



Part 22 — “Antiochus IV & the Antichrist” — 6 November 2022

Introduction:

Daniel had been given a glimpse of the conflicts of the near future between the kingdoms to the north (Seleucids) and south (Ptolemies) of Israel. He was then given insight into the coming of a contemptible king who would persecute his people and would serve as a type of the Antichrist who would lead the great end-time persecution of Israel.

Main Point: Both the _____ and _____ persecutions of Israel serve as a reminder to God’s people that the forces of evil will often wield political power against us in order to destroy us or diminish our witness.

The Near & Far Antagonists—Dan. II:20-12:1

The Career of Antiochus IV Epiphanes (II:21-35)

Observations

1. Following a series of conflicts between the kings of the north and south, a uniquely _____ person would come to power through deception and political intrigue.

“The throne rightly belonged to one of the sons of Seleucus IV, the former king and brother of Antiochus IV, but Antiochus IV seized it for himself and had himself proclaimed king. He persuaded the leaders of Syria to allow him to rule since Demetrius, the eldest son of Seleucus IV, was being held hostage in Rome. In this way, through intrigue, he secured the throne for himself.” —Thomas Constable

⇒ He took for himself the title *Theos Epiphanes* (“god manifest”), but many contemporaries who considered him an egomaniac nicknamed him *Empimanes* (“madman”).

2. The ‘contemptible’ king would enrich himself through plunder and would engage in numerous _____ expeditions with mixed results.

“Antiochus robbed the richest parts of his own kingdom when they did not expect to be plundered. He did not squander his wealth upon himself as his ancestors had done. Instead, he very generously distributed it among his poorer subjects...” —Renald Showers

⇒ From 170-168 BC Antiochus was involved in the Sixth Syrian War against the Ptolemies of Egypt. Although he managed to capture much of Egypt and further enrich himself over the course of multiple invasions, he was ultimately unsuccessful and forced to withdraw his forces because of fear of the Romans who aligned themselves with the Ptolemaic rulers.

3. Throughout this time period, this king will seek to maintain religious and political influence in _____.

“a prince of the covenant”

⇒ Antiochus encouraged infighting among the Jewish leadership, installing high priests who were favorable to his program of Hellenization and who would offer to him the greatest bribes.

Onias III deposed by Jason

Jason deposed by Menelaus

4. The king will then turn his _____ upon the people of Israel, desecrating the temple and leading a severe persecution.

“they will set up the abomination that causes desolation”

“An edict was made that all nationalities in Antiochus’ kingdom were to be fused into one people. All were to worship Greek deities. An Athenian philosopher was sent to Jerusalem to supervise the enforcement of the edict. The regular Temple sacrifices to God were stopped. Syrian soldiers and harlots performed licentious heathen rites in the Temple courts. Pigs were sacrificed to Greek gods in the Temple.”—Renald Showers

“but the people who know their God will firmly resist him”

“those who are wise”

⇒ A family of Jewish priests (the Maccabees) began a movement of resistance against the policies of Antiochus (1 Macc. 2:22-28). Although they faced persecution, these were the ‘wise’ who sought to remain faithful to the covenant of the Lord.

“The nature of their resistance is twofold: suffering and teaching. Through their efforts [‘the wise’] ‘make many understand’...thereby turning them to righteousness and emboldening them to stand for the Law. The [‘wise ones’] impart wisdom and this wisdom enables [one] to make prudent decisions in a time of crisis...This wisdom also imparts strength to undergo suffering because he is assured of glory in the inbreaking eschatological kingdom.” —W.J. Heard

⇒ Antiochus died in battle in Parthia in 164 BC and the Maccabean revolt was ultimately successful, establishing a period of Jewish independence that lasted until the conquest of Pompey and the appointment of Herod the Great to rule in 37/36 BC.

Key Point: This portion of the prophecy anticipated ongoing times of persecution that would continue to _____ Israel so that they would be prepared to receive _____.

“so that they may be refined, purified and made spotless until the time of the end, for it will still come at the appointed time.”

The Career of the Antichrist (11:36-12:1)

Observations

1. There is a transition in the text, beginning at the end of v. 35, indicating that the time of the _____ rather than the near future is the focus of all that follows.
“the time of the end” (11:35b) → *“the time of the end”* (11:40) → *“that time”* (12:1)
⇒ “The king” is a title distinct from prior designations of rulers in Dan. 11. The career of this ruler does not follow that of Antiochus, particularly the prediction of this king’s death occurring in Israel (11:45) since we know that Antiochus died elsewhere.
“Those of our persuasion believe all these things are spoken prophetically of the Antichrist who is to arise in the end time.”
- Jerome (AD 4th c.)
2. The prophecy describes the _____ he will claim for himself and the _____ that he will wield.
⇒ In terms of the timing, what is described here likely occurs in the latter half of Daniel’s seventieth week. Having made a covenant with the nation of Israel and presented himself as Messiah as Messiah, he will suddenly put an end to their religious sacrifices and commit the ‘abomination’ (Da. 9:27) to which these verses give further insight.
 - (1) *He will _____ himself and blaspheme God.* (Rev. 13:6)
 - (2) *He will be successful until the time of ‘the _____’ is complete.*
 - (3) *He will have no _____ for the God of his fathers or of the true Messiah.*
 - (4) *He will be empowered by _____ for political and military success.* (Rev. 13:4)
3. The prophecy also describes the military campaigns of the Antichrist in the lead up to the great and final _____.
⇒ Given that the earlier prophecies refer to conflicts between the Seleucid and Ptolemaic empires, we should assume that the general territories associated with these kingdoms remain in view.
 - (1) *He will engage in conflict with _____ and her allies in N. Africa.*
 - (2) *He will invade Israel, but his military might will not dominate the entire region.*
⇒ This will likely provide a place of escape for those who heed the warnings of Jesus given in the Olivet Discourse (Matt. 24:15-20).
 - (3) *He will then set himself to destroy _____, but will meet his end.*
⇒ Scripture predicts final battle and conflict around Jerusalem (Zech. 12-14) and that the nations will come against her, seeking her destruction (Rev. 17:15-18).

