

Throughout this chapter we have talked about what Daniel was told by the angel about the kings of the near future who will rule over the Israelites and one who will rule in the future. These kings who are still in the future for Daniel have waged war on each other causing the nation of Israel great distress. The generational rulers struggling with pride, self-indulgence, vengeance or just plain power hungry found reasons to stir up the battle again and again. Today we will see the last of rulers from the past and get into the one who is still to come for even us.

Daniel is getting to see with his own eyes, the last human reign of the world as we know it. As the text today takes the huge step from near future for Daniel to a time unknown by man. We will see the final ruler to ever persecute the Jewish people come onto the scene and as the scripture will say “do as he pleases”. He will be the bridge between Satan and God’s people, bringing all of Satan’s hatred for God and anyone who follows him. Antiochus Epiphanes was the Old Testament Antichrist, bringing destruction, and death to everything in his path. Antiochus gives us a clear picture of what is to come.

In the end the enemies top 3 will show up, Satan, the Antichrist and the False Prophet for one last battle with Jerusalem. We know the order of this and how it will go down, as back in Daniel 9 we read about the “beast” and how he would show favoritism towards the Jews to gain their favor. Making a covenant with them and even rebuilding the temple.

We left off last time with Antiochus and his nephew coming to some mutual arrangements, that neither of them intended on standing behind. Upon returning home the king of the North makes a quick pit stop in Jerusalem to settle a dispute over the high priest position. On the other side of the table the Ptolemy brothers were working together to strengthen the Egyptian army to stand against the Syrian king.

Daniel 11-29:45

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**Verse 29-30** So Antiochus decides he was not done with Egypt even though he promised not to invade them again. Unfortunately, even with the Egyptian brothers working together, they would not be strong enough to hold him off alone. When he invades, the Egyptians had a little surprise waiting for him. Unbeknownst to him, the Roman navy would be waiting for his arrival. This backing of the king of the south greatly changed the outcome for Antiochus.

The Romans encountered the oncoming army in a port town known as Alexandria, where Antiochus was ordered by general Popilius Laenas to evacuate immediately and go home. His response was “well let me talk this over with my advisors, I’ll let you know what we decide”.

The Roman general drew a circle around Antiochus in the sand, and he was demanded to answer before leaving the circle. Will you pay Rome what you owe? Unable to consult his own general clearly humiliated and intimidated Antiochus had no choice but to leave Egypt and head for home. Failing in

his invasion of Egypt, Antiochus Epiphanes returned home with only great wealth he had stolen to soothe his wounded pride. The grand idea of him becoming the next Alexander the Great had been permanently crushed. Although he would fight again, his passion to control all of the known world would never reach his previous aspirations and that goal would never be met. Instead, the uncontrollable fury within him would be taken out on the people he had come to despise.... The Jews.

When this vile person returned to his land, he attacks the land, the people, and the temple of Israel. It was a time of great courage and treachery among the people of God. This was fulfilled when Antiochus Epiphanes returned from Egypt, bitter from defeat. He vented his anger against Jerusalem, which was already shaken because Antiochus had previously taken a bribe and sold the office of High Priest. If that wasn't bad enough, he also instructed the new high priest into persecute the Jewish people to conform to Greek culture, ultimately forsaking the faith and traditions of their fathers. The decree issued that anyone found with a copy of scripture or even to be following Jewish law would be killed on the spot, no mercy. Antiochus plan was to without question eliminate any thought of rebellion against him as king.

He had lost the battle to be king of the known world so his power-hungry nature would lead him to focus on Jerusalem. Remember his nickname Epiphanes "madman" boy is he living up to that now, he thought he could break the covenant that God made with his chosen people.

**Verse 31** When Antiochus Epiphanes turned on Jerusalem, the Jewish people were divided. Many Jews were perfectly fine to give up on all they had ever known and accepting the Hellenistic ways that the high priest was forcing on them. Those who knew their God made a stand for righteousness in the face of incredible persecution, God has always preserved a portion of those who chose to remain faithful to Him. Antiochus had lost other battles in the past and this one would be no different, these true followers of God would not give in without a fight.

Antiochus Epiphanes set up an image of Zeus in the temple and built a pagan altar above the holy altar. He demanded sacrifices to this image, and later desecrated the temple even further by sacrificing a pig on the risen altar. It was in truth an abomination, which brought desolation to the Temple, for now no one would come to worship at all.

**Verse 32 – 35** We have revealed that Antiochus IV has been causing absolutely devastating destruction to the Jewish people. Just a few verse back on one of his tangents he was said to have killed 40,000 Jews and sold another 40,000 into slavery. Do you know the population of Greene County? 70,553 people live in Greene County, so Antiochus would have completely decimated all of Greene County leaving it a ghost town and about a 1/3 of Newport through death or slavery.

He also robbed the temple, leaving it barren. Estimations show the total value of everything taken would equal approximately 1 billion dollars in today's money.

There was a group of Jewish people who had seen enough, they decided to rebel against the king of the North. These guerrilla fighters would be known as the Maccabees, led by a man named Judah. Maccabee was sort of a nickname too, the Hebrew word for this is "makkevet" which means hammer. This man Judah would revolt against Syria in a war lasting three years, were he and his military forces would strike the outlying Syrian posts. Their tactic was to attack an outpost, then quickly retreat to

the hills. There they knew the land and could hide in caves, so that any of the Syrian army who would give chase where at a disadvantage. Due to the Maccabees wearing down the Syrians anytime they would actually have to face off with the enemy, they would overtake them even though on paper they should not have had a chance.

