



THE PROPHECY OF DANIEL

Lesson Number 35



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, #4

“ 11:20 Then shall stand up in his estate a raiser of taxes in the glory of the kingdom: but within few days he shall be destroyed, neither in anger, nor in battle. ²¹ And in his estate shall stand up a vile person, to whom they shall not give the honor of the kingdom: but he shall come in peaceably, and obtain the kingdom by flatteries. ²² And with the arms of a flood shall they be overflowed from before him, and shall be broken; yea, also the prince of the covenant. ²³ And after the league made with him he shall work deceitfully: for he shall come up, and shall become strong with a small people. ²⁴ He shall enter peaceably even upon the fattest places of the province; and he shall do that which his fathers have not done, nor his fathers' fathers; he shall scatter among them the prey, and spoil, and riches: yea, and he shall forecast his devices against the strong holds, even for a time. ²⁵ And he shall stir up his power and his courage against the king of the south with a great army; and the king of the south shall be stirred up to battle with a very great and mighty army; but he shall not stand: for they shall forecast devices against him. ²⁶ Yea, they that feed of the portion of his meat shall destroy him, and his army shall overflow: and many shall fall down slain. ²⁷ And both these kings' hearts shall be to do mischief, and they shall speak lies at one table; but it shall not prosper: for yet the end shall be at the time appointed.” ^{KJV} (Daniel 11:20-27)

INTRODUCTION

In a grand display of Divine love, Daniel is being shown what will befall his people in the times prior to the coming of the Messiah. Particular attention is being given to Israel's experience during the reign of the Persian and Grecian Empires. During those times, it is apparent that Satan launched an aggressive campaign against the covenanted people of God. The effort involved struggles in high places, and disruptive influences upon the earth. It was a time of social and political agitation, of wars and rumors of wars.

With remarkable detail and

accuracy, a significant number of kings, together with some of their activities, have been mentioned – particularly as they related to the Jews. Kings that have been mentioned thus far include:

- ☐ Darius the Mede – 11:1 (At the time of this revelation, around 536 B.C.).
- ☐ Three kings of Persia – 11:2a (Cambyses– 529-523 B.C., Pseudo-Smerdis – 523-522 B.C., Darius Hystapes – 522-485 B.C.)
- ☐ A fourth king – 11:2b (Xerxes – 486-

465 B.C.)

- ☐ A mighty king – 11:3 (Alexander the Great – 335-301 B.C.)
- ☐ Four successors of the mighty king – 11:4; 8:8 (Ptolemy, Cassander, Lysimachus, and Seleucus I).
- ☐ Kings of the North – 11:6-8, 11,13,15 (Syria – Antiochus II Theos – 261-246 B.C., Seleucus II Callinicus – 246-226 B.C., Antiochus III (the Great) – 223-187 B.C., Seleucus III Ceraunus – 226-223 B.C., Antiochus IV

Daniel is told of the further advances of wicked kings, and of their growing and relentless wickedness, by Given O. Blakely

OUTLINE

- ▶ A RAISER OF TAXES FOR A FEW DAYS (11:20)
- ▶ A VILE PERSON OBTAINS THE KINGDOM BY FLATTERIES (11:21)
- ▶ BROKEN WITH THE ARMS OF A FLOOD (11:22)
- ▶ STRONG WITH A SMALL PEOPLE (11:23)
- ▶ HE SHALL DO WHAT HIS FATHERS DID NOT DO (11:24)
- ▶ A GREAT ARMY, BUT HE SHALL NOT STAND (11:25)
- ▶ MANY SHALL FALL DOWN SLAIN (11:26)
- ▶ BOTH WILL LIE, YET THEY SHALL NOT PROSPER (11:27)

Epiphanes – 175-164. B.C

- ▣ Kings of the South – 11:59,11,14 (Egypt – Ptolemy I Lager Soter – 323-285 B.C., Ptolemy II Philadelphus – 285-246 B.C., Ptolemy III Euergetes I – 246-221 B.C., Ptolemy IV Philopator – 221-203 B.C., Ptolemy V Epiphanes – 203-181 B.C.).

Thus far, a period of no less than 363 years has been covered. With very few exceptions, this was a period of political upheaval. With the exceptions of the time of Darius the Mede and Cyrus the Persian, it was also a period during which no known Prophet was speaking for God, and no Scripture was being written. Yet, the Lord is making known to Daniel that He will not forsake His people, nor suffer their enemies be ungoverned, or realize their own wicked objectives.

The angel is showing Daniel the arena in which God will be working. He has, so to speak, put Himself in a seemingly impossible situation. From every external point of view, the enemy has the advantage. Yet, in spite of

appearance, we read of the continued frustration of the enemy: *“within a few days he shall be destroyed,”*²⁰ *“and shall be broken,”*²¹ *“even for a time,”*²⁴ *“but he shall not stand,”*²⁵ *“shall destroy him,”*^{26a} *“many shall fall down slain,”*^{26b} and *“but it shall not prosper.”*²⁷

God is in control of the circumstances, down to the most infinitesimal detail.

UNIQUE EXPRESSIONS

- ▣ **FINANCIAL IMPOSITION.** *“A raiser of taxes”* (v 20a) – “imposes taxes,”^{NKJV} “an oppressor,”^{NASB} “a tax collector,”^{NIV} “an official.”^{NRSV}
- ▣ **POLITICAL SPLENDOR.** *“The glory of the kingdom”* (v 20b) – “glorious kingdom,”^{NKJV} “Jewel of his kingdom,”^{NASB} “royal splendor.”^{NIV}
- ▣ **IMPOSED BREVITY.** *“Within few days”* (v 20c) – “In a few years,”^{NIV} “after a short time,”^{BBE} “soon,”^{NAB} “after a very brief reign.”^{NLT}
- ▣ **CORRUPT PERSONALITY.** *“A vile person”* (v 21a) – “a despicable person,”^{NASB} “a contemptible person,”^{NIV} “a low person,”^{BBE} “one despised,”^{DOUAY} “one who has been set at nought.”^{Septuagint}
- ▣ **ROYALTY.** *“The honor of the kingdom”* (v 21b) – honor of royalty,”^{NKJV} “honor of kingship,”^{NASB} “royal majesty,”^{NRSV} “kingly honor,”^{DOUAY} “royal honors,”^{NJB} “not directly in line for royal succession.”^{NLT}
- ▣ **EXPLOITING THE TIMES.** *“Come in peaceably”* (21 c) – “come in a time of tranquility,”^{NASB} “invade the kingdom when the people feel secure,”^{NIV} “come without warning,”^{NRSV} “come in a time of security,”^{ASV} “come in a time of peace,”^{BBE} “come in privately,”^{DOUAY} “slip in when least expected.”^{NLT}
- ▣ **FRAUD.** *“Obtain the kingdom by flatteries”* (v 21d) – “seize the kingdom by intrigue,”^{NKJV} “get the kingdom by

fair words,”^{BBE} “obtain the kingdom by fraud,”^{DOUAY} “obtain the kingdom by blandishments,”^{JPS} “by deceitful ways,”^{Septuagint} “by stealth and fraud,”^{NAB} “by flattery and intrigue.”^{YLT}

- ▣ **MILITARY SUPERIORITY.** *“The arms of a flood”* (v 22a) – “force of a flood,”^{NKJV} “overflowing forces,”^{NASB} “overwhelming army,”^{NIV} “overwhelming forces,”^{ASV} “great armies.”^{NLT}
- ▣ **CRUSHED.** *“They be overflown”* (v 22b) – “swept away,”^{NKJV} “overwhelmed from before him,”^{ASV} “completely taken away,”^{BBE} “washed away as with a flood,”^{Septuagint} “overwhelmed by him and crushed,”^{NAB} “utterly routed and crushed.”^{NJB}
- ▣ **LEADERSHIP.** *“The prince of the covenant”* (v 22c) – “ruler of the agreement,”^{BBE} “head of the covenant,”^{Septuagint} “a covenant prince,”^{NLT} “the covenant leader.”^{YLT}
- ▣ **DECEIT.** *“He shall work deceitfully”* (v 23a) – “act deceitfully,”^{NKJV} “practice deception,”^{NASB} “working falsely,”^{BBE} “deal deceitfully,”^{DOUAY} “act treacherously,”^{NJB} “making deceitful promises.”^{NLT}
- ▣ **SMALL BUT POWERFUL.** *“Strong with a small people”* (v 23b) – “become strong with a small number of people,”^{NKJV} “gain power with a small force of people,”^{NASB} “with only a few people he will rise to power,”^{NIV} “become strong with a small party,”^{NRSV} “with only a few people he will rise to power,”^{NIB} “despise the smallness of his following, grow ever stronger.”^{NJB}



Daniel is told of the further advances of wicked kings, and of their growing and relentless wickedness, by Given O. Blakely

- ▶ **A CHOICE AREA.** *“The fattest places of the province”* (v 24a) – “riches places,” ^{NKJV} “richest parts of the realm,” ^{NASB} “fertile places,” ^{BBE} “rich and plentiful cities,” ^{DOUAY} “richest areas of the land.” ^{NLT}
- ▶ **SHREWD STRATAGEMS.** *“Forecast his devices”* (v 24b) – “devise his plans,” ^{NKJV} “devise his schemes,” ^{NASB} “plot the overthrow,” ^{NIV} “plotting his stratagems.” ^{NJB}
- ▶ **LIMITATION.** *“For a time”* (v 24c) – “only for a time,” ^{NKJV} “this will last

- ▶ **FUTILITY.** *“He shall not stand”* (v 25c) – “he will not be able to stand,” ^{NIV} “he shall not succeed,” ^{NRSV} “he will be forced to give way,” ^{BBE} “but to no avail.” ^{NLT}
- ▶ **OVERTHROWN FROM WITHIN.** *“Feed of the portion of his meat”* (v 26a) – “eat his choice food,” ^{NASB} “eat from the king’s provisions,” ^{NIV} “eat the royal rations,” ^{NRSV} “they that eat bread with him,” ^{DOUAY} “his table companions.” ^{NAB}
- ▶ **SLAUGHTER.** *“Many shall fall*

other,” ^{NIV} “exchange lies,” ^{NRSV} “attempting to deceive each other.” ^{NLT}

- ▶ **DESTINED TO FALL.** *“It shall not prosper”* (27 c) – “it will not succeed,” ^{NASB} “but to no avail,” ^{NIV} “it shall not prosper,” ^{ASV} “it will come to nothing,” ^{BBE} “they will not have their way,” ^{NJB} “it will make no difference.” ^{NLT}
- ▶ **APPOINTMENT.** *“At the time appointed”* (27d) – “at the time fixed,” ^{BBE} “a fixed time.” ^{Septuagint}

WHO BUT GOD CAN CONTROL SUCH AN ADMIXTURE OF PEOPLE, EMOTIONS, INTENTIONS, AND EVENTS? HE ALONE CAN MANAGE SUCH A SEEMING HODGEPODGE, CAUSING IT TO WORK TOGETHER FOR THE GOOD OF THOSE WHO LOVE HIM AND ARE CALLED ACCORDING TO HIS PURPOSE

Who but God can control such an admixture of people, emotions, intentions, and events? He alone can manage such a seeming hodgepodge, causing it to work together for the good of those who love Him and are called according to His purpose (Rom 8:28).

Here we are provided a glimpse of one small portion of the world, during one relatively brief period of time. **Yet, this is an index that reveals how the Lord governs this world.** Those who put their trust in Him will surely not be disappointed.

This is heaven’s view of things occurring upon the earth – things taking place among the dignitaries of this present evil world. On man’s side of the equation, every effort, even though often shrewd and calculating, is eventually frustrated, proving to be futile. On God’s side, determinations are made that cannot be resisted or neutralized. His will dominates, and His time stands firm. None can change what He determines. That, dear reader, is the kind of world we are presently occupying.

only a short while.” ^{NLT}

- ▶ **AROUSAL.** *“Stir up his power and courage”* (v 25a) – “stir up his power and determination,” ^{NRSV} “his strength and his heart.” ^{DOUAY}
- ▶ **MOBILIZATION.** *“Stirred up to battle with a very great and mighty army”* (v 25b) – “mobilize an extremely large and mighty army,” ^{NASB} “wage ware with a large and very powerful army,” ^{NIV} “wage wear with a much greater and stronger army.” ^{NRSV}

down slain” (v 26b) – “many will fall in battle,” ^{NIV} “a great number will be put to the sword,” ^{BBE} “many will fall in the great slaughter.” ^{NJB}

- ▶ **SINFUL INTENTIONS.** *“Hearts shall be to do mischief”* (v 27a) – “bent on evil,” ^{NKJV} “intent on evil,” ^{NASB} “fixed on doing evil,” ^{BBE} “meditate mischief,” ^{DARBY} “resolved on evil.” ^{NAB}
- ▶ **LYING.** *“Speak lies at one table”* (v 27b) – “speak lies at the same table,” ^{NKJV} “speak lies to each other,” ^{NASB} “sit at the same table and lie to each

A RAISER OF TAXES FOR A FEW DAYS

^{11:20} *Then shall stand up in his estate a raiser of taxes in the glory of the kingdom: but within few days he shall be destroyed, neither in anger, nor in battle.”*

In tracing the Grecian kings with

which Israel would contend, the angel has just revealed the coming of Antiochus the Great. Compared by many to Alexander the Great, this was an imposing ruler. History says the following of him. “Antiochus III, c.242-187 ©, succeeded to the throne of the Seleucids in 223, when the kingdom was controlled

by a powerful minister and rebellion was spreading in Iran. He defeated the rebels, rid himself of the minister, and conquered much of Phoenicia, Syria, and Palestine from the Ptolemies of Egypt. He had to withdraw, however, after losing the Battle of Raphia (217).