Key Point: Although this will be a time of great distress, God will ultimately _____ His people from their enemies.

Dan. 12:1—“At that time shall arise Michael, the great prince who has charge of your people. And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never has been since there was a nation till that time. But at that time your people shall be delivered, everyone whose name shall be found written in the book.”

Living Faithfully in “Babylon”

- Faithful witness can be compromised by an idolatrous hope in _____ means of deliverance.
Psa. 33:16-17, 20-22—¹⁶ *The king is not saved by his great army; a warrior is not delivered by his great strength.* ¹⁷ *The war horse is a false hope for salvation, and by its great might it cannot rescue...* ²⁰ *Our soul waits for the Lord; he is our help and our shield.* ²¹ *For our heart is glad in him, because we trust in his holy name.* ²² *Let your steadfast love, O Lord, be upon us, even as we hope in you.*
- Faithful witness can be compromised by _____ of those who would seek to silence us.
1 Pet. 3:12-15—¹⁴ *But even if you should suffer for righteousness’ sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled,* ¹⁵ *but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect*

The Career of the Antichrist (11:36-12:1)

Observations

1. There is a transition in the text, beginning at the end of v. 35, indicating that the time of the **End** rather than the near future is the focus of all that follows.
“the time of the end” (11:35b) → *“the time of the end”* (11:40) → *“that time”* (12:1)
⇒ “The king” is a title distinct from prior designations of rulers in Dan. 11. The career of this ruler does not follow that of Antiochus, particularly the prediction of this king’s death occurring in Israel (11:45) since we know that Antiochus died elsewhere.
“Those of our persuasion believe all these things are spoken prophetically of the Antichrist who is to arise in the end time.”
- Jerome (AD 4th c.)
2. The prophecy describes the **authority** he will claim for himself and the **power** that he will wield.
⇒ In terms of the timing, what is described here likely occurs in the latter half of Daniel’s seventieth week. Having made a covenant with the nation of Israel and presented himself as Messiah to enforce the Mosaic Law, he will suddenly put an end to their religious sacrifices and commit the ‘abomination’ (Da. 9:27) to which these verses give further insight.
 - (1) *He will exalt himself and blaspheme God.* (Rev. 13:6)
 - (2) *He will be successful until the time of ‘the indignation’ is complete.*
 - (3) *He will have no regard for the God of his fathers or of the true Messiah.*
 - (4) *He will be empowered by Satan for political and military success.* (Rev. 13:4)
3. The prophecy also describes the military campaigns of the Antichrist in the lead up to the great and final **battle**.
⇒ Given that the earlier prophecies refer to conflicts between the Seleucid and Ptolemaic empires, we should assume that the general territories associated with these kingdoms remain in view.
 - (1) *He will engage in conflict with Egypt and her allies in N. Africa.*
 - (2) *He will invade Israel, but his military might will not dominate the entire region.*
⇒ This will likely provide a place of escape for those who heed the warnings of Jesus given in the Olivet Discourse (Matt. 24:15-20).
 - (3) *He will then set himself to destroy Jerusalem, but will meet his end.*
⇒ Scripture predicts final battle and conflict around Jerusalem (Zech. 12-14) and that the nations will come against her, seeking her destruction (Rev. 17:15-18).

Key Point: Although this will be a time of great distress, God will ultimately deliver His people from their enemies.

Dan. 12:1—“At that time shall arise Michael, the great prince who has charge of your people. And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never has been since there was a nation till that time. But at that time your people shall be delivered, everyone whose name shall be found written in the book.”

Living Faithfully in “Babylon”

- Faithful witness can be compromised by an idolatrous hope in **worldly** means of deliverance.

Psa. 33:16-17, 20-22—¹⁶ The king is not saved by his great army; a warrior is not delivered by his great strength. ¹⁷ The war horse is a false hope for salvation, and by its great might it cannot rescue... ²⁰ Our soul waits for the Lord; he is our help and our shield. ²¹ For our heart is glad in him, because we trust in his holy name. ²² Let your steadfast love, O Lord, be upon us, even as we hope in you.

- Faithful witness can be compromised by **fear** of those who would seek to silence us.

1 Pet. 3:12-15—¹⁴ But even if you should suffer for righteousness’ sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, ¹⁵ but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect