg. To this very day, orthodox Jews are mindful of this king, classing him along with Hitler. The full article, together with other information, can be accessed on the following website: <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/view.jsp?artid=1589&letter=A>

IT IS THE PECULIAR PREROGATIVE OF ANY RELIGION TO DE-EMPHASIZE SELF. IN FACT, THAT IS THE ESSENCE OF RELIGION – IT IS THE ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF DEPENDENCY ON AN ENTITY GREATER THAN SELF. BY DEFINITION, “RELIGION” IS “THE SERVICE AND WORSHIP OF GOD.”

This Antiochus is styled in rabbinical sources, "the wicked." Abundant information is extant concerning the character of this monarch, who exercised great influence upon Jewish history and the development of the Jewish religion. Since Jewish and heathen sources agree in their characterization of him, their portrayal is evidently correct. Antiochus combined in himself the worst faults of the Greeks and the Romans, and but very few of their good qualities. He was vainglorious and fond of display to the verge of eccentricity, liberal to extravagance; his sojourn in Rome had taught him how to captivate the common people with an appearance of geniality, but in his heart he had all a cruel tyrant's contempt for his fellow men. The attempt of modern phil-Hellenes to explain Antiochus' attitude toward the Jews as an endeavor "to reform a stiff-necked people" receives no confirmation from the fact that a Tacitus first formulated it. Antiochus had no wish to Hellenize his conquered subjects, but to denationalize them entirely; his Aramean subjects were far from becoming Hellenes simply because they had surrendered their name and some of their Semitic gods. His attempt to level all differences among the nations he ruled arose not from a conviction of the superiority of Greek culture, the true essence of which he can scarcely be said to have appreciated, but was simply a product of his eccentricity. The Jews themselves afforded Antiochus the first opportunity to interfere in their domestic affairs. The struggle of the Tobiads against the high priest Onias III., originally a personal matter, gradually assumed a religio-political phase. The conservatives siding with the legitimate high priest approached the king of Egypt; for they relied more on that monarch than on Antiochus, sometimes nicknamed "madman," while the Tobiads well understood that Antiochus' favor was to be purchased with gold. The Tobiads caused the deposition of Onias (173), and the appointment of their own partizan, Jason. In order to ingratiate himself with the king, this new high priest established an arena for public games close by the Temple. But the king cared very much more for gold than for the Hellenizing of Palestine, and a certain Menelaus made use of the fact so shrewdly that he received the high-priesthood in place of Jason, in the year 171. But when false tidings came to Jerusalem that Antiochus had died on a campaign in Egypt, Menelaus could not maintain himself in the city, and together with the Tobiads fled to Egypt. On his return homeward, Antiochus came to Jerusalem to reinstate Menelaus, and then the true character of the Hellenism that Antiochus desired was revealed to the Jews. He entered the Temple precincts, not out of curiosity, but to plunder the treasury, and carried away valuable utensils, such as the golden candlestick upon the altar and the showbread table, likewise of gold. This spoliation of the Sanctuary frustrated all the attempts of Jason and the other Tobiads to Hellenize the people, for even the most well-disposed of Hellenizers among them felt outraged at this desecration. They must have given vent to their sentiment very freely; for only thus can the policy of extermination waged by Antiochus against the Jews and Judaism, two years later, 168, be explained. As long as he was occupied with preparations for his expedition against Egypt, Antiochus had no time for Palestine; but when the Romans compelled him to forego his plans of conquest, his rage at the unexpected impediment was wreaked upon the innocent Jews. An officer, Apollonius, was sent through the country with an armed troop, commissioned to slay and destroy. He first entered Jerusalem amicably; then suddenly turning upon the defenseless city, he murdered, plundered, and burnt through its length and breadth. The men were butchered, women and children sold into slavery, and in order to give permanence to the work of desolation, the walls and numerous houses were torn down. The old City of David was fortified anew by the Syrians, and made into a very strong fortress completely dominating the city. Having thus made Jerusalem a Greek colony, the king's attention was next turned to the destruction of the national religion. A royal decree proclaimed the abolition of the Jewish mode of worship; Sabbaths and festivals were not to be observed; circumcision was not to be performed; the sacred books were to be surrendered and the Jews were compelled to offer sacrifices to the idols that had been erected. The officers charged with carrying out these commands did so with great rigor; a veritable inquisition was established with monthly sessions for investigation. The possession of a sacred book or the performance of the rite of circumcision was punished with death. On Kislev (Nov.-Dec.) 25, 168, the "abomination of desolation" (Dan. xi. 31, xii. 11) was set up on the altar of burnt offering in the Temple, and the Jews required to make obeisance to it. This was probably the Olympian Zeus, or Baal Shamem. *Jewish Encyclopedia*

HE WILL HONOR THE GOD OF FORCES

“³⁸ But in his estate shall he honor the God of forces: and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honor with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things.”

While enthroned, this king will honor a certain God, although he will not be altogether consistent in that honor. **Remember, he has exalted himself above everything else.** Any honor given to other gods is only a marginal, and will not allow for the dethronement or minimization of himself.

THE GOD OF FORCES

“But in his estate shall he honor the God of forces . . . ” Other versions read, *“But in their place shall he shall honor the god of fortresses,”* ^{NKJV} *“But instead he will honor a god of fortresses,”* ^{NASB} and *“He shall honor a god of fortresses instead of these.”* ^{NRSV}

The words *“his estate”* has a twofold meaning. From the earthly point of view, they refer to the position his father's gods occupied. Instead of those Syrian gods, he honored *“the God of forces,”* or *“the God of fortresses.”* From heaven's point of view, it refers to the Almighty God Himself. That is, this king would, in his own thought, assign the

position which God alone occupies to another god – *“the God of forces.”* In a place identified with the God of heaven, Antiochus would give honor to *“the God of forces.”*

This false god, as I understand it, was **Jupiter** (the Latin form of the Greek **“Zeus”**). He was supposed to represent the *“fertilizing power of the heavens.”* ^{McClintok and Strong} The name *“Jupiter”* means *“god of bulwarks,”* or fortresses. Antiochus Epiphanes introduced this god to the Syrians, who never before honored it. He erected a temple to this god in his capital city of Antioch, adorning it with all manner of gold, silver, and precious

stones. However, the temple was never completed.

The real transgression of this wicked king took place when he dared to erect an idol altar to this god upon the very altar of God – the altar of burnt offerings. “Antiochus, after compelling the Jews to call the Temple of Jerusalem THE TEMPLE OF JUPITER OLYMPIUS, built an idol altar upon the altar of God. Upon this altar swine were offered every day, and the broth of their flesh was sprinkled about the Temple.” McClintok and Strong

He Shall Honor

“ . . . and a god whom his fathers

knew not shall he honor with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things.”

I understand this to refer to Antiochus’ attempt to build a temple to Jupiter, adorned with all manner of precious metals, stones, and the likes. In his renovation of Antioch, the following is said of this king. “Even before he had begun his reign he had contributed to the building of the temple of Zeus (Latin form of Jupiter) in Athens and to the adornment of the theatre. He enlarged Antioch on the Orontes by adding a section to the city (named Epiphania afterhim). There he built an aqueduct, a council hall, a marketplace, and a temple to Jupiter Capitolinus.”

BRITANNICA 2003 Another resource reads, “But he also adorned Delos with inscribed altars & an abundance of statues. And at Antioch (he erected) a magnificent temple to Capitoline Jove [=Jupiter], not only with a ceiling lined with gold but with walls completely covered with gilded panels. And he did not complete many other (projects) promised to other places, since his reign was very brief.”

INTO HIS OWN, by MAHLON H. SMITH, 1999

The extravagance of Antiochus’ building exploits remains a source of historical wonder. Although himself not a deeply religious man, he took great delight in building temples to gods his fathers did not know. However, he chose to exalt himself even above them.

A STRANGE GOD

“³⁹ Thus shall he do in the most strong holds with a strange god, whom he shall acknowledge and

anyone imagines the way of transgressors is not “hard” (Prov 13:15), let them seriously ponder the

Although I have often said this in these lessons, it is appropriate to say it once again. “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God” (Heb 10:31). If this message fails to come through to our hearts, we will gain very little from the text before us.

HERE WE WILL SEE THE AGGRESSION OF THIS EVIL KING. HE NOT ONLY CAME AGAINST JERUSALEM, SACKING THE TEMPLE AND SLAYING THOUSANDS OF JEWS, HE ALSO SOUGHT TO THOROUGHLY CHANGE THEIR RELIGION.

A STRANGE GOD AND STRONGHOLDS

“Thus shall he do in the most strong holds with a strange god” Other versions read, “Thus he shall act against the strongest fortresses with a foreign god,”^{NKJV} “And he will take action against the strongest of fortresses with the help of a foreign god,”^{NASB} “And he will take action against the strongest of fortresses with the help of a foreign god,”^{NIV} and “Claiming this foreign god’s help, he will attack the strongest fortresses.”^{NLT}

increase with glory: and he shall cause them to rule over many, and shall divide the land for gain.”

ravages of Antiochus Epiphanes. If spiritual naivety blinds the heart to such considerations, then let them ponder specific revealed judgments against sin.

The meaning of the text is that this king came against and defeated the most fortified cities, including Sidon, Pelusloun, and Memphis. Primarily, however, the reference is to Jerusalem that was especially fortified. This king further imported the worship of Jupiter Capitolinus into the strong cities that he conquered.

Here we will see the aggression of this evil king. He not only came against Jerusalem, sacking the Temple and slaying thousands of Jews, **he also sought to thoroughly change their religion.** He devoted the city to a strange God, and enforced the worship of that God among the chosen people of God.

It is imperative that we have our spiritual bearings when we approach texts of this sort, else history will throw dust in our eyes. This is a period of Divine “*indignation*” (verse 36). It would come on the chosen people because of their sloppiness and indolent spiritual manners. **If**

- ☐ The fall of humanity (Gen 3:16-19).
- ☐ The flood (Gen 6-7).
- ☐ The scattering at Babel (Gen 11).
- ☐ The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen 19).
- ☐ The Babylonian captivity (Hab 1:6-10).
- ☐ The destruction of Jerusalem (Luke 19:43-44).

In his boastful pride, Antiochus drew honor to himself and the false god whom he honored with temples, altars, and images. **Actually, however, his success was owing to God’s**

dispensation of power to him because of the transgression of His people. As soon as the time of indignation, or chastening, was over, Antiochus' power would quickly dissipate and disappear.

HE WILL ACKNOWLEDGE AND INCREASE WITH GLORY

“... whom he shall acknowledge and increase with glory . . .” Other versions read, “which he shall acknowledge and advance its glory,”^{NKJV} “he will give great honor to those who acknowledge him,”^{NASB} “and will greatly honor those who acknowledge him,”^{NIV} and “Those who acknowledge him, he shall make more wealthy.”^{NRSV}

There are a variety of views promoted by the various translations.

- ▣ The king would acknowledge the false god and promote his glory by building temples and statues to it.
- ▣ The king would advance those who gave honor to the false God, increasing their wealth and glory.
- ▣ The king would give special honor to those who honored himself, causing them to become wealthy.

Once again, we must get our spiritual bearings, remembering what has been said about this king, whom, historically, I take to be Antiochus Epiphanes.

The whole point of the text is the self-exaltation of this king. He own will, not the will of a god, was the determining factor in what he did: “The king shall do according to his will.” He would “magnify himself above every god, and shall speak things against the God of gods” (v 36). The text, therefore, cannot mean that he was focusing all of the attention upon the god that he promoted. That promotion was a deceptive one – an attempt to change the culture of the people. In so doing, he would make them a Grecian province with Grecian manners. In so doing He would also destroy the religion of the Jews.

The truth of the matter is that Antiochus only promoted those who exalted himself. He was the focus of his

own attention, and the object of all of his efforts. He did not work for the glory of Greece or the glory of Jupiter. He sought his own glory. That is why the angel said he exalted himself and magnified himself.

HE WILL CAUSE THEM TO RULE OVER MANY

“... and he shall cause them to rule over many . . .” Other versions read, “he will make them rulers over many people,”^{NIV} “and shall appoint them as rulers over many,”^{NRSV} “he will make them rulers over the mass of the people.”^{BBE} and “He will honor those who submit to him, appointing them to positions of authority.”^{NLT}

These people ranged from Grecian mercenaries, placed in the cities to

unto me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins. And I will break the pride of your power; and I will make your heaven as iron, and your earth as brass: and your strength shall be spent in vain: for your land shall not yield her increase, neither shall the trees of the land yield their fruits” (Lev 26:15-20).

Thus, during the inter-testamental period, the Word of the Lord continued to be dominant and to be fulfilled, even though there was no known prophet among the people.

HE WILL DIVIDE THE LAND FOR GAIN

“... and shall divide the land for gain.” Other versions read, “parcel out land for a price,”^{NASB} “distribute the land

BECAUSE, AS A WHOLE, THE JEWS HAD FORSAKEN THE LORD, OTHERS, WHO DID NOT SEEK THEIR INTEREST, WERE APPOINTED OVER THEM.

hellenize the people, to those Jews who gave their allegiance to him. The particular emphasis is placed upon the country of Palestine, and the city of Jerusalem.

Because, as a whole, the Jews had forsaken the Lord, others, who did not seek their interest, were appointed over them. Before they entered into the promised land, Moses declared such things would happen to the people if they refused to follow the Lord. “And if ye shall despise my statutes, or if your soul abhor my judgments, so that ye will not do all my commandments, but that ye break my covenant: I also will do this unto you; I will even appoint over you terror, consumption, and the burning ague, that shall consume the eyes, and cause sorrow of heart: and ye shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it. And I will set my face against you, and ye shall be slain before your enemies: they that hate you shall reign over you; and ye shall flee when none pursueth you. And if ye will not yet for all this hearken

at a price,”^{NIV} and “dividing the land among them as their reward.”^{NLT}

The meaning is that Antiochus distributed the land to those who served him. This he did for personal gain, selling it, as it was, to the highest bidder. It can also mean that land was distributed to them for their own gain, because of their compliance with the will of Antiochus. The particular land of reference was “the land of the Jews,” God’s own land. Other countries and cities were incidental, for the angel is making known what will “befall” Daniel’s “people” (10:13). First Maccabees says of this, “To wit, that he should send an army against them, to destroy and root out the strength of Israel, and the remnant of Jerusalem, and to take away their memorial from that place; 3:36 And that he should place strangers in all their quarters, and divide their land by lot.”^{1 Macc 3:35-36}

AN APPLICATION

How does Satan make inroads among the people of God? We are to watch and be vigilant – for what should we be alert? As in the case of Antiochus, who

sought to change the culture of God's people, this is still one of the primary methods employed by the devil. **He seeks to change the culture of the people of God – to alter how they think and how they speak.** He seeks to impose upon them the template of this present evil world, so that they have a different reason for living, and differing means of expressing themselves.

He will take the word of God

though it was proper.

ANOTHER APPLICATION

There is a principle revealed in this text that we must see. **When the people of God drift from Him, choosing their own will and ways over His, judgment will begin at His house.** This is the manner in which our God works. As it is written, *“For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us,*

their accomplishments.

The thrust has been turned from taking in and imbibing truth, to shallow expressions that do not come from the heart. Edification has been replaced by entertainment, and speaking to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, has been replaced by shallow praise and worship services. The Word of God has been replaced by discourses that are saturated with the wisdom of this world.

The religion of the people has been changed! Experts in Scripture are no longer needed. Powerful proclaimers and expositors are not in vogue. It is a new day, like the day of Antiochus Epiphanes in Jerusalem. He hellenized the Jews, causing them to adopt the ways of the Greeks. **In our time, men are forcing the adoption of the ways of the world – and the world has rushed into the church like a mighty flood.** Pure hearts, holiness, purged consciences, and bodies that are living sacrifices are not common. The *Christianity* of our time promotes casualness, brevity, soulless expressions, and spiritual ignorance.

This is, in my view, a time of Divine judgment. Because the professed church has largely rejected *“the love of the truth,”* God has sent *“strong delusion, that they should believe a lie,”* and the masses have not been able to survive that lie (2 Thess 2:9-11). It has come in the form of psychological babble, marital expertise, institutional building, financial planning, and educational priorities.

I am aware that it is not popular to speak of such things, but someone must speak of them. We are living in a time when the walls are in a state of disrepair, as they were in the days of Nehemiah. It is a time when the book of God is lost, as it was in the days of Josiah. The people of God have mingled with the world, as they did in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah. **Consequently, this is the time of the “remnant,” when here and there clusters of people can be found that refuse to be absorbed into a religious system that has the spot of the world upon it.** You are blessed if you have found some of them. It is a time to *“stand fast,”* and *“quit like men.”* These are, indeed, *“perilous times.”*

AS IN THE CASE OF ANTIOCHUS, WHO SOUGHT TO CHANGE THE CULTURE OF GOD'S PEOPLE, THIS IS STILL ONE OF THE PRIMARY METHODS EMPLOYED BY THE DEVIL. HE SEEKS TO CHANGE THE CULTURE OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD – TO ALTER HOW THEY THINK AND HOW THEY SPEAK.

and tempt men to think differently about it. Take, for example, the temptation of Eve. The *“old serpent”* led Eve to think differently about the word of the Lord. At the first, she concluded it was best not to even touch the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. That is the impact the Word of God had upon her. But after her dialog with the devil, she thought it would be to her advantage to eat what God had commanded her not to eat. God said if she ate she would *“surely die.”* After reasoning with the devil, she concluded she would not die (Gen 2:17; 3:1-6).

Satan undertook the same ploy with Jesus. He tempted Him to view the Word of God from the standpoint of personal advantage: *“If Thou be the Son of God, cast Thyself down: for it is written, He shall give His angels charge concerning Thee: and in their hands they shall bear Thee up, lest at any time Thou dash Thy foot against a stone”* (Matt 4:6). Jesus did not yield to the Tempter, refusing to change the way He thought about the Word of God, which lives and abides forever. The devil's conclusion was not the one God intended to provoke by that word, and Jesus refused to proceed as

what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?” (1 Pet 4:17)! What I am about to say is my own persuasion – and a strong one at that.

Changing the Religion of a People

Antiochus was not the last of Satan's effort to change the religion of the people. In his time, those Jews who refused to stand on the side of truth, were swept up in the delusion of that wicked king. **His success was directly traceable to the spiritual lethargy of God's people** – just as it was with Nebuchadnezzar.

We are living in a time of dramatic religious change. A new face is being put on *“the church of the living God,”* and it is not a good one. Successful churches, we are being led to believe, are mega-churches. They have large staffs, community programs, credentialed leaders, and polished Sunday performances. Their icons are youthful musicians, administrative organizers, psychological experts, and the likes. Many churches are financial empires with impressive campuses. They are more noted for their buildings than for their members, and for their appearance than

THE KINGS OF THE SOUTH AND THE NORTH

“⁴⁰ And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over.”

This verse confirms we are still speaking of the demise of the Grecian Empire. The South is Egypt, and the North is Syria, as previous referenced (11:6,7,8,9,11,13,14,15,25). While this text may very well contain types of “*the man of sin*” mentioned in Second Thessalonians 2:3, that is not the primary reference of this passage. Care must be taken not to force the text into the theological systems of men, else the message of the text will be lost. **Divine thoughts cannot be contained in the theological systems invented by men.** As soon as men circumscribe the truth of God by stuffing it into their own systems, it loses both its message and its power.

Once again, I want to state certain principles that are directing the manner in which I review this text.

- ▣ First, these are things that were to “*befall*” Daniel’s people (10:13).
- ▣ Second, they have to do with preparations for the coming of the Messiah (9:25-26).