During the next few years Antiochus regained much of Anatolia, where a relative, Achaeus, had

proclaimed himself king. In 213, Achaeus was captured in a dramatic plot and executed. Antiochus then embarked on a major expedition (212-206) to reconquer the lost eastern provinces, ruled by independent dynasties. Marching with little fighting as far as India, he received the nominal homage of the eastern rulers without imposing firm control.

Compared by flatterers to Alexander the Great, Antiochus set himself to regain all the land held by Seleucus I. After the death (205) of Ptolemy IV, he retook what he had lost at Raphia, then advanced as a self-styled liberator through Anatolia and crossed to Thrace, where he rebuilt (196) the old capital of Lysimachus. GROLLIER ENCYCLOPEDIA 2003

Yet, like all earthly rulers, he was “removed” by God from the political landscape. The inspired commentary on this impressive ruler is this: *“but he shall stumble and fall; and not be found”* (v 19). Thus it is written, *“Thus saith the LORD; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD”* (Jer 17:5). Whatever we may think of kings and kingdoms, or governors and governments, we do well not to trust in them. For in so doing, the heart departs from the Lord, who alone is *“the Governor among the nations”* and the *“Lord of kings.”* As simplistic as that may appear, we are living in a time when believers are being influenced to think otherwise,

IN HIS ESTATE

“Then shall stand up in his estate . . .” Other versions read, *“there shall arise in his place,”*^{NKJV} *“his successor,”*^{NIV} *“his place will be taken,”*^{BBE} *“there shall arise out of his root,”*^{Septuagint} *“in his stead one shall rise,”*^{NAB} and *“stood up on his station.”*^{YLT}

The word translated *“estate”* means a stand, base, office, or place. This refers to a role that is played, and a place into which one is set. When applied to kings, it emphasizes they have been *“set up”* by God (Dan 2:21), given authority by Him (Rom 13:1), and therefore are responsible to Him (Dan 2:47). From another vantage point, *“estate”* refers to a stewardship – an area of responsibility in which God is preeminent, even when it is undetected by men. The angels that fell, for example, *“kept not their first estate”* (Jude 1:6). They were expelled by God, who rules over all. They lost their assigned position.

In this text, the position of *“king of the North”* did not disappear when Antiochus the Great stumbled, fell, and was not found (11:19). God was not yet finished with Greece, and thus the fractured kingdom continued.

A RAISER OF TAXES

“. . . a raiser of taxes . . .” Other versions read *“imposes taxes,”*^{NKJV} *“an oppressor,”*^{NASB} and *“a tax collector.”*^{NIV}

A Kingdom Principle

It is the Spirit’s manner to associate specific kings with certain aspects of their dominion – particularly as they regard the outworking of Divine purpose. For

Spirit accentuates about them.

In my opinion, everyone will eventually be noted for something in particular – something that especially highlights their role in the Divine purpose. To put it another way, every person is in some way serving the purpose of God – either for good or for evil. Paul put it this way: *“But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honor, and some to dishonor”* (2 Tim 2:20). Jesus spoke of the heavenly kingdom being like a net that gathered a multitude of fishes *“of every kind.”* Some were *“good,”* and some were *“bad.”* In the end, the *“good”* were

IT IS THE SPIRIT’S MANNER TO ASSOCIATE SPECIFIC KINGS WITH CERTAIN ASPECTS OF THEIR DOMINION – PARTICULARLY AS THEY REGARD THE OUTWORKING OF DIVINE PURPOSE.

example, Pharaoh is noted for his refusal to let God’s people go, and his consequent overthrow at the Red Sea (Ex 9:16; Psa 136:15). Sihon and Og were noted for their obstinance against the sojourn eying Israelites (Num 32:33; Deut 31:4). Cyrus is associated with the rebuilding of the Temple (2 Chron 36:23). Pilate and Herod are marked by their opposition to the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 4:27).

This kingdom principle is even seen in key individuals. **Although long and divers lives may have been lived, people can be especially noted for one thing.** For example, Cain murdered Abel (1 John 3:12), Achan coveted and took forbidden things (Josh 7:1), and Judas betrayed Jesus (Mark 3:19), Demas forsook Paul (2 Tim 4:10), a certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets prepared a special room for Elisha (2 Kgs 4:10), and Onesiphorus refreshed Paul when he was in prison (2 Tim 1:16). There were also certain women, for example, who *“ministered”* to Jesus from their substance (Luke 8:3). These are things for which people were **especially noted** – things the Holy

“gathered into good vessels,” and the bad were cast away (Matt 13:47-48).

Again, Jesus spoke of the day of judgment, declaring that *“all nations”* would be judged upon the basis of how they treated His people (Matt 25:32-46). What other things they may or may not have done will be of little or no consequence compared with how they responded to the people of God.

What we have in this section of Daniel is a review of some *“vessels of dishonor,”* and *“bad fish.”* **These are kings that distinguished themselves by hostilities toward the people of God.** An historian might view their record quite differently, citing political, social, and military achievements for which they were responsible. However, that is not how heaven evaluates men.

What We Have Here

Now we come to the king who succeeded Antiochus the Great. What will he be noted for? How will the Spirit identify this Grecian dignitary? He was a *“raiser of taxes.”* He is noted for trying to

wring more money out of the people – imposing undue burdens upon them. This is the distinguishing thing about his reign. This is the sort of thing for which Jehoiakim was noted: *“And Jehoiakim gave the silver and the gold to Pharaoh; but he taxed the land to give the money according to the commandment of Pharaoh: he exacted the silver and the gold of the people of the land, of every one according to his taxation, to give it unto Pharaohnechoh”* (2 Kgs 23:35). **God does take note of such things!**

Seleucus Philopator

The king of reference is Seleucus Philopator, the eldest son of Antiochus the Great, and seventh king of the Seleucid dynasty, Syria (187-175 B.C.). Because of the heavy debt incurred by his

succeeded him, and was settled in his kingdom in his father’s room, and stood upon his basis; and might well be called a raiser of taxes, being not only a covetous man, and a lover of money above all things; and therefore laid heavy taxes on his subjects, to gratify his avarice; but was indeed obliged to it, to raise the thousand talents yearly to pay the Romans, which his father had laid himself under obligation to do; and this took up the whole life of this his successor; for as there were twelve thousand talents to pay, a thousand each year, and Seleucus reigned in all but twelve years at most, he did nothing but raise taxes yearly to pay this tribute.” JOHN GILL

▣ “The general policy of Seleucus towards the Jews, like that of his father (3, 2, 3, kai < Se > leukon) was conciliatory, as the possession of Palestine was of the highest importance in the prospect of an Egyptian war; and he undertook a large share of

directions of his father, toward sustaining the expenses of the sacrifices at Jerusalem, determined to apply to his own use the treasures of the temple, for the annual payment of one thousand talents to the Romans had reduced his finances to a very low ebb. With the design, therefore, of replenishing his exhausted treasury, he sent Heliodorus to Jerusalem to plunder the temple.” Hebrews Commonwealth, p. 255

Although history counts the activity of this king fairly insignificant, yet *“the Scriptures of truth”* throw the Divine spotlight on his taxing policy. The reason for this will be expounded in the following verses. **His policy moved him to seek to exploit the people of God, and things that belonged to the Lord.**

THE GLORY OF THE KINGDOM

“... in the glory of the kingdom . . .” Other versions read, *“who imposes taxes on the glorious kingdom,”*^{NKJV} *“the Jewel of his kingdom.”*^{NASB}

Here many of the linguists miss the point, being overly enamored of word meanings, and missing the spirit of the text. **The “glory of the kingdom” was the land of the Jews.** Remember, the things being revealed to Daniel are what will befall his people in the latter days. The angel is not providing a mere overview of Grecian political policies. The events now described derive their significance from their association with *“the pleasant land,”* or *“glory of the kingdom.”*

The meaning of this text is that this king sought to raise funds from within the holy land itself. His effort was most malicious. History records that he made an attempt to rob the Temple of God, in which much wealth was stored. Such actions are duly noted by the *“Governor among the nations.”*

I here provide a rather lengthy excerpt from the book of First Maccabees. It is to be understood that this is an historical record, and is not to be considered equal with Divine revelation. It does, however, provide a sense of what took place hundreds of years after Daniel’s prophecy, confirming the exacting detail of the word’s the angel brought to him. **The purpose of God is, indeed, very detailed!**

ALTHOUGH HISTORY COUNTS THE ACTIVITY OF THIS KING FAIRLY INSIGNIFICANT, YET “THE SCRIPTURES OF TRUTH” THROW THE DIVINE SPOTLIGHT ON HIS TAXING POLICY. THE REASON FOR THIS WILL BE EXPOUNDED IN THE FOLLOWING VERSES. HIS POLICY MOVED HIM TO SEEK TO EXPLOIT THE PEOPLE OF GOD, AND THINGS THAT BELONGED TO THE LORD.

father Antiochus the Great, he devoted his rule to the gathering of monies to pay off that debt. Of him history records the following.

▣ “He was compelled by financial necessities, created in part by the heavy war-indemnity exacted by Rome, to pursue an ambitious policy and was assassinated by his minister Heliodorus.” Wikipedia Encyclopedia

▣ “Because of financial difficulties, created in part by the heavy war indemnity exacted by Rome, Seleucus was compelled to pursue a policy devoid of expensive adventures.” BRITANNICA 2003

▣ “his character was emarkably answered in Seleucus Philopater, the elder son of Antiochus he Great, who was a great oppressor of his own subjects, and exacted bundance of money from them; and, when he was told he would thereby lose his friends, he said he knew no better friend he had then money. He likewise attempted to rob the temple at Jerusalem, which this seems especially to refer to.” MATTHEW HENRY

▣ “. . . the eldest son of Antiochus the great; who

the expenses of the Temple service (ver. 3, 6). On one occasion, by the false representations of Simon (q.v.), a Jewish officer, he was induced to make an attempt to carry away the treasures deposited in the Temple by means of the same Heliodorus who murdered him. The attempt signally failed, but it does not appear that he afterwards showed any resentment against the Jews (4, 5, 6,); though his want of money to pay the enormous tribute due to the Romans may have compelled him to raise extraordinary revenues, for which cause he is described in Daniel as a “raiser of taxes” (11, 20; comp. Livy, 41, 19).” MCLINTOK STRONG’S CYCLOPEDIA

▣ “Seleucus Philopator (B.C. 187-176) had a character the reverse of his father’s. He was no restless seeker for glory, but desired wealth and quietness. Among the Jews, however, he had a very evil reputation, for he sent an “exactor” — a mere tax-collector, Heliodorus — “to pass through the glory of the kingdom.” THE EXPOSITOR’S BIBLE

▣ The historian Jahn says, “The king, through a friend to the Jews, and though he had regularly made disbursements, according to the

Daniel is told of the further advances of wicked kings, and of their growing and relentless wickedness, by Given O. Blakely

"Insomuch that Seleucus of Asia of his own revenues bare all the costs belonging to the service of the sacrifices. **3:4** But one Simon of the tribe of Benjamin, who was made governor of the temple, fell out with the high priest about disorder in the city. **3:5** And when he could not overcome Onias, he gat him to Apollonius the son of Thraseas, who then was governor of Celosyria and Phenice, **3:6** And told him that the treasury in Jerusalem was full of infinite sums of money, so that the multitude of their riches, which did not pertain to the account of the sacrifices, was innumerable, and that it was possible to bring all into the king's hand. Now when Apollonius came to the king, and had showed him of the money whereof he was told, the king chose out Heliodorus his treasurer, and sent him with a commandment to bring him the foresaid money. **3:8** So forthwith Heliodorus took his journey; under a color of visiting the cities of Celosyria and Phenice, but indeed to fulfil the king's purpose. **3:9** And when he was come to Jerusalem, and had been courteously received of the high priest of the city, he told him what intelligence was given of the money, and declared wherefore he came, and asked if these things were so indeed. **3:10** Then the high priest told him that there was such money laid up for the relief of widows and fatherless children: **3:11** And that some of it belonged to Hircanus son of Tobias, a man of great dignity, and not as that wicked Simon had misinformed: the sum whereof in all was four hundred talents of silver, and two hundred of gold: **3:12** And that it was altogether impossible that such wrongs should be done unto them, that had committed it to the holiness of the place, and to the majesty and inviolable sanctity of the temple, honored over all the world. **3:13** But Heliodorus, because of the king's commandment given him, said, That in any wise it must be brought into the king's treasury. **3:14** So at the day which he appointed he entered in to order this matter: wherefore there was no small agony throughout the whole city. **3:15** But the priests, prostrating themselves before the altar in their priests' vestments, called unto heaven upon him that made a law concerning things given to he kept, that they should safely be preserved for such as had committed them to be kept. Then whoso had looked the high priest in the face, it would have wounded his heart: for his countenance and the changing of his color declared the inward agony of his mind. **3:17** For the man was so compassed with fear and horror of the body, that it was manifest to them that looked upon him, what sorrow he had now in his heart. **3:18** Others ran flocking out of their houses to the general supplication, because the place was like to come into contempt. **3:19** And the women, girt with sackcloth under their breasts, abounded in the streets, and the virgins that were kept in ran, some to the gates, and some to the walls, and others looked out of the windows. **3:20** And all, holding their hands toward heaven, made supplication. **3:21** Then it would have pitied a man to see the falling down of the multitude of all sorts, and the fear of the high priest being in such an agony. **3:22** They then called upon the Almighty Lord to

keep the things committed of trust safe and sure for those that had committed them. **3:23** Nevertheless Heliodorus executed that which was decreed. ^{FIRST} MACABEES, CHAPTER 3

At the precise point at which this king sought to exploit the people of God, and plunder the Temple, he sealed his own doom. The land of the Jews, *"the glory of the kingdom,"* could have been the sanctifying element in his domain. The Syrian kings were given the opportunity to seek *"the God of the Hebrews"* (Ex 3:18). They could have declared Him to be the God of heaven and earth, as did Nebuchadnezzar and Darius (Dan 4:34-37; 6:25-27). Instead, they sought to exploit them. The

accomplishments of his reign would have no measurable significance – only as a technical, and nearly meaningless, "blip" on the canvas of eternal purpose.