THE PUSHING KING OF THE SOUTH

“And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him . . . ” Other versions read, “*And at the end time the king of the South will collide with him,*”^{NASB} “*At the time of the end the king of the South will engage him in battle,*”^{NIV} and “*At the time of the end the king of the south shall attack him.*”^{NRSV}

The Time of the End

The “*end*” of reference is not the end of time itself, or the closing period of human history. Rather, this is specifically the end of the Grecian Empire, and the end of the dominance of human kingdoms in general. God had already revealed the

following concerning His own initiative through the Messiah. “*And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever*” (Dan 2:44). The term “*these kings,*” refers to Babylon, the Medes and the Persians, Grecia, and Rome. Already Daniel has actually seen

The King of the South

Now “*the king of the South*” (Egypt) engages in an initiative against “*the king of the North*” (Syria). **Remember, the Grecian Empire is in its death throes, and Rome is waiting to assume the dominance of the world.** None of the kingdoms involved know this is what is happening. They do not know these things are written in “*the scriptures of Truth.*”

DIVINE THOUGHTS CANNOT BE CONTAINED IN THE THEOLOGICAL SYSTEMS INVENTED BY MEN. AS SOON AS MEN CIRCUMSCRIBE THE TRUTH OF GOD BY STUFFING IT INTO THEIR OWN SYSTEMS, IT LOSES BOTH ITS MESSAGE AND ITS POWER.

the demise of Babylon and the dominance of the Medes and Persians (5:31). He has also been told of the overthrow of the Medes and Persians by Greece (8:1-7). The kingdom of Greece was diminished with the removal of Alexander the Great, or the “*notable horn*” (8:8). It was further reduced in power by being divided into four parts (8:8,22; 11:4). The demise continued as the focus became only two kingdoms – Syria and Egypt, or the North and the South. **These two kingdoms engaged in continual warfare with one another, further chronicling the end of the Grecian Empire.**

The expression “*time of the end*” speaks of the conclusion of the events that have been determined by heaven. It would be equivalent to saying, “at the appointed time, when all would be fulfilled.” To say it another way, the end of the distress that is being described – the things that would befall Daniel’s people.

Now an additional conflict is found between these two kingdoms – with the land of Israel between them. The terms “*North*” (as applied to Syria) and “*South*” (as applied to Egypt) are defined by the “*holy land.*” Syria was North of the Jew’s land, and Egypt was South of it.

However, hundreds of years before the events will actually take place, these Divine determinations are being revealed to Daniel.

When the prophecy comes to pass, Egypt will be under the joint control of Philometor and his brother Physkon. They will unite to attack Antiochus, who had previously defeated them.

The Difficulty

The difficulty encountered in this passage is that history (with one exception) does not record a fourth conflict between Antiochus and Egypt. As a result, some serious theologians have said the passage applies to the Antichrist. In this case, it is supposed that the South refers to the Saracens, and the North to the Turks. These are said to afflict the Western part of the world, where the Antichrist is thought to have his seat.^{MEDE} That is a most difficult alternative, for it requires a significant change in both subject and time in the text – without any explanation.

The Historical Exception

The historical exception to the above view is found in the writings of Porphyry, a celebrated heathen

philosopher, born in 233 A.D. He was an avid opponent of Christianity. He wrote extensively on supposed discrepancies in Scripture. That extensive work is said to have been fifteen volumes, most of which has been destroyed.

Porphyry wrote that Antiochus actually did invade Egypt in the year in which he died – the eleventh year of his reign. Porphyry was so impressed with what he saw to be the literal fulfillment of this text, that he said it had to be written **after** the events actually took place. Thus, he surmised, Daniel did not write this book at all.

Admittedly, appealing to a writer

Another Possibility

There is also the possibility that this is a **recapitulation** of what has been said before. Things that would befall the Jews (10:13) covered a period from, Darius the Mede (11:1), through the conclusion of this specific oppression – a period of over three hundred and fifty years. **The closing phase of that time was the era of Antiochus Epiphanes, who only reigned eleven years.** Yet, in that period, such havoc was wreaked against the people of God as had scarcely been imagined possible. That period was *“the time of the end.”*

With this in mind, some have suggested verses 40-45 are a summation

the king of the South. I concede, therefore, that this can refer to a fourth and final confrontation between Egypt and Syria. However, I cannot be dogmatic on this point. Nor, indeed, do I see a need to be dogmatic on this matter.

The angel is saying a final attempt will be made by Egypt to throw off the shackles of Syria. However, it will miserably fail, as they it will be overwhelmed. The remainder of the text, in my judgment, confirms the king of the North to be Antiochus Epiphanes.

HE SHALL ENTER INTO THE COUNTRIES

“ . . . and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over.” Other versions read, *“and he shall enter the countries, overwhelm them, and pass through,”*^{NKJV} *“He will invade many countries and sweep through them like a flood,”*^{NIV} and *“he will go through many lands like overflowing waters.”*^{BBE}

The idea is that Antiochus will beat down the nations around him. History refers to this effort as his attempt to hellenize these kingdoms, compelling them to adopt Grecian manners, and thus extended the Empire. **However, Daniel is informed that God was in these things, being moved to indignation by the waywardness of His people.** Seizing upon the opportunity afforded him, Satan is seeking to obliterate the Jews, thereby thwarting the entrance of the woman’s promised *“Seed”* who would bruise his head and render him impotent.

Passing into other countries coincides with the taking of fenced cities of verse 14, which were in CoeloSyria, Palestine, and adjacent lands. It is also the kind of exploit described in verse 22.

The Overall Emphasis

While some of the details may not clear, the overall emphasis is that the enemy of the people of God would show no signs of weakness. There would be no outward reason to expect him to miserably fail, or to suddenly pass from the scene. In every way he seems superior to the people of God, heaping suffering and indignation upon them in increasing and repulsive measures – but that is before we put the God of heaven into the scenario!

I KNOW OF NO PLACE IN SCRIPTURE THAT SUGGESTS THE TRUTH OF GOD’S WORD, WHETHER HISTORICAL OR FUTURE, DEPENDS UPON HUMAN ASSESSMENT AND RECORDS.

like this to substantiate that Antiochus is the subject of our text, does not appear wise. One might liken it to a donkey speaking to a man who was being directed by God (Num 22:28-32), or unclean ravens bringing food to a holy prophet (1 Kgs 17:4-6).

I know of no place in Scripture that suggests the truth of God’s Word, whether historical or future, depends upon human assessment and records. If, for example, God had not told us about the fall of man, the judgment at Shinar, and a flood in which only eight inhabitants of the entire world survived, how would ever have known of them? This is not to mention the miraculous birth of Isaac to an aged couple, the details of Israel’s deliverance from Egypt, a virgin giving birth to the Savior of the world, and the day of Pentecost.

The unbroken nature of the eleventh chapter of Daniel suggests it is not wise to take sections of it and apply them to matters wholly unrelated to what has been unveiled – particularly what would befall Daniel’s people.

of the closing of Antiochus’ despotic reign. The position does have some merit. Whatever view a person takes of this text, it should be one that allows a continuity of thought throughout the text. It should also have some significance in regard to Daniel’s people. Also, it should have a prominent place for the *“glorious land.”*

LIKE A WHIRLWIND

“ . . . and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships . . . ” Other versions read, *“the king of the North will storm against him with chariots, with horsemen, and with many ships,”*^{NASB} *“but the king of the north shall rush upon him like a whirlwind, with chariots and horsemen, and with many ships,”*^{ESV} and *“but the king of the north shall overwhelm him with chariots and horsemen and a great fleet.”*^{NJB}

If this is a summation of the aggression of Antiochus Epiphanes, this is a recap of the things first revealed in verses 13-14. This view coincides with that text, for it also represents the king of the North as reacting to the aggression of

HE WILL ENTER THE GLORIOUS LAND

“⁴¹ He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon.”

As we move toward the conclusion of this wicked man’s reign, it will appear as though he is having his own way, and cannot possibly be overcome. Once again, seeing this as a summation, a point is made of Antiochus entering into “*the glorious land.*” It is as though God is arranging things so the faithful will clearly associate the fall of their enemy with the judgment of God.

THE GLORIOUS LAND

“He shall enter also into the glorious land . . .” Other versions read, *“He will also enter the Beautiful Land.”*
NASB/NIV/NRSV

This is the land of Judea – “*the land of the Jews*” (Acts 10:39) and “*the Lord’s land*” (Hos 9:3). This is the land in which God Himself chose to dwell – the “*Sanctuary.*” As it is written, “*Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance, in the place, O LORD, which Thou hast made for thee to dwell in, in the Sanctuary, O Lord, which thy hands have established*” (Ex 15:17).

The battles Antiochus had with Egypt were incidental. The conquering of fenced cities and surrounding countries was also insignificant so far as the heavens were concerned. But when he thought to go into God’s land – even though the people were being chastened for their failures – he was meddling. Like Nebuchadnezzar before him, he was going too far, using the occasion to make himself great. Habakkuk’s word concerning Nebuchadnezzar applies in principle to Antiochus: “*Then his purpose will be changed, over-stepping the limit; he will make his strength his god*” (Hab 1:11).^{BBE} He went too far, crossing over the line of Divine tolerance.

MANY COUNTRIES SHALL BE OVER THROWN

“ . . . and many countries shall be

overthrown . . . ”

That is, countries, fortified cities, and people will be crushed in this campaign. Keep in mind, “*the glorious land*” is in the middle of all of this activity. It will become involved in the aggression of Antiochus, and the attempts of the king of the South to overthrow him. That is why all of these things are mentioned. This all started as retaliation against the king of the South who would “*push*” at him. But it would not be enough to merely thwart the aggression of Egypt. **As anger is wont to do, the**

invade the holy land. That is from his perspective. **From the heavenly point of view, God was having indignation upon Israel for its coldness toward Him.** Thus, Antiochus was successful in ravaging them. The text accounts for this in verse thirty-six. The Contemporary English Version reads, “*Indeed, he will be successful until God is no longer angry with His people.*” **Were it not for that anger, Antiochus would not have enjoyed such sweeping victories.**

There is also evidence that these nations (Edom, Moab, and Ammon) joined

THE POINT IS THAT THERE WERE CONTINUED EFFORTS NOT ONLY TO KEEP THE DOMAIN OF GREECE ALIVE, BUT TO BOTH EXPAND IT, AND BRING ALL OF ITS AUTHORITY UNDER ONE MAN, AS IT WAS WITH ALEXANDER.

reaction of Antiochus would spill over into other areas.

These exploits, as I have already indicated, can very well be a summation of the details already given. The difference is that “*the end*” is here accented. That is, toward the end of the reign of Antiochus there would be a flurry of violent and aggressive activity – quite unlike the latter days of Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar.

The point is that there were continued efforts not only to keep the domain of Greece alive, but to both expand it, and bring all of its authority under one man, as it was with Alexander.

SOME WILL ESCAPE

“ . . . but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon.”

As Antiochus made his way to Egypt along the Mediterranean Sea, he did not molest Edom, Moab, and Ammon. His wrath was initially against Egypt, but he could not pass the opportunity to

with Antiochus in previous assaults against the Jews. In fact, the book of Maccabees says that is why Judas Maccabees (who cleansed the Temple) fought against them. “*Then Judas fought against the children of Esau in Idumea at Arabattine, because they besieged Gael: and he gave them a great overthrow, and abated their courage, and took their spoils. Also he remembered the injury of the children of Ben, who had been a snare and an offence unto the people, in that they lay in wait for them in the ways.*”^{1 Macc 1:3-4}

All three of these nations were also hostile toward the Jews. Thus they tended to side more with Antiochus, and he thus thought not of destroying them. Of their hostility toward the Jews, the book of Maccabees reads, “*At that time also they builded up the mount Sion with high walls and strong towers round about, lest the Gentiles should come and tread it down as they had done before. And they set there a garrison to keep it, and fortified Bethsura to preserve it; that the people might have a defence against Idumea (Edom).*”^{1 Macc 4:60-61}

Again we read, “*Then Judas fought against the children of Esau in Idumea at Arabattine, because they besieged Gael: and he gave them a great overthrow, and abated their courage, and took their*

spoils. Also he remembered the injury of the children of Bean, who had been a snare and an offence unto the people, in that they lay in wait for them in the ways. He shut them up therefore in the towers, and encamped against them, and destroyed them utterly, and burned the towers of that place with fire, and all that were therein. Afterward he passed over to the children of Ammon, where he found a mighty power, and much

people, with Timotheus their captain." ^{1 Macc 5:3-8}

From a temporal point of view, the "escape" of these nations can be accounted for from at least two perspectives. Over and above these perspectives, however, God was at work. Orchestrating the affairs of men for His own glory, and for

the ultimate advantage of His people.

- ▣ It was not convenient for Antiochus to turn aside at that time.
- ▣ They had proved themselves inclined toward Antiochus, and also against the Jews.

THE LAND OF EGYPT WILL NOT ESCAPE

"⁴² He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries: and the land of Egypt shall not escape.⁴³ But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt: and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps."

It will appear as though Antiochus is gathering strength and increasing his

A particular point is made of this: "Egypt shall not escape." In a sense, it had escaped this king previously, having survived his assaults and continued as a competitive kingdom. As formerly declared, he conquered the great cities of Egypt, and even captured their king (11:25-28). "Polybius, in Athenaeus, relates that Antiochus, having got together abundance of wealth, by spoiling young Philometer, and breaking league with him, and by the contributions of his friends, bestowed a vast

Antiochus Epiphanes. This included their agricultural land, structures, art, monuments, libraries, and even instruments of war. They were all at his disposal.

All of this tended to lull this monster into sleep, the lusts of his heart being satiated with the spoil of his enemies. However, he will shortly be jarred from his slumber by something that he hears.

THE LIBYANS AND ETHIOPIANS

" . . . and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps." Other versions read, *"the Libyans and Ethiopians shall follow at his heels,"* ^{NKJV} *"with the Libyans and Ethiopians in submission,"* ^{NIV} and *"the Libyans and Ethiopians will be his servants."* ^{NLT}

These two nations were naturally allied with Egypt, so that when Egypt was dominated by Antiochus, so were they. Ezekiel paints a similar picture, speaking of Egypt being overcome, and Ethiopia and Lydia with it. *"And the sword shall come upon Egypt, and great pain shall be in Ethiopia, when the slain shall fall in Egypt, and they shall take away her multitude, and her foundations shall be broken down. Ethiopia, and Libya, and Lydia, and all the mingled people, and Cub, and the men of the land that is in league, shall fall with them by the sword"* (Ezek 30:4-5).

It is a principle of Scripture that people either rise or fall with the people with whom they are allied and identified. Thus, Jesus said, *"I the blind lead the blind, they both fall in the ditch"* (Matt 15:14). On the other hand, one can receive *"the reward of a prophet"*

IT WILL APPEAR AS THOUGH ANTIOCHUS IS GATHERING STRENGTH AND INCREASING HIS INFLUENCE. HOWEVER, WE WILL SOON FIND THE ACTIVITY IS NOTHING MORE THAN THE DEATH THROES OF A TYRANT WHO HAS SERVED HIS PURPOSE.

influence. However, we will soon find the activity is nothing more than the death throes of a tyrant who has served his purpose.

THE LAND OF EGYPT SHALL NOT ESCAPE

"He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries: and the land of Egypt shall not escape."

Here Antiochus is heralded as an invader of foreign lands. Of some of these final conquests history records, "Antiochus then mounted a campaign against the Parthians who were threatening the empire in the east, recovered the income from that area, forced Artaxias of Armenia—who had defected—to recognize his suzerainty, founded the city of Antioch on the Persian Gulf, set out on an expedition to the Arabian coast . . ." ^{BRITANNICA 2003}

deal upon a triumph, in imitation of Paulus Aemilius, and describes the extravagance of it; here we are told how he got that money which he spent so profusely." ^{MATTHEW HENRY}

POWER OVER THE TREASURES AND PRECIOUS THINGS

"But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt . . ."

The point here is plunder, or taking the spoils, rather than the shedding of blood. He had seized the fortresses of Egypt and captured their king. It is no marvel, then, that he had power over all of their valuable resources. Like the vessels of the Temple were given to Nebuchadnezzar (Dan 1:2), so the treasures of Egypt were given to

by ministering to such an one (Matt 10:41).

When Epiphanes controlled the resources, he controlled the people. When

he controlled the people, he controlled the countries. He did not dominate only by forceful dominion, therefore, but by controlling their resources. This principle is still in place in our time. **The one who**

controls your resources controls you. To put another way, the one from whom you receive your supplies is your master. There are no exceptions to this rule.

TROUBLOUS TIDINGS FROM THE EAST AND THE NORTH

“⁴⁴ But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many.”

We now enter the section that will chronicle the end of “*the king of the North,*” Antiochus Epiphanes. God will employ a message to lure him to the place of his demise. **It is much like the way God lured Ahab to the place appointed for his death.**

The Example of Ahab

When the time came for Ahab’s overthrow, we are given a glimpse of a heavenly gathering. These things were revealed to Micaiah the prophet. ***“And the LORD said, Who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramothgilead? And one said on this manner, and another said on that manner. And there came forth a spirit, and stood before the LORD, and said, I will persuade him. And the LORD said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And he said, Thou shalt persuade him, and prevail also: go forth, and do so. Now therefore, behold, the LORD hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the LORD hath spoken evil concerning thee”*** (1 Kgs 22:20-23).

The outcome of it all confirms the effectiveness of the strategy. Ahab went to Ramothgilead with Jehosaphat, the king of Judah, to do battle with the king of Syria. Ahab said he would disguise himself, and told Jehosaphat to put on his kingly robes. Ahab then disguised himself and went to the battle. When the Syrian hosts saw Jehosaphat, they said, ***“Surely this is the king of Israel,”*** and ***“they turned aside to fight him.”*** When Jehosaphat cried out, they detected it was

not Ahab, and stopped pursuing him. Meanwhile, a certain man drew his bow “*at random,*” and shot an aimless arrow into the air. The arrow “*struck the king of Israel in a joint of the armor.*” That evening Ahab died – having been lured to the place of his appointed death (1 Kgs 22:29-37).

Now we will see a similar end has been arranged for Antiochus Epiphanes.

TROUBLESOME TIDINGS

“But tidings out of the East and out of the North shall trouble him . . . ” Other versions read, ***“news from the East and the North shall trouble him,”*** ^{NKJV} ***“rumors from the East and from the North will disturb him,”*** ^{NASB} and ***“reports from the East and the North will alarm him.”*** ^{NIV}

Barnes says of this event, Antiochus “was called forth in a warlike expedition by tidings or reports from Parthia and Armenia – regions

The book of First Maccabees records the following. “Now when king Antiochus heard these things, he was full of indignation: wherefore he sent and gathered together all the forces of his realm, even a very strong army. He opened also his treasure, and gave his soldiers pay for a year, commanding them to be ready whensoever he should need them. Nevertheless, when he saw that the money of his treasures failed and that the tributes in the country were small, because of the dissension and plague, which he had brought upon the land in taking away the laws which had been of old time; He feared that he should not be able to bear the charges any longer, nor to have such gifts to give so liberally as he did before: for he had abounded above the kings that were before him. Wherefore, being greatly perplexed in his mind, he determined to go into Persia, there to take the tributes of the countries, and to gather much money. So he left Lysias, a nobleman, and one of the blood royal, to oversee the affairs of the king from the river Euphrates unto the borders of Egypt: And to bring up his son Antiochus, until he came again. Moreover he delivered unto him the half of his forces, and the elephants, and gave him charge of all things that he would have done, as also concerning them that dwelt in

WE NOW ENTER THE SECTION THAT WILL CHRONICLE THE END OF “THE KING OF THE NORTH,” ANTIOCHUS EPIPHANES. GOD WILL EMPLOY A MESSAGE TO LURE HIM TO THE PLACE OF HIS DEMISE.

lying to the east and the north, and it was in this expedition that he lost his life, and that this series of historical events was closed. Lengerke says, Antiochus assembled an army to take vengeance on the Jews, who, after the close of the unfortunate campaign in Egypt, rose up, under the Maccabees, against Antiochus, 1 Macc. 3:10, following Then the intelligence that the Parthians in the east, and the Armenians in the north, had armed themselves for war against him, alarmed him.” ^{BARNES NOTES}

Juda and Jerusalem: To wit, that he should send an army against them, to destroy and root out the strength of Israel, and the remnant of Jerusalem, and to take away their memorial from that place. And that he should place strangers in all their quarters, and divide their land by lot. So the king took the half of the forces that remained, and departed from Antioch, his royal city, the hundred forty and seventh year and having passed the river Euphrates, he went through the high countries.” ^{First Macc 3:27-37}

GOING FORTH WITH FURY

“ . . . therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many.” Other versions read, “he shall go forth with great fury to destroy and annihilate many,”^{NKJV} and “with great fury to exterminate and utterly destroy many.”^{RSV}

As the historical book of Maccabees also affirms, the intent of this man was to “destroy and root out the strength of Israel, and the remnant of Jerusalem, and to take away their memorial from that place.”^{1 Macc 3:35}

We will now see if he is able to implement his will. Until this time, he

has realized much success in his ambitions against Israel. He had slain thousands of them, killing both women and children. He had renamed the Temple in honor of Jupiter, and placed a heathen idol to that false god on top of the altar of burnt offerings. How will he do now? Has he crossed the line?