He Shall Be Destroyed

This king would be taken away violently – *"destroyed."* It would not, however, be in a fierce battle, or some form of military conflict – *"not in anger or in battle."* One version reads, *"neither publicly nor in battle."* ^{NJB}

One has said of this man: "Seleucus Philopator, who peeled his subjects, and spared not to rob the temple. Within few days - For he lived not out the third part of his father's reign. Not in battle - Not by open force, but by poison." ^{JOHN WESLEY}

AT THE PRECISE POINT AT WHICH THIS KING SOUGHT TO EXPLOIT THE PEOPLE OF GOD, AND PLUNDER THE TEMPLE, HE SEALED HIS OWN DOOM. THE LAND OF THE JEWS, "THE GLORY OF THE KINGDOM," COULD HAVE BEEN THE SANCTIFYING ELEMENT IN HIS DOMAIN. THE SYRIAN KINGS WERE GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO SEEK "THE GOD OF THE HEBREWS"

king now being considered came to *"the glory of the kingdom,"* even seeking to rob the Temple of God. What will happen to such a wicked intruder?

WITHIN A FEW DAYS

"... but within few days he shall be destroyed, neither in anger, nor in battle." Other versions read, *"In a few years,"* ^{NIV} *"after a short time,"* ^{BBE} and *"after a very brief reign."* ^{NLT}

A Few Days

Actually, this king reigned twelve years. Why does the angel use the words *"within a few days?"* There are two reasons. First, his reign was brief in comparison with that of his father, Antiochus the Great. Second, and of even more significance, **his death took place shortly after his determination to rob the Temple of God.** His reign would be cut short by God, and the

The historian Jahn provides the following details. "In the eleventh year of his reign, he sent his only son Demetrius as hostage to Rome, and released his brother Antiochus, who had resided twelve years in that city. As the heir to the crown was now out of the way, Heliodorus sought to raise himself to the royal dignity, and for this purpose he destroyed the king by poison." ^{Hebrews Commonwealth,} ch. ix. Section 91.

Thus a reign of twelve years (187-175 B.C.) is briefly summarized by the angel in these words: *"In his stead one shall arise who will send a tax collector through the glorious kingdom, but he shall soon be destroyed, though not in conflict or in battle."* ^{NAB}

Remember, this is heaven's view of things occurring on the earth. It is placed against the backdrop of *"eternal purpose,"* in which the will of God is preeminent, and the people with whom He has identified Himself taking

Daniel is told of the further advances of wicked kings, and of their growing and relentless wickedness, by Given O. Blakely

precedence over all other peoples. Also, the coming of the Messiah, the time in which God would set up a kingdom that would never be destroyed (Dan 2:44) overshadows all other events and kingdoms.

PERSPECTIVE

Thus, we have an example true godly perspective. **When evaluating the events taking place among men and kingdoms, we must view them through the window of Divine intent.** We must ever remember that *“the earth is the Lord’s, and the fulness*

thereof” (Psa 24:1). In every age it is true, *“God reigneth over the heathen”* (Psa 47:8) – whether they are Babylonians, Persians, Grecians, or Romans. God punishes *“the kings of the earth upon the earth”* (Isa 24:21), not allowing their blasphemous deeds to go unrequited. Whether it is Pharaoh, Sennacherib, Seleucus Philopator, or Herod the Great, they are held in strict account by God – and **God is faithful to remember His land, His City, and His people.** This is all the more true of those who are in His Son, having been joined to Him, and made partakers of the Divine nature.

Thus the Scriptures testify to these two great realities.

- ▣ *“The Lord will not forsake His people or cast off His inheritance”* (Psa 94:14).
- ▣ God is *“able to abase”* those who walk in pride (Dan 4:37).

Circumstances may seem to contradict these affirmations, but they that *“wait upon the Lord”* will find them to be true. Thus it is written, *“If God be for us, who can be against us”* (Rom 8:31).

A VILE PERSON OBTAINS THE KINGDOM BY FLATTERIES

“²¹ And in his estate shall stand up a vile person, to whom they shall not give the honor of the kingdom: but he shall come in peaceably, and obtain the kingdom by flatteries.”

The prophecy of God’s people under the reign of the Grecians continues.

pushed his way into *“the pleasant land,”* which was Israel’s dwelling place (8:9b).

- ▣ He waxed great, even casting down some of the *“host of heaven,”* Trampling them, and moving against those who were aligned with the God of heaven (8:10).

- ▣ He was a king *“of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences,”* having no fear of God or regard for man (8:23).

- ▣ Operating in a power that was not his own, but was delegated to him, he *“shall destroy the mighty and holy people,”* launching an aggressive initiative against them (8:24).

- ▣ His rule would be one of craftiness and subtlety (8:25a).

- ▣ He would *“magnify himself in his heart”* (8:25b).

- ▣ He would *“destroy many”* (8:25c).

- ▣ He would stand up against *“the Prince of princes”* (8:25d).

- ▣ He would be destroyed, but not with human power (8:25e).

WHEREAS ANTIOCHUS EPIPHANES WAS FORMERLY SAID TO HAVE SPRUNG UP FROM AMONG THE FOUR HORNS OF THE HE GOAT, WE HAVE NOW SEEN THAT HIS IDENTITY IS NARROWED DOWN TO THE KINGS OF THE NORTH AND THE SOUTH – THE TWO KINGDOMS OF SYRIA AND EGYPT.

Upon the sudden and non-military death of Seleucus Philopator another king rises, taking his place, for he had no successor. This is the same king already mentioned in the eighth chapter. There his beginning is referred to as *“a little horn.”* In that passage, the following is said of him.

- ▣ He came forth from the four horns of the *“he goat,”* who depicted the Grecian Empire (8:8-9a).
- ▣ He *“waxed exceedingly great,”* and

- ▣ Through him, God’s daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of the sanctuary plundered and cast down (8:11).

- ▣ Because of the transgression of Israel, he was given power to cast truth down to the ground, and prosper in his own wicked way (8:12).

- ▣ Under him, both *“the sanctuary and the host”* were trampled underfoot (8:13).

Now the angel extends his comments on this wicked king – one who was revealed after the fall of Alexander (the *“notable horn that was broken”*), and after the rise of the *“four notable ones”* that rose up in Alexander’s place (8:8). It is as though a spiritual magnifying glass is being placed over the Intertestamental period, providing details that confirm the Sovereignty of God and His care for His people. Whereas Antiochus Epiphanes was formerly said to have sprung up from among the four horns of the he goat, we

have now seen that his identity is narrowed down to the kings of the North and the South – the two kingdoms of Syria and Egypt.

In a sense, we are witnessing the death-throes of the Grecian empire. At its root, the aggression against the people of God is because of their own transgressions, which were brought to the full (8:12,23). However, at the next level, it was provoked by “*spiritual wickedness in high places.*” Operating under Satan, they were seeking to thwart the coming of the promised Savior into the world.

A VILE PERSON

“*And in his estate shall stand up a vile person . . .*” Other versions read, “*in his place a despicable person will arise,*”^{NASB} “*He will be succeeded by a contemptible person,*”^{NIV} “*There shall stand up in his place one despised,*”^{DOUAY} and “*In his place will rise a wretch.*”^{NJB}

A “*vile person*” is one worthless and disdained, or looked down upon. The sons of Eli are described as men who “*made themselves vile*” (1 Sam 3:13). A “*vile person*” is said to “*speak villany*” (wickedness), and “*work iniquity*” (Isa 32:6). Such a person is one in whom iniquity is enthroned, and its expression is aggressive.

In this case, the vileness of the ruler will be measured by his conduct toward the people of God.

THEY WILL NOT GIVE THE HONOR OF THE KINGDOM

“*. . . to whom they shall not give the honor of the kingdom , , ,*” Other versions read, “*to whom they will not give the honor of royalty,*”^{NKJV} “*on whom the honor of kingship has not been conferred,*”^{NASB} “*who has not been given the honor of royalty,*”^{NIV} and “*on whom royal majesty has not been conferred.*”^{NRSV}

The idea is that Antiochus Epiphanes did not come to the throne through a normal process – i.e., either by succession, or royal appointment. Following the assassination of Seleucus Philopator, the rightful heir of the throne was his son, Demetrius. Antiochus was the younger brother of Seleucus, and other son of Antiochus the Great. He is one of the two sons of the

king of the North (Seleucus Callinicus), who were stirred up against the “*king of the South,*” or Egypt (11:10).

History records the following concerning the ascension of Antiochus Epphanes to the throne. “. . . also called Antiochus Epimanes (the Mad) Seleucid king of the Hellenistic Syrian kingdom who reigned from 175 to 164 BC. As a ruler he was best known for his encouragement of Greek culture and institutions. His attempts to suppress Judaism brought on the Wars of the Maccabees.”^{BRITANNICA 2003} “Antiochus IV was the Seleucid king whose attempts to introduce pagan rites in Jerusalem led to the revolt of the Maccabees and the creation of a Jewish state. The son of Antiochus III, he had to defeat the usurper Heliodorus before taking power in 175.”^{GROLLIERS 2003}

McClintok and Strong’s Cyclopedia of Bible Knowledge says the following about this man. “ANTIOCHUS (IV) EPIPHANES (Ejpfanh, illustrious; comp. Michaelis on 1 Maccabees 1:10, and Eckhel, Doctr. num. I, 3, 223; nicknamed Epimanes, Ejpimanh, madman, Athen. 10:438

Now the angel shines the light of heavenly illumination upon this despot, showing his role in the latter days of the Grecian Empire – particularly as it regards the land of Israel and the people of God.

HE SHALL COME IN PEACEABLY

“*. . . but he shall come in peaceably . . .*” Other versions read, “*come in a time of tranquility,*”^{NASB} “*when the people feel secure,*”^{NIV} and “*without warning.*”^{NRSV}

Antiochus Epiphanes did not seize the throne forcibly, or by military might. He rather took it by craft and stealth. One commentator provides the following concerning this effort. “But he quietly left Rome – while Demetrius, his nephew, the true heir to the crown, remained there; came to Athens, and learned what was the state of things in Syria, where Heliodorus had usurped the authority; made an agreement with the king of Pergamos to aid him, and, by the assistance of a part of the Syrians who were opposed to the usurper

IN THIS CASE, THE VILENESS OF THE RULER WILL BE MEASURED BY HIS CONDUCT TOWARD THE PEOPLE OF GOD.

sq.; on coins Theos, Deo ,god, see Frohlich, Annal. tab. 6, 7), a Seleucid king of Syria, second son of Antiochus the Great (Appian, Syr. 45; 1 Maccabees 1:11), ascended the throne on the death of his brother, Seleucus Philopator (on his enumeration, the 11th of the Seleucidae, Daniel 7:8, 24; see Lengerke, Daniel, p. 318 sq.), B.C. 175 (see Wernsdorf, De fide libr. Macc. p. 28 sq.), and attained an evil notoriety for his tyrannical treatment of the Jews (comp. Daniel 7:8 sq.), who have described him (in the second Book of the Maccabees) as barbarous in the extreme (see Eichhorn, Apokr. p. 265). He had been given as a hostage to the Romans (B.C. 188) after his father’s defeat at Magnesia. In B.C. 175 he was released by the intervention of his brother Seleucus, who substituted his own son Demetrius in his place. Antiochus was at Athens when Seleucus was assassinated by Heliodorus. He took advantage of his position, and, by the assistance of Eumenes and Attalus, easily expelled Heliodorus, who had usurped the crown, and himself “obtained the kingdom by flatteries” (Daniel 11:21; comp. Liv.41:20), to the exclusion of his nephew Demetrius (Daniel 7:8).