HE WILL COME TO AN END

“⁴⁵ And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.”

This is an example of how the Lord “removes” kings (Dan 2:21). Perusing the eleven years of this man’s reign, one might surmise such a removal to be high unlikely. But with God, “all things are possible” (Matt 19:26).

HE WILL PLANT THE TABERNACLES OF HIS PALACE

“And he shall plant the

mountain” was no doubt the Temple Mount – Mount Zion (Psa 48:2,11; Isa 8:18). The traveling headquarters were near to Jerusalem, and Antiochus was bent on exterminating the people of God.

The phrase “between the seas” probably means between the Great Sea (the Mediterranean) and the Dead Sea. Now we will see what this king is able to do.

HE SHALL COME TO AN END

“ . . . yet he shall come to his end.”

Thus the career of this madman

and breastplates, and shields, which Alexander, son of Philip, the Macedonian king, who reigned first among the Grecians, had left there. Wherefore he came and sought to take the city, and to spoil it; but he was not able, because they of the city, having had warning thereof, Rose up against him in battle: so he fled, and departed thence with great heaviness, and returned to Babylon. Moreover there came one who brought him tidings into Persia, that the armies, which went against the land of Judea, were put to flight: And that Lysias, who went forth first with a great power was driven away of the Jews; and that they were made strong by the armour, and power, and store of spoils, which they had gotten of the armies, whom they had destroyed: Also that they had pulled down the abomination, which he had set up upon the altar in Jerusalem, and that they had compassed about the sanctuary with high walls, as before, and his city Bethsura. Now when the king heard these words, he was astonished and sore moved: whereupon he laid him down upon his bed, and fell sick for grief, because it had not befallen him as he looked for. And there he continued many days: for his grief was ever more and more, and he made account that he should die. Wherefore he called for all his friends, and said unto them, The sleep is gone from mine eyes, and my heart faileth for very care. And I thought with myself, Into what tribulation am I come, and how great a flood of misery is it, wherein now I am! for I was bountiful and beloved in my power. But now I remember the evils that I did at Jerusalem, and that I took all the vessels of gold and silver that were therein, and sent to destroy the inhabitants of Judea without a cause. I perceive therefore that for this cause these troubles are come upon me, and, behold, I perish through great grief in a strange land. Then called he for Philip, one of his friends, who he made ruler over all his realm, And gave him the crown, and his robe, and his signet, to the end he should bring up his son Antiochus, and nourish him up for th kingdom. So king Antiochus died there in the hundred forty and ninth year.”^{First Macc 6:1-15}

The Britannica Encyclopedia says of his death, “ at the end of 164, died of an illness at Tabae (or Gabae, probably present Isfahan) in Persis.”
BRITANNICA 2003

THUS THE CAREER OF THIS MADMAN WAS BROUGHT TO AN ABRUPT CONCLUSION. HE DID NOT DIE IN BATTLE, BUT OF AN ILLNESS, LIKE ALEXANDER THE GREAT, AND HEROD. THE ACCOUNT OF HIS DEMISE IS ALSO WRITTEN IN THE EIGHT CHAPTER. “HE SHALL ALSO STAND UP AGAINST THE PRINCE OF PRINCES; BUT HE SHALL BE BROKEN WITHOUT HAND”

tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain . . . ”Other versions read, “And he will pitch the tents of his royal pavilion between the seas and the beautiful Holy Mountain,”^{NASB} and “He will halt between the glorious holy mountain and the sea and will pitch his royal tents there.”^{NLT}

This expedition was a majestic one. The royal court, together with the military intelligence, pitched their tents – their temporary headquarters – in the land of Judea! The sea was the Mediterranean, and the “glorious holy

was brought to an abrupt conclusion. He did not die in battle, but of an illness, like Alexander the Great, and Herod. The account of his demise is also written in the eight chapter. “He shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand” (8:25).

The book of First Maccabees gives the following account of the death of Antiochus Epiphanes. “About that time king Antiochus traveling through the high countries heard say, that Elymais in the country of Persia was a city greatly renowned for riches, silver, and gold; And that there was in it a very rich temple, wherein were coverings of gold,

NONE SHALL HELP HIM

“ . . . and none shall help him.”

None would be able to avert his death – not doctor, not magician, not a priest of the idols he had set up! He was, in every sense of the word, “helpless.”

Joseph Sutcliffe, writing in 1834, said this of the death of Antiochus: “After his defeat at Elymais, his allies forsook him. He then marched to rob the temple of Diana; and on his return,

having heard that the worship of the Lord at Jerusalem was restored, he fell sick of a dreadful malady and perished, forsaken and hated of all men.”

Writing in 1896, J.E.H. Thompson said, “The death of Antiochus, baffled in his attempt to rifle the temple of Nanaia, humiliated not only by his own disaster, but by the news received from Jerusalem, is full of disappointment and misery, even when we get rid of the rhetoric with which the events are clothed in Polybius and 1 and 2 Maccabees. One-half of his army under Lysias had been baffled and defeated by Judas

Maccabaeus; he himself had been repulsed in his attempt to replenish his coffers; the, re is therefore for him no helper, so he dies of disappointment at Tabes.”

Around 539 B.C., 375 years before Antiochus Epiphanes died, an angel from heaven put it this way: *“yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.”* It was written in *“the Scripture of Truth.”* Thus God removed Antiochus Epiphanes from the stage on which the drama of redemption is being worked.

CONCLUSION

This was a period or preparation – preparation for the coming of the Messiah. Judaism had lapsed into an unacceptable state, and thus the judgment of God came upon it. There is a sense in which the weakening of Judaism was the Lord preparing for the coming of the Messiah. **God was purging from their manners conduct that would not be a suitable environment for the induction of the Savior of the world.** Although there was no small amount of corruption among the people and their leaders when *“the Word was made flesh,”* it was not as bad as it would have been, had their iniquity not been beaten out of them with the chastening hand of God.

A NEW KIND OF ENEMY

It will be of value to here recount what has been revealed about Antiochus Epiphanes to this point – and it is considerable! We will see their unveiling of a new kind of enemy.