Heliodorus, deprived him of the authority, and himself took possession of the crown. No one seemed to suspect that this was his aim, or to doubt that his object was to remove an usurper that his nephew might be placed on the throne.”^{BARNES}

OBTAIN THE KINGDOM BY FLATTERIES

“*. . . and obtain the kingdom by flatteries.*” Other versions read, “*seize the kingdom by intrigue,*”^{NKJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV} “*by fair words,*”^{BBE} “*by fraud,*”^{DOUAY} “*by deceitful ways,*”^{Septuagint} and “*through trickery.*”^{TNK}

These were deceptive and cunning methods that employed words and promises more than military might and power. **He did, in fact, seize the kingdom by cunning stratagem rather than a military coup, which is a frequent Satanic method.**

Daniel is told of the further advances of wicked kings, and of their growing and relentless wickedness, by Given O. Blakely

Prior to his reign, Antiochus himself was a prisoner of Rome, the kingdom that was lurking in the background, waiting to replace Greece. Antiochus was a hostage in Rome for his father, who was defeated by the Romans. Using stealth, he moved his brother, Seleucus IV to exchange his own son (Demetrius, the rightful heir) for himself. Of this, history records the following. "Antiochus was the third son of Antiochus III the Great. After his father's defeat by the Romans in 190-189, he served as hostage for his father in Rome from 189 to 175, where he learned to admire Roman institutions and policies. His brother, King Seleucus IV, exchanged him for Demetrius, the son of Seleucus; and after Seleucus was murdered by Heliodorus, a usurper, Antiochus in turn ousted him." BRITANNICA 2003

McClintok and Strong's

What the angel referred to as taking away the daily sacrifice, defiling the sanctuary, and overthrowing a heavenly host, history records as the following. "Antiochus' hellenizing policies brought him into conflict with the prosperous Oriental temple organizations, and particularly with the Jews. Since Antiochus III's reign the Jews had enjoyed extensive autonomy under their high priest. They were divided into two parties, the orthodox Hasideans (Pious Ones) and a reform party that favored Hellenism. For financial reasons Antiochus supported the reform party and, in return for a considerable sum, permitted the high priest, Jason, to build a gymnasium in Jerusalem and to introduce the Greek mode of educating young people. In 172, for an even bigger tribute, he appointed Menelaus in place of Jason. In 169, however, while Antiochus was campaigning in Egypt, Jason conquered Jerusalem—with the exception of the citadel—and murdered many adherents of his rival Menelaus. When Antiochus

glory to God when he is abruptly brought down. **It is God's manner to let the wicked excel prior to casting them down.**

SOMETHING TO LEARN

There is a valuable lesson to be learned from this text. Ponder the surroundings in which the people of God find themselves. They are surrounded on all sides by political opportunists. They are being bludgeoned by wars and rumors of wars. Not only will they be subject to military force, but to shrewd deception as well. How will the wisdom of this world be able to protect them in such circumstances? How will they be able to muster armed forces sufficient to consistently repel their enemies? If God does not protect them, who will?

The people of God today are in much the same circumstance. There are August powers and unparalleled deceivers aligned against them. They cannot hope to confront such forces in the energy of the flesh. Additionally, they have a mandate from heaven to "*resist the devil,*" and to "*stand*" against his wiles (1 Pet 5:8-9; Eph 6:10-11). They cannot make "*friends*" with the world, for that will cause them to be the enemies of God (James 4:4). They are admonished, "*Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong!*" (1 Cor 16:13).

It is not possible for this to be accomplished apart from faith. The victory that overcomes the world is faith, not might! Faith, not wisdom! Faith, not brilliant planning! Faith, not The words that are being revealed to Daniel will fuel faith and ignite hope. They will enable the people of God to survive assaults from seemingly impossible odds!

THUS, THROUGH SHREWDNESS, FLATTERIES, AND DECEPTIONS, THE REIGN OF ANTIOCHUS BEGINS. HOWEVER, THIS WILL NOT BE THE END OF THE STORY. EVERY ADVANTAGE IS GIVEN TO HIM IN ORDER TO FULFILL HIS WICKED WILL. THIS WILL ONLY SERVE TO BRING GLORY TO GOD WHEN HE IS ABRUPTLY BROUGHT DOWN.

Cyclopedia of Biblical Knowledge, says of Antiochus obtaining the kingdom. "In B.C. 175 he was released by the intervention of his brother Seleucus, who substituted his own son Demetrius in his place. Antiochus was at Athens when Seleucus was assassinated by Heliodorus. He took advantage of his position, and, by the assistance of Eumenes and Attalus, easily expelled Heliodorus, who had usurped the crown, and himself "obtained the kingdom by flatteries" (Daniel 11:21; comp. Liv. 41:20), to the exclusion of his nephew Demetrius (Daniel 7:8)."

returned from Egypt in 167 he took Jerusalem by storm and enforced its Hellenization. The city forfeited its privileges and was permanently garrisoned by Syrian soldiers." BRITANNICA 2003

Thus, through shrewdness, flatteries, and deceptions, the reign of Antiochus begins. However, this will not be the end of the story. Every advantage is given to him in order to fulfill his wicked will. This will only serve to bring

BROKEN WITH THE ARMS OF A FLOOD

"²² And with the arms of a flood shall they be overflowed from before him, and shall be broken; yea, also the prince of the covenant."

The angel continues outlining the circumstances through which Daniel's

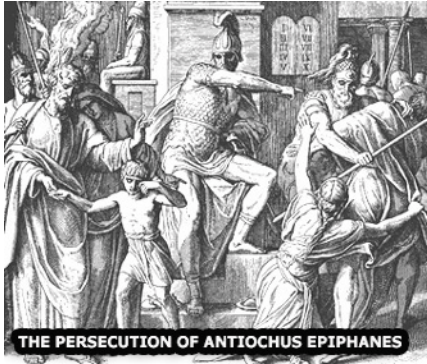
people will pass – and survive! The kingdoms of this world will not be able to topple the kingdom of God. Rather, it is His kingdom that will utterly decimate all of them.

Although Antiochus Epiphanes

seized the kingdom by craft, he would have to maintain it by force. The kingdoms of this world cannot remain in a perpetual season of peace. They are like the "*troubled sea*" that continually casts up mire and dirt (Isa 57:20), and "*foaming out their own shame*" (Jude 1:13).

Daniel is told of the further advances of wicked kings, and of their growing and relentless wickedness, by Given O. Blakely

Our first exposure to this wicked king emphasized his assault against the people of God themselves.



In this revelation, a different view is presented of this opponent of the people of God. His character is accentuated – “a vile person.” The means by which he gained the throne are underscored – “to whom they did not give the honor of the kingdom.” That is, he did not ascend the throne through a normal process, as did the other kings. Rather, he seized the kingdom by craft. Now we will see the rapidity and seeming invincibility with which this king dominates.

THE ARMS OF A FLOOD

“And with the arms of a flood . . .”

Other versions read, “with the force of a flood,”^{NKJV} “overflowing forces,”^{NASB} and “an overwhelming arm.”^{NIV}

The word “arms,” or “arm,” denotes power or strength. The word “flood” depicts a rapid inundation, against which it is impossible to stand.

Here the angel moves to the final conquest of Antiochus over Egypt, the kingdom of the South. Remember, these two kingdoms (Syria and Egypt) were the final divisions of the once-great kingdom of Grecia. It is as though Antiochus is attempting to gather the kingdom into a single powerful entity once again, as it was under Alexander the Great. However, “the Scriptures of Truth” have already recorded the outcome of the divided kingdom of Greece. “Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his (Alexander, the “notable horn”) power” (Dan 8:22). As powerful as Antiochus may have appeared, the powers of Greece were in a state

of appointed deterioration.

OVERFLOWN FROM BEFORE HIM

“ . . . shall they be overflown from before him and shall be broken . . . ” Other versions read, “they shall be swept away from before him,”^{NKJV} and “flooded away before him, and shattered,”^{NASB} and “crushed.”^{NJB}

The sudden and devastating power of Antiochus’ initiative is described most vividly. “He undertook four campaigns against Egypt, in order to possess himself of Coele-Syria and Phoenicia, which he had claimed since Cleopatra’s death (see the ANTIQCHUS preceding); the first B.C. 171, the second B.C. 170 (2 Maccabees 5:1; 1 Maccabees 1:17 sq.), the third B.C. 169, the fourth B.C. 168. On his return from the second of these campaigns, in the prosecution of which he had overrun the greater part of Egypt, and taken prisoner the Egyptian king, Ptolemy Philometor (comp. Daniel 11:26), he indulged in the harshest manner of proceedings in Jerusalem, on occasion of the above shameful quarrel among the priests, SEE MENELAUS, which had been carried on by open force of arms (comp. Joseph. Ant. 12, 5, 1), and vented his rage especially on the temple, which he plundered and desecrated with great bloodshed (1 Maccabees 1:20 42; 2 Maccabees 5:1- 23). Being checked by the Romans in his fourth campaign against Egypt, and compelled in a very peremptory manner to retire (Liv. 45:12; Polyb. 29:11; Appian, Syr. 66; Diod. Sic. Exc. Vatic. 31:2; comp. Daniel 11:29 sq.), he detached (B.C. 167) a body of troops to Jerusalem, who took the city by assault, slaughtered a large part of the inhabitants, and gave up the city to a general sack (1 Maccabees 1:30 sq.; 2 Maccabees 5:24 sq.; comp. Daniel 11:31 sq.). The Jewish worship in the Temple was utterly broken up and abolished (1 Maccabees 1:43 sq.). At this time he availed himself of the assistance of the ancestral enemies of the Jews (1 Maccabees 4:61; 5:3 sq.; Daniel 11:41). The decrees then followed which have rendered his name infamous. The Greek religion was forcibly imposed upon the Jews, and there was set up, for the purpose of desecrating (Diod. Sic. Eclog. 34, 1) and defiling the Temple, on the 15th of Kisleu, the “abomination of desolation” [q.v.] (Daniel 11:31; 12:11; 1 Maccabees 1:57), i.e. probably a little idolatrous shrine (Joseph. Ant. 12, 5, 4) on the altar of burnt-offerings; the first victim was sacrificed to Jupiter Olympius, on the 25th of the same month.”
MCCLINTOK AND STRONG

Antiochus’ final conquest of Egypt, therefore led to his flagrant abuses of the people and worship of Almighty God. It was a sort of prelude to the atrocities committed against the Jews. It is as though his victories bolstered his wicked pride, and whetted his appetite for the oppression of the

people of God.

To Antiochus, the conquest of Jerusalem was incidental, with the greater exploit being that of Egypt. In heaven, the conquest of Egypt was secondary to the overrunning of Jerusalem, which had drawn the attention of God. Power had been given to Antiochus by the only One who can give power (Rom 13:1). The manner in which he used this power confirmed he was, in fact, a “vile person.”

If it had not been for the prophecy given to Daniel, those living in the time of “the little horn” would have lost all hope. Judging from appearance, Antiochus Epiphanes seemed invincible, sweeping over foes like a torrential flood. However, that was only according to appearance.

A THOUGHT

Here was a period of time during which political upheaval and the oppression of the people of God was present. There were still people of faith who had to live in these times, trusting in God and not yielding to unbelief and despair. These were things that would befall Daniel’s people (10:13) – who were primarily God’s people. The land that would be invaded would be “the pleasant land” (8:9), the “glorious land” (11:16) – “the LORD’S land” (Hos 9:3). The Temple that would be sacked was His sanctuary.

There is a theological stance that imagines such things cannot take place. Novices will cite Scriptures that appear to indicate no such things can happen to those aligned with God.

- ▣ “No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is of me, saith the LORD.” (Isa 54:17)
- ▣ “For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found: surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him.” (Psa 32:6)
- ▣ “He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust:

his truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee.” (Psa 91:4-7)

- ▶ “And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.” (2 Tim 4:18)

Such texts are not intended to suggest the people of God pass through this world without experiencing staggering unpleasantries. There are higher purposes being served than the personal comfort of the people of God. That is why He says, “*When thou **passest through the waters**, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou **walkest through the fire**, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee” (Isa 43:2). **There IS such a thing as going THROUGH the flood and the fire – of enduring unspeakably atrocities.** Yet, they will have no ultimate, or eternal, affect upon the saints.*

Even if this was not stated, our knowledge of the history of the saints should have led us to this conclusion. Ponder what the most favored of God’s people have endured. Some continued to live in the world for a time, and some did not.

- ▶ Abel was murdered (Gen 4:8).
- ▶ Joseph was oppressed by his brothers, and by a lengthy imprisonment (Gen 37:20-29; 39:20-23).
- ▶ The Israelites were grievously oppressed in Egypt (Ex 5:14).
- ▶ The newborn children of the Israelites were consigned to death (Ex 1:22; Acts 7:19).
- ▶ David was slandered, experienced fear on every side, his enemies took counsel against him, and devised

ways to kill him (Psa 31:13).

- ▶ Wicked Jezebel “*cut off the prophets of the Lord*” (1 Kgs 18:4).
- ▶ Zechariah the prophet was stoned to death in “*the court of the house of the Lord*” (2 Chron 24:24).
- ▶ Job endured unparalleled assaults from the devil himself (Job 1:7-20; 2:2-8).
- ▶ Jeremiah was thrown into a pit, and sunk down into its mire (Jer 38:6).

spiritual naivety far from us. God has said far too much on this subject for His people to expect every opponent to topple before them.

One of the things we are to derive from this text, is that God always has the last word! There is no such thing as an enemy of God’s people that the Lord will not bring down. As wicked as Antiochus Epiphanes was, he was not an exception to this rule.

A Word to Teachers
The servants of God are never to

SUCH TEXTS ARE NOT INTENDED TO SUGGEST THE PEOPLE OF GOD PASS THROUGH THIS WORLD WITHOUT EXPERIENCING STAGGERING UNPLEASANTRIES. THERE ARE HIGHER PURPOSES BEING SERVED THAN THE PERSONAL COMFORT OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD.

- ▶ Jehoiakim the king killed Urijah the priest with the sword, and cast his body into “*the graves of the common people*” (Jer 26:23).
- ▶ John the Baptist was beheaded (Matt 14:10-11).
- ▶ James the Apostle, brother of James, was slain with the sword by Herod (Acts 12:2).
- ▶ Stephen was stoned to death by his own countrymen (Acts 7:58-59).
- ▶ Paul was beaten with stripes five times, three times with rods, and was stoned once, also enduring three shipwrecks, a day and a night in the deep, and perils everywhere he went (2 Cor 11:23-27).
- ▶ In his old age, John the Apostle was exiled on the Isle of Patmos (Rev 1:9).

Yet, none of the wicked achieved what they desired in their oppressions. Not only do the righteous live on with the Lord, their influence remains as well, and their works do follow them. Let us remove

get caught up in the doctrinal fads of the day. However, our day appears to be one of especial religious delusion. It is fashionable for men to speak of a coming world leader in such a way as to cause fear and trembling among believers. They belch out words about a one world government, a global despot, and a dreadful mark – doing so in such a way as to induce fear and obscure faith. While the presence of such things is not to be questioned, it is certainly not to be feared. With examples like Cain, Job, Stephen, Paul, etc., it is a sin of the greatest magnitude to teach the people of God they will be suddenly wafted away from all threat and harm. Such doctrines fly in the face of great bodies of revelation, and must not be tolerated among the saints.

Let faithful preachers and teachers proclaim the ultimate overthrow of political and spiritual despots. Tell the people of God **they** will at last judge the world (1 Cor 6:2-3), and that their enemies **will** stand before them to acknowledge that Jesus loved the saints (Rev 3:9). Declare the eternal triumph of Christ and those who trust in Him, not temporal successes of their enemies!

Even in the text before us, the angel has been accenting the Sovereignty of God and the vulnerability and temporality of all of His enemies. We must not fail to see these things.

ALSO THE PRINCE OF THE COVENANT

“... yea, also the prince of the covenant.” Other versions read, “the ruler of the agreement,”^{BBE} “head of the covenant,”^{Septuagint} “covenant leader,”^{TNK} and “leader of the covenant.”^{YLT}

There is a diversity of opinion concerning the identity of “the prince of the covenant.” Some think it was Judas Maccabaeus.^{Jerome} Others see this as Onias the high priest, Seleucus Philopater (Antiochus’ brother), and Trypho, a peer in the realm of Egypt.^{JOHN GILL} Some also believe it was Demetrius (Seleucus Philopator’s son and rightful heir),
MATTHEW HENRY

In my judgment, the “covenant” of

Second Maccabees. “7 But after the death of Seleucus, when Antiochus, called Epiphanes, took the kingdom, Jason the brother of Onias labored underhand to be high priest, 8 Promising unto the king by intercession three hundred and threescore talents of silver, and of another revenue eighty talents: 9 Beside this, he promised to assign an hundred and fifty more, if he might have licence to set him up a place for exercise, and for the training up of youth in the fashions of the heathen, and to write them of Jerusalem by the name of Antiochians. 34 Wherefore Menelaus, taking Andronicus apart, prayed, him to get Onias into his hands; who being persuaded thereunto, and coming to Onias in deceit, gave him his right hand with oaths; and though he were suspected by him, yet persuaded he him to come forth of the sanctuary: whom forthwith he shut up without regard of justice. 35 For the which cause not only the Jews, but many also of other nations, took great indignation, and were much grieved for the unjust murder of the man.”^{2 Maccabees 4}

The Historical Point

The point being made is that Antiochus Epiphanes would overwhelm Egypt, breaking the power of its ruler, and voiding the covenant that had been

vain. In my understanding, this is the primary message that is being brought home to Daniel. **The people of God may be subjected to all manner of atrocities and oppression. Yet, the devil’s cause will not triumph over that of the Lord.**

God had made certain commitments to Israel, and the message of the angel is confirming they will hold firm for all who trust the Lord.

▣ “And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and **will not forsake My people Israel.**” (1 Kgs 6:13)

▣ “Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, **yet will I not forget thee.** Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of My hands; thy walls are continually before Me.” (Isa 49:15-16)

▣ “Remember these, O Jacob and Israel; for thou art My servant: I have formed thee; thou art My servant: O Israel, **thou shalt not be forgotten of Me.**” (Isa 44:21)

▣ “Is Ephraim My dear son? is he a pleasant child? for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still: therefore My bowels are troubled for him; **I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the LORD.**” (Jer 31:20)

▣ “Thus saith the LORD, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The LORD of hosts is his name: **If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the LORD, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever. Thus saith the LORD; If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the LORD.**” (Jer 31:35-37)

Daniel knew of the Jews being

NO EFFORT OF THE ENEMIES OF GOD WILL ULTIMATELY SUCCEED. IT MAY INVOLVE MILITARY POWER, UNPARALLELED SHREWDNESS AND SUBTLETY, AND THE MAKING OF SEEMINGLY SUCCESSFUL COVENANTS – BUT IT WILL BE IN VAIN.

reference is the one made by Onias the high priest with Ptolemy and Cleopatra (referenced in Lesson 34, pages 5-6). This had to do with Onias building a temple in Egypt, which he affirmed was prophesied by Isaiah (Isa 19:20-21).

Although I would not be contentious about identifying this “prince,” I make this choice because the revelation regards what will befall Daniel’s people (10:13). It seems more proper, therefore, to favor a view that keeps the Jewish people in the prominence.

As an historical fact, Antiochus did displace Onias as high priest. Of that displacement, the following is recorded in

made prior to him. Even though the king of Egypt sought alliances with other countries to ward off the attacks of Antiochus, he was not able to stand before him. No agreements, however potentially effective they were considered, could stop the overthrow of Egypt.

THE REAL POINT

However the student wishes to approach this matter of identifying “the prince of the covenant,” care must be taken not to be moved away from the basic message of the heavenly messenger. **No effort of the enemies of God will ultimately succeed.** It may involve military power, unparalleled shrewdness and subtlety, and the making of seemingly successful covenants – but it will be in

oppressed by Nebuchadnezzar. He was told of the coming oppression of Persian principalities and Grecian kings. That oppression would be awful, yet it would not be decisive, nor would it void the promises of God. All of heaven leans over the ramparts of heaven to behold the marvelous working of the Lord. Now an angel brings a message that will move Daniel to do the same.

God has frequently affirmed the futility of initiatives against His will and people. Especially in these days, it is good to fill our mind with these words, and muse upon them within our hearts.

- ▶ *“Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD: though hand join in hand, he shall not be unpunished.”* (Prov 16:5)
- ▶ *“So are the paths of all that forget God; and the hypocrite’s hope shall perish: Whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust shall be a spider’s web. He shall lean upon his house, but it shall not stand: he shall hold it fast, but it shall not endure.”* (Job 8:13-15)
- ▶ *“And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.”* (Isa 13:11).

- ▶ *“And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low: and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day.”* (Isa 2:17)

prudent” (1 Cor 1:19)

- ▶ *“And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth,*

GOD HAS FREQUENTLY AFFIRMED THE FUTILITY OF INITIATIVES AGAINST HIS WILL AND PEOPLE. ESPECIALLY IN THESE DAYS, IT IS GOOD TO FILL OUR MIND WITH THESE WORDS, AND MUSE UPON THEM WITHIN OUR HEARTS.

- ▶ *“And the mean man shall be brought down, and the mighty man shall be humbled, and the eyes of the lofty shall be humbled.”* (Isa 5:15)

and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders.” (2 Thess 2:9)

- ▶ *“And the most proud shall stumble and fall, and none shall raise him up: and I will kindle a fire in his cities, and it shall devour all round about him.”* (Jer 50:32)

There is no question about the ultimate destiny of the wicked, and of all those who oppress the people of God, or come against what He has ordained. Under both covenants, considerable has been said about this. There is no room for doubt. Even while they appear to be prospering, God has actually placed them in *“slippery places,”* and their fall will come very soon (Psa 73:18). Thus, the political power that is now being expounded, will end very soon.

- ▶ *“The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.”* (Psa 9:17)

- ▶ *“For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the*

STRONG WITH A SMALL PEOPLE

“²³ And after the league made with him he shall work deceitfully: for he shall come up, and shall become strong with a small people.”

It should be apparent that the heavenly messenger sees things with much more clarity than mere mortals. Notice the confidence with which he speaks, and the sureness of his word. **There is no possibility that what he is saying will not come to pass.** Even though the mist of vagueness may surround some of the details of this prophecy, yet there is God, who will certainly bring it to pass for His own

glory, and for the ultimate good of His people. That is the impact this word must have upon our hearts.

THE LEAGUE MADE WITH HIM

“And after the league made with him . . .” Other versions read, “after an alliance made with him,” ^{NASB} *“after an agreement with him,”* ^{NIV} *“after friendships,”* ^{DOUAY} and *“after they join themselves to him.”* ^{YLT}

The conflict between Syria and Egypt (the North and the South) was over the possession of Coelo-Syria and Palestine. This was the cause of continual

contention and war. In the original dividing of the single Empire of Greece into four sections, the original kings of the North (Seleucus I Nicator), and the South (Ptolemy I Lager Soter) contended that these sections were under their control. History records the following.

“The great subject of contention between the kings of Syria and Egypt was the possession of Coelo-Syria and Palestine. This they often endeavored to settle by conquest as each of them claimed that in the original partition of the empire of Alexander this portion of the empire fell to himself; and often they endeavored to settle it by treaty. Consequently this region was constantly passing from one to the other, and was also

the seat of frequent wars. The "league" here referred to seems to have been that respecting this country — file successive promises which had been made to the king of Egypt that Coelo-Syria and Palestine should be made over to him. These provinces had been secured to Ptolemy Lagus by the treaty made 301 B.C., and they had been again pledged by Antiochus the Great, in dowry, when his daughter Cleopatra should be made queen of Egypt." Jahn, Hebrews Commonwealth, p. 260.

Now, as is characteristic of the

Within the framework of peace and friendship, treachery will be in this man's heart, and his own agenda will be zealously sought. While a covenant has been made, he will act in contradiction of that covenant, seeking to gain the whole of Egypt for himself. Craftily he will refuse to comply with its conditions.

When, For example, Ptolemy Philometor reached the age of fourteen

person who was morally spotless (1 Tim 2:14). Since that time, there has only been a single person who did not fall into the category of "deceived" (Tit 3:3) — the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now we have a king who is aligned against Israel working "deceitfully." How will Israel be able to survive? In his scheming, Satan no doubt thought this would be an excellent way to bring this nation down — a nation he knew was destined to bring forth the "Seed" God had told him would bruise his head.

However, as we will see, deceiving and crafty Antiochus was in God's world, and was well within the perimeter of Divine control. This is the God of whom it is said, "The LORD bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought: he maketh the devices of the people of none effect" (Psa 33:10).

THE MORE A PERSON IS INVOLVED IN DECEPTION, THE FURTHER THEY ARE FROM GOD, AND THE MORE CLOSELY THEY ARE ALIGNED WITH THE DEVIL. DECEPTION IS NOTHING LESS THAN A LIE DRESSED IN THE FEIGNED ATTIRE OF VERITY.

STRONG WITH A SMALL PEOPLE

" . . . for he shall come up, and shall become strong with a small people." Other versions read, "gain power with a small force of people,"^{NASB} "with only a few people he will rise to power,"^{NIV} "take up arms suddenly with a small force,"^{BBE} "shall overcome with a small people,"^{DOUAY} "despite the smallness of his following, grow ever stronger,"^{NJB} and "With a mere handful of followers, he will become strong."^{NLT}

wicked, Antiochus Epiphanes is not willing to abide by any previous agreement. **The idea of this verse is that Antiochus went about to fulfill his own diabolical agenda under the guise of friendship and agreement.** Some believe the "league" refers to feigned friendship with the king of the South, Ptolemy Philometor.^{CALVIN} Others see the "league" as the agreement originally made by Antiochus the Great, when he gave Coelo-Syria and Palestine to Ptolemy V, as a dowry for his marriage to Cleopatra.^{BARNES} Still others are of the opinion it refers to an agreement made with Jason, the high priest he put in the place of Onias, for a large sum of money given to him by Jason.^{BENSON}

(he was made king at five), he was formerly invested with the government. His ascension to the throne was honored by several countries, who sent congratulatory representatives to him. Under the pretext of a genuine care for the young king, Antiochus also sent a representative to the coronation. The book of Second Maccabees refers to this. "Now when Apollonius the son of Menestheus was sent into Egypt for the coronation of king Ptolemy Philometor, Antiochus, understanding him not to be well affected to his affairs, provided for his own safety: whereupon he came to Joppa, and from thence to Jerusalem." ^{2 Maccabees 4:21}

The Art of Deception

The more a person is involved in deception, the further they are from God, and the more closely they are aligned with the devil. Deception is nothing less than a lie dressed in the feigned attire of verity. Deception is also the mother of the lie, which seeks to break down any resistance to treachery under the guise of friendship. Therefore Satan is called "the father" of the lie, and the one who "deceives the whole world" (John 8:44; Rev 12:9).