- ▣ 8:9a – He was the *“little horn”* that sprang out of the four Grecian horns that took the place of Alexander, the *“notable horn”* of the he goat.
- ▣ 8:9b – He *“waxed exceeding great”* toward the South, the East, and the *“pleasant land”* of Israel.
- ▣ 8:10 – He cast down *“some”* of the host of heaven, and the *“stars,”* and stamped upon them.
- ▣ 8:11a – He magnified himself as equal to the *“the Prince of host.”*

- ▣ 8:11b – By him the *“daily sacrifice”* was taken away.
- ▣ 8:11c – On account of Israel’s transgression, he was given to *“cast truth to the ground.”*
- ▣ 8:11d – He practiced and prospered without any apparent restraint.
- ▣ 8:23 – He is described as *“a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences.”*

- ▣ 8:25c – By peace he would *“destroy many.”*
- ▣ 8:25d – He would *“stand up against the Prince of princes.”*
- ▣ 8:25c – He would be *“destroyed without hand.”*
- ▣ 11:21a – Described as a *“vile person.”*
- ▣ 11:21b – He will *“obtain the kingdom by flatteries.”*

THERE IS A SENSE IN WHICH THE WEAKENING OF JUDAISM WAS THE LORD PREPARING FOR THE COMING OF THE MESSIAH. GOD WAS PURGING FROM THEIR MANNERS CONDUCT THAT WOULD NOT BE A SUITABLE ENVIRONMENT FOR THE INDUCTION OF THE SAVIOR OF THE WORLD.

- ▣ 8:24a – Through a power that was not his own, he destroyed fearfully, prospered and thrived.
- ▣ 8:24b – He would *“destroy the mighty and holy people.”*
- ▣ 8:25a – He would cause *“craft to prosper in his hand.”*
- ▣ 8:25b – He would *“magnify himself in his heart.”*

- ▣ 11:23a – He will *“work deceitfully.”*
- ▣ 11:23b – He will become *“strong with a small (or few) people.”*
- ▣ 11:24a – He will do things *“which his fathers have not done.”*
- ▣ 11:24b – He will devise schemes *“against strongholds”* for a time.
- ▣ 11:25 – He will stir up *“his power and*

IN ANTIOCHUS EPIPHANES WE HAVE A NEW KIND OF FOE INTRODUCED. HE IS MORE LIKE SATAN THAN MANY OF HIS PREDECESSORS – MORE FILLED WITH THE NATURE OF THE EVIL ONE. WHILE HE WAS, INDEED, UNSPEAKABLY RUTHLESS, HIS SUCCESS WAS FOUND IN HIS DECEPTION, LIES, COVENANTS, AND STRATEGIES. HE WAS AN INTELLIGENT ENEMY, WHO DID NOT CONFINE HIMSELF TO MERE BARBARISM.

his courage” against the king of the South (Egypt).

- ▶ 11:27 – He will join the king of the South in speaking lies.
- ▶ 11:30a – He will have *“indignation against the holy covenant.”*
- ▶ 11:30b – He will form an alliance with Jews who *“forsake the holy covenant.”*
- ▶ 11:31a – He will *“pollute the sanctuary of strength.”*
- ▶ 11:31b – He will *“place the abomination that makes desolate.”*
- ▶ 11:36a – He will *“do according to his will.”*
- ▶ 11:36b – He will exalt himself.
- ▶ 11:36c – He will *“magnify himself above every god.”*
- ▶ 11:36d – He will *“speak marvelous things against the God of gods.”*
- ▶ 11:36e – He will *“prosper”* until God’s indignation with His people is past.
- ▶ 11:37a – He will not regard the gods or religion of his fathers.
- ▶ 11:37b – He will *“magnify himself above all.”*
- ▶ 11:38 – He will *“honor the God of forces”* with gold, silver, precious stones, and pleasant things.”
- ▶ 11:39a – He will *“acknowledge”* a strange god.

▶ 11:39b – He will cause those who acknowledge him to rule over others, and will reward them.

▶ 11:40 – He will enter other countries and *“overflow them.”*

▶ 11:41 – He will *“enter the glorious land.”*

Deception Replaces Raw Force

In Antiochus Epiphanes we have a new kind of foe introduced. **He is more like Satan than many of his predecessors – more filled with the nature of the evil one.** While he was, indeed, unspeakably ruthless, his success was found in his deception, lies, covenants, and strategies. He was an **intelligent enemy**, who did not confine himself to mere barbarism.

For the first time, we find a person attempting to change the culture of the people of God. Nebuchadnezzar allowed them to maintain their way of life in Babylon. Belshazzar did the same, as well as Darius and Cyrus. They were allowed to keep their God and their Scriptures. Antiochus made a god of himself, and took unto himself the attributes of Deity. Other kings destroyed and plundered the Temple, but Antiochus Epiphanes polluted it with abomination. He was a different kind of enemy.

A Type of Coming Delusion

This is the point at which he foreshadows Paul’s *“man of sin”* and *“son of perdition”* (2 Thess 2:3), John’s *“Antichrist”* (1 John 2:18), and the second *“beast”* of Revelation (Rev 13:11). The *“falling away”* (2 Thess 2:3), departure from the faith (1 Tim 4:1), love waxing cold (Matt 24:12), and *“perilous times”* (2 Tim 3:1) of Scripture are **not** the

abandonment of religion. **They speak of the corruption of religion** – a *“form of godliness that denies the power thereof”* (2 Tim 3:5). This is the shell of religion that has no real content, a form that possesses no power.

Powerless Religion Is Common

Powerless religion is so common in American churches that people have come to think nothing of it. Once the Lord warned Israel of seeking help from other sources than Himself. *“Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help, and rely on horses, who trust in chariots because they are many, and in horsemen because they are very strong, but who do not look to the Holy One of Israel, Nor seek the LORD!”*^{NKJV} (Isa 31:1).

The modern church has sought to psychologists to resolve the issues of the mind and emotions. Too often, illnesses are not brought before the Lord. There are professed “experts” in nearly every facet of life, and they are getting a lot of business from the church. There are new ways of thinking, new ways of preaching, new ways of singing, and new ways of worshiping. They are creative, and they are powerful – at least that is what men are telling us. But all of these new ways has not changed hearts. It has not resolved the dilemma of immorality in the church, and populated the churches with insightful proclaimers of the truth. It has not taken away the appetite for sin, or brought the love of the truth into the professed church.

Just as Antiochus sought to hellenize the Jews, so Satan’s messengers have eagerly sought to carnalize the church. One might even say, he has sought to HELL-enize the church.

This is the type of assault that was largely introduced by Antiochus Epiphanes. It was violent, but it was deceptive and shrewd. **It was an attempt to alter the way God’s people lived, spoke, and thought.** This, in my understanding, is precisely the strategy that is being attempted through a corrupt church – a beast with horns like a lamb, but a mouth like a dragon (Rev 13:11). God be praised for the remnant who refuse to yield to such delusive subtleties! May they be strengthened and encouraged to stand.

Our next Hungry Saints Meeting will be held on Friday, 6/13/2003. We will continue in our overview of Daniel, reviewing verses 1-4 of the twelfth chapter. The title of our lesson is, "MICHAEL STANDS UP FOR THE PEOPLE." The language used in this remarkable passage is both typical and substantive. Here is a passage that is most difficult to decipher, and yet it abounds in edifying power. Our meeting will begin at 7:00 P.M. You are invited to bring your family and friends for fellowship around the Word of God. Refreshments are served afterward, with a time of extended fellowship for everyone.

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