I am persuaded that it is not profitable to pursue the specific identity of the one involved in this "league" with Antiochus Epiphanes. Historically, there are several who fit into the revealed scenario. At this point, it is enough to say the agreement somehow involved the people of God and their land, for that is the matter the angel is opening to Daniel.

HE SHALL WORK DECEITFULLY

" . . . he shall work deceitfully . . ."

Other versions read, "he will practice deception,"^{NASB} "act deceitfully,"^{NIV} and "will be working falsely."^{BBE}

The success of deception is seen in the history of mankind. The very first time Satan employed deception on the earth, he successfully brought down a

Within the framework of seeming peace, and operating with deceptiveness, Antiochus became strong suddenly, without any association being made with a violent overthrow or massive military force. The smallness of the forces he used would not incite any suspicion, or move Egyptian dignitaries into a defensive posture. The historian Jahn says, "with a small body of troops he made himself master of Memphis, and of all Egypt as far as Alexandria, almost without striking a blow." Hebrews Commonwealth, p. 263; Compare Diod. Sic. xxvi. 75, 77; Jos. "Ant." xii. 5, 2. It is also said of him, " . . . he went into the heart of Syria with a small number of men at first, and gathered together a large army; or into Phoenicia with a handful of men, where he ingratiated himself into the affections of the people by words and gifts, and became strong; or he went up into Egypt accompanied only with a few, lest, the Egyptians should be suspicious of him; but these it is said were valiant men, whom he placed in the forts of Egypt, and so became master of it, which is an instance of his deceitful working; and Sutorius, an

Daniel is told of the further advances of wicked kings, and of their growing and relentless wickedness, by Given O. Blakely

ancient historian, as quoted by Jerome, says that he subdued Egypt to himself with a very small number of people.” JOHN GILL

Now the meaning of this passage becomes even more clear. Antiochus entered into various areas of the kingdom with but a few men, thus arousing no suspicion of any malicious intent. Then he gathered forces from within those areas, increasing his militia. Thus he entered peaceably, but not with peaceable intentions.

AN APPLICATION

I cannot leave this verse without observing that Satan is still employing these same tactics. **Actually, those who are aligned with Satan, making a place for him, take upon themselves his character.** That is why Jesus called Peter “Satan,” when he took Jesus aside

and “*began to rebuke Him*” because He has spoken of dying. “*This shall not be unto Thee,*” Peter said. Jesus replied, “*Get thee behind me Satan: thou art an offence unto Me*” (Matt 16:22-23).

The fact that those who yield to the devil become like him is also confirmed in the much disputed prophecies against the king of Babylon (Isa 14:4-15). Isaiah says to this king, “*How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer . . .*” Satan was at work in that king, and thus he was addressed as though he was Satan himself.

The same type of thing is seen in Ezekiel’s denunciation of the “*king of Tyrus.*” He also had yielded to the devil, and had therefore acquired his traits. To him the prophet said, “*Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious*

stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire” (Ezek 28:13-14).

Just as Satan was working through the king of Babylon and the king of Tyrus, so he was working through Antiochus Epiphanes. That is why this ruler was so shrewd.

Once again, I pose the question: How will Israel (Daniel’s people) be able to survive such opposition?

HE SHALL DO WHAT HIS FATHERS DID NOT DO

“²⁴ He shall enter peaceably even upon the fattest places of the province; and he shall do that which his fathers have not done, nor his fathers’ fathers; he shall scatter among them the prey, and spoil, and riches: yea, and he shall forecast his devices against the strong holds, even for a time.”

conceived of a God that is withdrawn from the affairs of this world. Their understanding is too small.

The manner of the Divine rule upon the earth is profitable to consider. **He rules in the midst of seeming chaos, trouble, and agitation.** While, apart from faith, men are not able to see

hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory” (Isa 6:3).

However, that is not what it looked like to men. Uzziah had been a gifted military man, preparing “*for all the army shields, spears, helmets, body armor, bows and sling stones. And in Jerusalem he made engines of war invented by skillful men to be on the towers and on the corners, for the purpose of shooting arrows and great stones. Hence his fame spread afar, for he was marvelously helped until he was strong*” (2 Chr 26:14-15). However, when he was strong, his heart was lifted up and he transgressed against the Lord. He took upon himself to enter the Temple and offer incense upon the altar of incense. When he was rebuked for his action, he became enraged. While the anger was welling up in him, God struck him with leprosy in his forehead, and he remained a leper until the day he died (2 Chron 26:16-19).

WHEN ONCE A PERSON SEES THE POWER AND RULE OF GOD, IT IS SOMETIMES DIFFICULT TO ACCOUNT FOR THE RAPID SPREAD OF INIQUITY. UNABLE TO PERCEIVE SUCH THINGS, SOME HAVE EXAGGERATED THE WILL OF MAN, AND CONCEIVED OF A GOD THAT IS WITHDRAWN FROM THE AFFAIRS OF THIS WORLD.

Like a malignant growth, the influence and power of this “*vile person*” begins to expand. When once a person sees the power and rule of God, it is sometimes difficult to account for the rapid spread of iniquity. **Unable to perceive such things, some have exaggerated the will of man, and**

this, it is quite clear to the heavenly hosts. In the year king Uzziah died, when all seemed but loss, Isaiah saw the Lord high and lifted up. Near His throne were some majestic six-winged seraphs. As they flew around the throne they cried out to one another, “*And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of*

His son Jotham reigned in his stead, and more wickedness broke out. While he himself did not go into the Temple as his father did, “*the people did yet corruptly*” (2 Chron 27:1-3). **It surely**

did not look like the earth was filled with God's glory!

Yet, when Isaiah saw the Lord, he heard holy seraphs affirm, *"the whole earth is full of His glory!"* While men did not see it, God was at work in all of the affairs of men. **There was not a despot in the entire world that was operating on his own, or who was not under the immediate control of God. Nor, indeed, was there a single believer under the heavens who was not seen, heard, upheld, and cared for by the Lord!**

With these things in mind, the present reign of the Lord Jesus becomes more clear. In the 110th Psalm, the prophet speaks of the coming Messiah, referring to Him being seated at the right hand of God. He is seated in expectation of His enemies being made His footstool. **What is more, He is actually reigning in the very presence of His enemies.** Here is what that Psalm says, *"A Psalm of David. The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit Thou at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool. The LORD shall send the rod of Thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of Thine enemies"* (Psa 110:1-2).

Of What Relevance Is This?

To some, this might appear to be a theological bypath – but it is not. **The message that is being brought to Daniel is precisely this – that God is ruling in the midst of His enemies!** We must not fail to see this! What will befall Daniel's people will not be beyond Divine control. However, that is not stated strongly enough. **God has determined to bring the Messiah forth from a people for whom no seeming hope exists.** Their circumstances are anything but conducive to the bringing forth of a King, whose kingdom will have no end.

Notwithstanding that circumstance, the Savior will come into the world *"in the fulness of the time"* (Gal 4:45) – precisely on schedule, and without a moment's delay. As we consider the machinations of this *"vile"* king, let us keep these things in mind, lest we be unduly impressed with his exploits.

THE FATTEST PLACES

"He shall enter peaceably even upon the fattest places of the province . . ." Other versions read, *"the richest parts of the realm,"* ^{NASB} *"the richest provinces,"* ^{NIV} *"fertile places,"* ^{BBE} *"rich and plentiful cities,"* ^{DOUAY} *"prosperous provinces."* ^{NAB}

The picture here is one of Egypt residing in comfort and seeming safety, considering Antiochus Epiphanes as their friend. Using Satanic and supernatural craftiness, he took possession of the principle cities of Egypt's domain. I say Egypt's domain not Egypt itself. I agree with Adam Clarke, who sees these principle cities as being within the areas of Colesyria and Palestine. Again, I

his fathers have not done, nor his fathers' fathers . . ." Other versions read, *"he will accomplish what his fathers never did, nor his ancestors,"* ^{NASB} *"he will invade them and will achieve what neither his fathers nor his forefathers did,"* ^{NIV} and *"do what none of his predecessors had ever done."* ^{NRSV}

Empowered by *"the prince of Grecia,"* and under the control of the Almighty God, this wicked king went beyond what others had done. It appeared as though he was operating without any restraint, making everything fall to his advantage. A worldly observer would find it exceedingly difficult to see in this circumstance a God who *"does according*

THERE WAS NOT A DESPOT IN THE ENTIRE WORLD THAT WAS OPERATING ON HIS OWN, OR WHO WAS NOT UNDER THE IMMEDIATE CONTROL OF GOD. NOR, INDEED, WAS THERE A SINGLE BELIEVER UNDER THE HEAVENS WHO WAS NOT SEEN, HEARD, UPHELD, AND CARED FOR BY THE LORD!

emphasize that the word being given to Daniel regards what will befall his people. Of themselves, Egyptian cities would not be of significance. But when we consider they had rule over Palestine, we are right in the heart of Divine purpose. One writer points out that the invasion of Galilee was included in the undetected initiative of Antiochus . ^{F.W Farrar}

In my judgment *"the fattest places"* is a heavenly view of the Egyptian domain. It surely includes the idea of richness and productivity, but has more regard to *"the holy land"* Zech 2:12) over which Egypt was presiding. This is in keeping with other descriptions of the *"land of the Jews"* (Acts 10:39). These include *"glorious land"* (Dan 11:16,41), *"pleasant land"* (Dan 8:9; Psa 106:24), *"the sanctuary"* (Ex 15:17), *"the Lord's land"* (Hos 9:3), *"Immanuel"* (Isa 8:8), *"His land"* (Joel 2:18), and *"Beulah"* (Isa 62:4).

SOMETHING HIS FATHERS AND HIS FATHERS' FATHERS HAVE NOT DONE

" . . . and he shall do that which

to His will in the army of heaven And among the inhabitants of the earth" – a God of whom it is said, *"No one can restrain His hand Or say to Him, "What have You done?"* (Dan 4:35). Up to this point, the whole saga of Antiochus Epiphanes seems to contradict those words. Now, he reaches out in the exercise of a corrupt will and does something that none of his predecessors did. Surely this man is operating without being controlled!

His penetration of the cities of Egypt and the land of Israel was unparalleled. Others had waged wars in the same places, but this king took more spoils. The following verse will declare something he did that his ancestors did not do.

SCATTER THEM AMONG THE PREY

" . . . he shall scatter among them the prey, and spoil, and riches . . ." Other versions read, *"he will disperse among them the plunder, spoil, and riches,"* ^{NKJV} *"he will distribute plunder, booty, and possessions among them,"* ^{NASB} *"He will distribute plunder, loot, and wealth*

Daniel is told of the further advances of wicked kings, and of their growing and relentless wickedness, by Given O. Blakely

among his followers," NIV and "distribute among his followers the plunder and wealth of the rich." ^{NLT}

This is a most remarkable circumstance, for it contradicts a prideful and greedy spirit. Rather than hoarding up the spoils of his campaign against Egypt, he dispersed its wealth. He was so excessive in his distributions that historians say he later was afraid he would not be able to pay required tribute to Rome or again be so liberal with his soldiers. First Maccabees records the following. "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." ^{1 Macc 3:30}

Polybius relates, that sometimes,

☐ "He that giveth unto the poor shall not lack: but he that hideth his eyes shall have many a curse." (Prov 28:27)

☐ "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again." (Luke 6:38)

☐ "But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully" (2 Cor 9:6).

And how is it that Antiochus Epiphanes was liberal, yet became the

Those who, like Antiochus Epiphanes, are aligned against the people of God will not be able to reap Divine benefits simply because they do something the Scriptures declare will bring a blessing. **An impure heart casts the blanket of impurity upon all that is done.** As it is written, "Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled" (Titus 1:15).

Solomon said that even "the plowing of the wicked is sin" (Prov 21:4). That is why the Lord sometimes sends the locust, cankerworm, and caterpillar to consume the fruit of men's labors (Joel 1:4; 2:26). **Oh, that men were delivered from simplistic frames of religious thought!** It seems as though our present culture nurtures such folly.

FORECAST HIS DEVICES

"... yea, and he shall forecast his devices against the strong holds . . ." Other versions read, "he shall devise his plans against the strongholds," ^{NKJV} "he will devise his schemes," ^{NASB} "he will plot the overthrow of fortresses," ^{NIV} and "he shall plan his devices against the fortified places." ^{DAREY}

Here, the word "forecast" means to develop a plan or strategy – not to predict. The word has evil connotations, literally meaning "to weave, plot, or contrive." ^{STRONG} In other words, this ruler would devise means to take over the principle cities of Egypt's domain.

Josephus records, "Antiochus took possession of Pelusium, the key of Egypt; he seized upon Memphis, and he then laid siege to Alexandria, supposing that if that were reduced, the whole country would be his." ^{Jos. Ant. b. xii. ch. v. Section 2.} Another writer records, "By this may be meant his invasions of Galilee and Lower Egypt. Acting unlike any of his royal predecessors, he shall lavishly scatter his gains and his booty among needy followers, and shall plot to seize Pelusium, Naucratis, Alexandria, and other strongholds of Egypt for a time." ^{F.W Farrar, Expositor's Bible}

The point is that this evil king, reveling in the aftermath of many successes, made shrewd plans to take all of the principle cities of Egypt. Judging from appearance, there was no reason to suspect his plans would come short of fulfillment. However, "there is a God in

IT SHOULD BE APPARENT THAT THE PROMISES OF GOD ARE NOT INVOLABLE LAWS THAT APPLY TO EVERYONE – LIKE THE LAW OF GRAVITY. THE LAW OF HARVEST IS NOT ONE THAT IS AUTOMATICALLY PUT INTO MOTION REGARDLESS OF THE PERSON WHO SOWS.

meeting accidentally with people whom he had never seen before, he would enrich them with unexpected presents; and sometimes, standing in the public streets, he would throw about his money, and cry aloud, "Let him take it to whom fortune shall give it." ^{BENSON}

The book of Maccabees again records that his liberality jeopardized his ability to pay the tribute imposed upon Greece by Rome. "... he having been so magnanimous and so liberal that what he had was not sufficient for him, he therefore resolved first to go into Persia, and collect the taxes of that country." ^{1 Macc 12, chapter 7, section 2}

An Observation

There is something of particular note to be seen in this text. Here was a king that was liberal, yet became poor because of it. When he gave to others, he was not blessed in return. Compare that with the promises made to the godly.

☐ "The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself." (Prov 11:25)

poorer for it? It is because he was not a righteous man. His heart was corrupt, being lifted up, and he was an enemy of the people of God.

What ought to be gained from this? **It should be apparent that the promises of God are not inviolable laws that apply to everyone – like the law of gravity.** The law of harvest is not one that is automatically put into motion regardless of the person who sows. The heart enters into the matter. It is possible to "sow much" and "bring in little," (Hag 1:6). A "fruitful land" can be turned "into barrenness, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein" (Psa 107:34).

Those who bring a health-and-wealth-gospel often speak of reaping bountifully as though it was a principle that cannot be contradicted. Such teaching causes confusion in the heart, and leads people to have flawed reasoning.

heaven,” and He is “*the Lord of kings*” (Dan 2:27, 47). Make no mistake about this, “*A man’s heart deviseth his way: but the LORD directeth his steps*” (Prov 16:9). **This tyrant, who has stained the pages of history, will have his plans sifted through the purpose of God, who will determine whether they will or will not be carried out.**

An Observation

Child of God, take heart! When things seem to be in favor of your enemies, and circumstances are not your apparent friend, look up! God is working all things together for your good, even if you are subjected to Antiochus Epiphanes!

FOR A TIME

“ . . . *even for a time.*” Other versions read, “but only for a time,” NKJV, NASB, NIV, NRSV and “*but this will last only for a short while.*” NLT

Why is this so? Has this king not proved himself to be nearly invincible, both in power and shrewdness? Indeed, that may be the appearance, but it is not

THERE IS NO MAN WHO CAN CONTROL TIME OR TIMES! NO MORTAL CAN CREATE, SUSTAIN, OR CONCLUDE A SEASON! THESE ARE THINGS THAT GOD ALONE CAN DO, FOR “TIMES” AND “SEASONS” ARE IN THE POWER OF GOD ALONE.

the fact of the case. **There is no man who can control time or times! No mortal can create, sustain, or conclude a season!** These are things that God alone can do, for “*times*” and “*seasons*” are in the power of God alone. As Jesus Himself said to His disciples, who inquired concerning the times, “*And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power*” (Acts 1:7). In speaking to Nebuchadnezzar, another seemingly invincible king, Daniel said, “*Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his:*

And He changeth the times and the seasons:” (Dan 2:20-21).

This verse means that Antiochus Epiphanes will, indeed, make his plans. **However, even the making of them will not extend one second beyond the time God had appointed for him and his influence.**

Faith can take hold of a God like that, trusting wholly in Him! Armed with this perspective life becomes more tolerable, and hope grows into a dominating expectation.

A GREAT ARMY, BUT HE SHALL NOT STAND

“²⁵ ***And he shall stir up his power and his courage against the king of the south with a great army; and the king of the south shall be stirred up to battle with a very great and mighty army; but he shall not stand: for they shall forecast devices against him.***”

To this point, our text has emphasized the craftiness and stealth of Antiochus. Now we will see that he was also capable of great military exploits. Now, in focusing upon Egypt, he will not come in “*peaceably,*” or without due notice. He will muster the hosts for an open confrontation.

An Observation

Mark it well, it was not the devil’s purpose to merely have dissension within the Grecian Empire, with the North and South engaged in incessant battles. Were it not for the restraining powers of heaven, Syria and Egypt could have

united and come against Israel. Instead, they are aligned against themselves.

This is not coincidence, but reveals a Divine manner. **The Lord has allowed Satan a certain boundary in which to work.** We see this in the controlled advances of the devil against Job. He could go no further than God allowed.

The same principle is found on a regional and even global level. This is seen in some statements made about the devil himself in the revelation given to John on Patmos. There our adversary is declared to be most hostile, filled “*with great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time*” (Rev 12:12). With cunning aggression he is depicted as casting a overwhelming flood out of his mouth, that he might cause the people of God to be “*carried away of the flood.*” The flood is focused and it is powerful, but it is not effective for “*the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth,*

and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth” (Rev 12:13-16). **Thus the saints were delivered from what was really intended for them.**

The text before us shows much the same thing. Satan’s attention is upon “*the pleasant land,*” not Egypt. His purpose is to get rid of Israel, not the Egyptians. However, God will not allow his *unbridled* wrath to fall upon His people or His land. **Instead, Antiochus will fight with his own nephew, against part of the very empire to which he himself belongs.** This is “*the earth*” helping the woman, absorbing the shock of evil intentions in order to the survival of the elect.

Whatever circumstances have interrupted your life, and however grievous they may be, there is something you need to know. The earth has “*helped*” you, absorbing much of the blow Satan

Daniel is told of the further advances of wicked kings, and of their growing and relentless wickedness, by Given O. Blakely

intended to level at you. You have not experienced the worst, but something you are “able to bear” (1 Cor 10:13). If you doubt that such a thing is possible, pay attention to this text. The truth of what I have just said will be lived out before you.

**POWER AND COURAGE
STIRRED UP**

“And he shall stir up his power and his courage against the king of the south with a great army . . .” Other versions say he will stir up his “strength and courage,” ^{NASB, NIV} “power and determination,” ^{NRSV} “his strength and his heart,” ^{DOUAY} and “strength and cleverness.” ^{NAB}

The idea is that Antiochus will employ all of his shrewdness and muster all of his courage to make an all-out assault against Egypt. No other consideration will neutralize his ambition. He will not be moved to other considerations. Before this, he came with

governor over Egypt and all his house” (Acts 7:10).

Remember, these are matters that have been written in “the Scriptures of Truth,” the book of Divine destiny. If this seems too challenging to consider, think of it in this manner. **The Grecian Empire is now like a two-armed warrior. What God is going to do is have one arm cut off the other arm, thus diminishing the kingdom and readying it to pass from the stage of Divine purpose.** Antiochus Epiphanes is one arm, and “the king of the South,” Ptolemy Philometor, his own nephew, and son of his sister Cleopatra, is the other.

Of this particular initiative, First Maccabees reads, “Wherefore he entered into Egypt with a great multitude, with chariots, and elephants, and horsemen, and a great navy, and made war against Ptolemy king of Egypt.” ^{1 Maccabees 1:17-18} Porphyrey also writes, “Wherefore he entered Egypt with a great multitude, with chariots, and

Cleopatra’s brother.

I have not been able to find the size of the army of the “king of the South,” as it is not listed in any of my resources. However, our text makes it clear that it was large enough to gain the victory. Not only was it “large and very powerful,” the NRSV states it was “a much greater and stronger army.”

Remember, these are two kings belonging to the same empire. They are even uncle and nephew. Yet, they are fiercely aligned against one another. **Behold how God can turn our enemies against each other!**

- ▣ Is it not said of the Midianites, “and the LORD set every man’s sword against his fellow, even throughout all the host” (Judg 7:22).
- ▣ On another occasion, when king Saul came up against the Philistines, “They found the Philistines in total confusion, striking each other with their swords” ^{NIV} (1 Sam 14:20).

- ▣ On still another occasion, when Jehosaphat was facing the children of Ammon and Moab and men from mount Seir, “the sons of Ammon and Moab rose up against the inhabitants of Mount Seir destroying them completely, and when they had finished with the inhabitants of Seir, they helped to destroy one another” ^{NASB} (2 Chr 20:23).

- ▣ Again, God promised Israel, “And I will set the Egyptians against the Egyptians: and they shall fight every one against his brother, and every one against his neighbor; city against city, and kingdom against kingdom” (Isa 19:2).

Throw that into the colander of prayer! It greatly enhances the possibilities, and brings hope to the “few” that find the way that leads to life. **When believers are decidedly outnumbered, God can change the whole picture by causing their enemies to devour one another.** That bit of understanding fuels faith and strengthens hope. We can have courage to seek such a resolution.

REMEMBER, THESE ARE TWO KINGS BELONGING TO THE SAME EMPIRE. THEY ARE EVEN UNCLE AND NEPHEW. YET, THEY ARE FIERCELY ALIGNED AGAINST ONE ANOTHER. BEHOLD HOW GOD CAN TURN OUR ENEMIES AGAINST EACH OTHER!

a “small number of people” ^{NKJV} (11:23). Now he amasses a multitude.

Remember, God is in this matter, for “The king’s heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: He turneth it whithersoever He will” (Prov 21:1). It is ever true, “the preparations of the heart in man . . . is from the Lord” (Prov 16:1). Again, “Man’s goings are of the Lord” (Prov 20:24). God can even turn the hearts of men to hate his own people. As it is written, “He turned their heart to hate His people, to deal subtly with His servants” (Psa 105:25).

God can also make them “to be pitied of all those that carried them captives” (Psa 106:46), and even give Joseph “favor and wisdom in the sight of Pharaoh king of Egypt; and he made him

elephants, and horsemen, and a great navy.” — Porphyry, as quoted by Scaliger; Polybius, Legat, Sections 81, 82, 84; Livy, xlv. 19; xlv. 11; Justin, xxxiv. 2; Prideaux, Con. iii. 232-235.

**THE KING OF THE SOUTH IS
STIRRED UP**

“ . . . and the king of the south shall be stirred up to battle with a very great and mighty army . . .” Other versions say the king of the South would “mobilize an extremely large and mighty army for war,” ^{NASB} “wage war with a large and very powerful army,” ^{NIV} “wage war with a much greater and stronger army,” ^{NRSV} and “march to war with a huge and powerful army.” ^{NJB}

The “king of the South” is Ptolemy Philometor, son of Ptolemy V Epiphanes and Cleopatra I, nephew of Antiochus Epiphanes, who was

HE SHALL NOT STAND

“ . . . but he shall not stand . . . ”

Other versions read, “he will not be able to stand,”^{NIV} “he shall not succeed,”^{NRSV} and “he will be forced to give way.”^{BBE}

The largeness of his army provided no advantage. What was written in “the Scriptures of truth” outweighed military superiority. Here again, the plans of man are frustrated – but it is not by fate, and not by superior forces. God is to be seen in all of this, for He alone is able to remove kings (Dan 2:21). **What is happening here is that God is giving the**

kingdom of Egypt to wicked

Antiochus Epiphanes. That, of course, is something He has the right and wisdom to do. “The most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will, and setteth up over it the basest of men” (Dan 4:17).

FORECASTED DEVICES

“ . . . for they shall forecast devices against him.” Other versions read, “for they shall devise plans against him,”^{NKJV} “for schemes will be devised against him,”^{NASB} and “because of the plots devised against him.”^{NIV}

We will find from the next verse that these devises and plots came from within his own ranks. These were not the schemes of Antiochus Epiphanes, but of those who were close to Ptolemy Philometor.

Who cannot see the marvelous working of God in this whole matter. **The Grecian Empire is in a state of confusion. Inner fighting is taking place between the North and the South. Now we see that betrayal and treason takes place within the superior army of Ptolemy.**

MANY SHALL FALL DOWN SLAIN

²⁶ **Yea, they that feed of the portion of his meat shall destroy him, and his army shall overflow: and many shall fall down slain.”**

Ponder the various ways that God has wrought deliverances.

- ▣ In some cases, he caused the defenses to depart from the people (Num 14:9).
- ▣ In one case, an angel simply slew an entire army during the night (2 Kgs 19:35).
- ▣ In numerous cases, the enemies turned against each other (Judges 7:22; 1 Sam 14:20; 2 Chron 20:23).
- ▣ On one occasion, God flooded the country with water, making it appear as blood to the enemy, and thus weakening them (2 Kings 3:20).
- ▣ On yet another occasion the Lord hurled great hailstones down from heaven, killing more of the enemy than Israel killed with the sword (Josh 10:11).
- ▣ In Egypt, God used ten plagues to bring the Egyptians to ask Israel to leave their country, even giving them, many riches (Ex 12:36).
- ▣ God also simply delivered the enemy into the hands of His people through victory in battle (Judges 1:4).

- ▣ He also caused the enemy to refuse to stand against His people, also delivering them into their hands (Josh 21:44).

Now we will find yet another way

special confidants. Whether this came by betrayal to Antiochus, giving unsound advise, desertion, forming an alliance with the adversary, being bribed by Antiochus, or some other means, we do not know. **The tree of his government was rotten at the core.**

HIS FOES WERE AT HIS OWN TABLE, EATING HIS CHOICE FOOD. PERHAPS THEY WERE RELATIVES, ADVISORS, CLOSE FRIENDS, AND SPECIAL CONFIDANTS. WHETHER THIS CAME BY BETRAYAL TO ANTIOCHUS, GIVING UNSOUND ADVISE, DESERTION, FORMING AN ALLIANCE WITH THE ADVERSARY, BEING BRIBED BY ANTIOCHUS, OR SOME OTHER MEANS

in which the Lord caused defeat to take place.

HIS OWN PEOPLE

“Yea, they that feed of the portion of his meat shall destroy him . . . ” Other versions read, “those who eat his choice food will destroy him,”^{NASB} “those who eat from the king’s provision will try to destroy him,”^{NIV} “plots shall be devised against him by those who eat of the royal rations,”^{NRSV} and “Those who shared his food will ruin him.”^{NJB}

His foes were at his own table, eating his choice food. Perhaps they were relatives, advisors, close friends, and

Commentator Benson says of this, “. . . it is certain that Eulæus was a very wicked minister, and bred up the young king in luxury and effeminacy, contrary to his inclination. Ptolemy Macron, too, who was governor of Cyprus, revolted from him, and delivered up that important island to Antiochus. Nay, even the Alexandrians, seeing the distress of Philometor, renounced their allegiance; and taking his younger brother Euergetes, or Physcon, proclaimed him king instead of his elder brother.”^{BENSON’S COMMENTARY}

OVERWHELMING VICTORY

“ . . . and his army shall overflow: and many shall fall down slain.” Other versions read, “his army will be swept away, and many will fall down slain”^{NKJV},^{NIV} “his army will overflow, but many will

Daniel is told of the further advances of wicked kings, and of their growing and relentless wickedness, by Given O. Blakely

fall down slain,"^{NASB} "his army will come to complete destruction, and a great number will be put to the sword,"^{BBE} and "his army shall be dissolved."^{DARBY}

The language indicates a great slaughter. The mighty and superior forces of Ptolemy were decidedly defeated. The way it is stated can also mean the army of Ptolemy was itself like a great flood, spread out so as to defeat Antiochus. Yet, in spite of their massiveness, they were slaughtered in a wholesale manner.

The book of Maccabees again provides some small amount of detail. "Wherefore he entered into Egypt with a great multitude, with chariots, and elephants, and horsemen, and a great navy, and made war against Ptolemy king of Egypt: but Ptolemy was afraid of him, and fled; and many were wounded to death."^{1 Macc 1:17-18}

Josephus writes, "being with a great army at Pelusium, and circumventing Ptolemy Philometor by fraud, seized on Egypt; and being in the parts near to Memphis, and taking it, he hastened to Alexandria to besiege it, and got Ptolemy, reigning there, into his

hands." Antiqu. 1. 12. c. 5, sect. 2

Thus Antiochus triumphs over his nephew, bringing Egypt under his dominion. All the while, the "glorious land" has remained between the warring kingdoms of Syria and Egypt. The eye of the Lord is upon it. **It will survive all of these wars, and yet be the place where the Son of God will enter into the world in "the fulness of the time," to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.**

BOTH WILL LIE, YET THEY SHALL NOT PROSPER

"²⁷ And both these kings' hearts shall be to do mischief, and they shall speak lies at one table; but it shall not prosper: for yet the end shall be at the time appointed."

The corruption of both Antiochus

Physcon (also referred to as Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II) had been enthroned in Egypt. Of him history records, "also called Physcon (Greek: "Potbellied") Macedonian king of Egypt who played a divisive role in trying to win the kingship, making himself subservient to Rome and encouraging Roman interference in Egypt. Ptolemy VIII ruled jointly

war that disrupted internal stability until 118; but he was able to retain control of Cyprus and Cyrenaica. He also intervened in Syria. His mischievous will, in which he divided Egypt's foreign territories, created conflict among his heirs.

From Ptolemy's side, the reason for the feigned friendship with his uncle Antiochus was to get his own brother off of the throne. As for Antiochus, he was attempting to seize the whole kingdom of Egypt for himself. Neither of them had noble motives. Their hearts were corrupt, their minds were depraved, and their intentions were wicked. They toyed with each other, each one seeking their own corrupt and mischievous interests.^{GROLLIERS 2003}

A CASUAL OBSERVER MIGHT HAVE SAID THESE TWO KINGS WERE NEGOTIATING, OR TRYING TO ARRIVE AT A CONSENSUS. PERHAPS THEY WERE ATTEMPTING TO OPEN SOME MEANINGFUL DIALOG, OR TRYING TO UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER BETTER.

SPEAKING LIES AT ONE TABLE

"... and they shall speak lies at one table..." Other versions read, "at the same table,"^{NKJV} "speak lies to each other at the same table,"^{NASB} "sit at the same table and lie to each other,"^{NIV} "exchange lies,"^{NRSV} and "plot against each other at the conference table, attempting to deceive each other."^{NLT}

and Ptolemy is revealed here. Although there had been a decided and unquestionable victory, yet a relationship continued between these two men.

MISCHIEVOUS HEARTS

"And both these kings' hearts shall be to do mischief..." Other versions read, "these kings hearts shall be bent on evil,"^{NKJV} "their hearts will be intent upon evil,"^{NASB} "their hearts will be fixed on doing evil,"^{BBE} and "These kings' hearts shall meditate mischief."^{DARBY}

Here the uncle and the nephew meet together, feigning friendship, yet thinking treachery. During this time, Ptolemy's brother

with his brother, Ptolemy VI Philometor, in 170-164 BC and alone during the next year; he was king of Cyrenaica (in modern Libya) in 163-145, and sole ruler of Egypt from 145 to his death in 116, except for a brief exile in 131-129. Continuously quarreling with his queen, Cleopatra II, the widow of Philometor, he caused civil war and economic collapse in Egypt. Late in his reign (118) he instituted extensive reforms to restore the country."^{BRITANNICA 2003}

Grollier's Encyclopedia says of him, "Ptolemy VIII, c.182-116 ©, presided over the accelerating decay of Ptolemaic Egypt. An unsavory intriguer, Ptolemy was co-ruler with his brother Ptolemy VI from 170 to 164 and king of Cyrenaica from 163 to 145. He assassinated (145) his nephew, Ptolemy VII, and was sole king of Egypt from 145 to 116. Ptolemy and one of his two wives fought (131-124) a long civil

A casual observer might have said these two kings were negotiating, or trying to arrive at a consensus. Perhaps they were attempting to open some meaningful dialog, or trying to understand each other better. An uninformed person might have reasoned, "Well, at least they are talking. Something good will come from it."

The angel, however, strips away all pretense, dealing a devastating blow to naivety. Both of the men are lying. They are deliberately deceiving each other, and

there is not an ounce of sincerity in their hearts. Their purpose is “*mischievous*,” i.e., to do evil to someone. Both are seeking their own advantage, with absolutely no regard for the other person. **Under the guise of meaningful dialog, they are actually plotting against each other.** Although he was a prisoner, Ptolemy is treated as a king by Antiochus. Although he was soundly defeated by his uncle, Ptolemy treats Antiochus with seeming respect. But it is all deception.

IT WILL NOT PROSPER

“... but it shall not prosper...”

Other versions read, “it will not succeed,”^{NASB} “but to no avail,”^{NIV} “it will come to nothing,”^{BBE} “they shall have no success,”^{NAB} “they will not have their way,”^{NJB} and “it will make no difference.”^{NLT}

The lies and deceptions are all futile. The shrewdness, craftiness, and subtlety is all to no avail. Not only are the intentions of their hearts and their actions written in the “*Scriptures of truth*,” but the outcome of it all is written there as well.

This is not a prognostication, but a Divine determination. God will frustrate their desires and abort their purposes. He will make their wisdom foolishness and cause their purposes to be dashed to the ground. Even though they “will” to do this or that, **God’s will thwarts their will.** They have mischief in their hearts, and are bent on doing evil, but they cannot get it accomplished! If they had their way, much more evil would befall God’s people than will be experienced. **But they will not have their desires, for God will not let them be realized.**

It is still true, “*The LORD bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought: he maketh the devices of the*

people of none effect” (Psa 33:10). Whether it is Antiochus Epiphanes, Ptolemy Philometor, Herod, Nero, Hitler, or Saddam Hussein, their will and their purposes cannot be cast in stone. It is “*the Most High*” that “*ruleth in the kingdom of men*” (Dan 4:17). He is able to do “*exceeding abundantly above all we ask or*

end will be at the time fixed.”^{BBE}

Everything introduced in this passage was moving to an appointed end – a Divine controlled conclusion. Their lies would end. Sitting at one table would end. Their wars would end. Their feigned peace would end. Their reigns would end.

THIS IS NOT A PROGNOSTICATION, BUT A DIVINE DETERMINATION. GOD WILL FRUSTRATE THEIR DESIRES AND ABORT THEIR PURPOSES. HE WILL MAKE THEIR WISDOM FOOLISHNESS AND CAUSE THEIR PURPOSES TO BE DASHED TO THE GROUND.

think, according to the power that worketh in us” (Eph 3:20). He is also able to “*make void the counsel*” of wayward souls (Jer 19:7), and “*cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease*” (Isa 13:11).

God can pass such judgment upon an individual that it can be said, “*And thou shalt grope at noonday, as the blind gropeth in darkness, and thou shalt not prosper in thy ways: and thou shalt be only oppressed and spoiled evermore, and no man shall save thee*” (Deu 28:29). When faith takes hold of this, it enables us to root out “*the fear of man*,” which consistently “*bringeth a snare*” (Prov 29:25).

AN APPOINTED TIME

“... for yet the end shall be at the time appointed.” Other versions read, “the end will still be at the appointed time,”^{NKJV} “the end is still to come at the appointed time,”^{NASB} “there remains an end at the appointed time,”^{NRSV} and “the

They themselves would end. Their kingdoms would end. The Grecian Empire would end. The oppression of God’s people would finally end. The defilement of God’s land would end. Another kingdom would come, and other kings would reign.

It would all be by “*appointment*.” **None of these conclusions would be the result of human strategy or action.** The truth of the matter is that men cannot bring anything to an end, or “*closure*,” as some are wont to say. Only the One who is the “*Finisher*,” “*Omega*,” “*End*,” and “*Last*,” can truly conclude a matter (Heb 12:2; Rev 22:13).

Whether it is a purpose, a person, or a kingdom, when God calls down the curtain, that is the end. Until then, there is not a single or accumulated thought, word, or deed that can thwart, delay, or change Divinely appointed “ends.” They all come on schedule.

CONCLUSION

How we must thank and praise the Lord for revealing much of what is coming. While every detail has not been clearly made known, yet enough has been said to confirm that our times are truly in

the Lord’s hand (Psa 31:15). Our enemies are not invincible, and our destiny is not in their hands. Circumstances may beat upon our lives, but they are not capable of dislodging us from the purpose of God, or

cause the heart of the trusting one to faint. If things appear as though they are hopeless, that by no means indicates such a condition exists. **This is God’s world, together with everything in it, and**

Daniel is told of the further advances of wicked kings, and of their growing and relentless wickedness, by Given O. Blakely

He is presently governing it through the Lord Jesus Christ, and with the intent of bring many sons to glory.

Everything is actually being orchestrated for the glory of God and our ultimate good. There is no reason to fear, and every reason to hope, and be strong in faith, giving glory to God. My prayer is

that you will be able to associate the wonders of this text with your own pilgrimage. Daniel was in a strange land, and so are you. He was surrounded by disturbing things, and so are you. He had a heart for the people of God when they were under great duress. You may be sharing in a similar concern for the church.

God can bring the truth of this text home to your heart, enabling you to identify the Antiochus' and Ptolemys with which you are contending. He can also assure your heart that the future cannot separate you from the love of God, or put you at a decided disadvantage. You have every reason to enjoy good hope and everlasting consolation through grace.

Our next Hungry Saints Meeting will be held on Friday, 5/16/2003. We will continue in our overview of Daniel, reviewing verses 28-35 of the eleventh chapter. The title of our lesson is, **"THE FUTURE IS UNFOLDED TO DANIEL, #5."** The angel continues to unfold coming events, tracing the fall of the wicked. In this lesson, Daniel will be told about the reaction of the people of God during these disruptive events. The superiority of faith will be declared, thus keeping hope alive. 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.

*The Blakely Family: Given, June, Benjamin, Jonathan, and Eva
406 South Bergeant Street, Joplin, MO 64801*

A place where believers can meet, fellowship, be edified, and express themselves.

Telephone: (417) 782-3063, Email: Given (GivenB@aol.com) June: (JuneE01@aol.com)

ADAH's Webpage: <http://wotruth.com/adah.htm> -- EVA's Webpage: <http://wotruth.com/Eva.htm>

Benjamin (Bensvison@aol.com), Jonathan (Jonstalk@aol.com), Eva (Evablakely@aol.com)
Adah Hutchcraft (ALHutchcraft@milligan.edu), Jason Hutchcraft (hutchcraftj@esr.edu)

WORD OF TRUTH Website: <http://wotruth.com>

WORD OF TRUTH FELLOWSHIP Website: <http://wotruth.com/wotf/wotindex.htm>

COMMENTARY on Romans: <http://wotruth.com/Romans.htm>

COMMENTARY on Daniel: <http://wotruth.com/Daniel.htm>