Eventually these rebel fighters would regain control of Jerusalem from Syria, once again stopping Antiochus in his tracks and sending him packing. This doesn't mean that there wasn't a cost for this victory. Many of the freedom fighters lost their lives in battle against the "madman" of Syria.

This terror could only last for as long as God had appointed it, and God had a purpose even for such persecution and blasphemy. Finally in 164 BC something wonderful for the Egyptians the Israelites and anyone in the surrounding area happens, Antiochus IV Epiphanes dies of a debilitating disease. This made for a very painful death, and I know that we should not be happy about that, but this may have been a little payback for all the pain and destruction he caused everyone else.

Have you ever seen worldly people who without Jesus coming into their lives for a complete renovation of their lives would deserve nothing more than hell. They seem to prosper even through all their sin. They constantly diminish the work of God and seem to get away with it. In Romans 12:19 it says "*Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, vengeance is mine, I will repay says the Lord*". Being the most horrendous person who ever lived, Antiochus deserved nothing more than hell, judgement has come to the Old Testament Antichrist. Antiochus IV Epiphanes was a foreshadow of one who is still to come and will be worse yet.

Antiochus had dreams and aspirations to conquer the known world and although that did not come to fruition for him, the one who is yet to come will indeed succeed in ruling the entire world. Causing even more hardship and destruction for Gods people, as the vilest of anyone who has ever lived. The coming Antichrist will fulfill everything that Antiochus ever dreamt of and then some. He will also be described as "the king who does as he pleases", showing no interest in things that do not benefit him.

### How to deal with your struggles

**Verse 36** The reference to "the time of the end" in verse 35 offers a challenge in interpretation. Some understand this as referring to the time just before Christ's return, and others see it as the end of the Maccabean struggles. Some of the actions can be attributed to Antiochus Epiphanes, and some seem to be prophecies of the beast power that will exist at the end of this present age. These verses apparently have dual fulfillments, spanning from the time of the Maccabees until the return of Christ.

The preceding verses in Daniel 11 represent extremely detailed prophecies that have been fulfilled exactly as they were revealed to Daniel. It is important to note that the Roman Empire defeated Seleucid Syria in 65 B.C. and that it defeated Egypt in 30 B.C. At last, the family feud of the century between the king of the North and the king of the South comes to an end.

We know that everything about this prophecy was not fulfilled during the career of Antiochus Epiphanes. In Matthew 24, Jesus specifically said the *real* abomination of desolation was still in the future. The Apostle Paul paraphrased Daniel verse 36 in reference to the coming Antichrist: in 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 it says "*Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. He*

*will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in Gods temple, proclaiming himself as God.”*

Antiochus Epiphanes, whose persecution of the Israelites could have come from nothing other than being demonically inspired, was only a picture of the king who will come to power in the last seven years of the earth's history.

He will literally only be using them as a pawn in order to fulfill his true purpose, to rule as both the king and god of the world.

**Verse 37** There are 2 parts to this verse, the first being that he will show no regard to God of his ancestors. Some say this indicated that the antichrist will be a Jew, showing no respect for the God we know. The second part is or the one desired by women. There are some people who think this means the antichrist will be homosexual, but with understanding it is clearly referencing Jesus.

It was the desire of every Jewish girl to be privileged to bear the Messiah. And Christ was called the desire of nations. But the desire, really, of every young girl--to be chosen to be the mother of the Messiah. Most of the Jewish people are still waiting on the Messiah to come, that is why so many of the Jewish mothers name their child Joshua. Hoping that God would use him for the salvation of Israel.

**Verse 38-39** He is not looking to play nice, he will take charge by force not earn it. He will hold his power with great military force and will not be afraid to spend the nation's money to maintain it. Do you know how much money it takes to fund the US military? I am not sure what all this money covers, if its only weapons, equipment, payroll, VA costs etc. but it's estimated that it cost 942 billion dollars in 2023. I am not saying that this is a poor use of a nation's money but man that's a lot! I'm sure there is a little splurging but to stay ahead of the enemy it takes the newest resources, and the best safety gear for our troops. Image if you had to defend yourself against your own nation. This is what the antichrist will do spend the budget on maintaining his position.

#### How to stand firm

**Verse 40-45** The end-time identities of these nations are yet to be determined. The angel described to Daniel a confederation of kings coming against this great leader, with a battle in and near the Holy Land. The establishment of the modern nation of Israel in 1948 seems to be a key development that allows for the fulfillment of these end-time verses. From the time of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in A.D. 70 until 1948, there was no Jewish nation.

Now, with a Jewish nation once again existing in the Middle East, there is relevance to identifying major world governments as a king of the North and a king of the South in reference to Jewish people living in Jerusalem. Prophetically speaking, a precise identification of the people mentioned is difficult. The king of the South may be Egypt or represent the Arab community. The king of the North may be the Antichrist's domain, or it may be Russia.

The precise points may be cloudy, but the general idea is clear. The end will be marked by great conflict, culminating in the world's armies gathering in the Promised Land to do final battle.

In the end there is no hope for the Antichrist or for any of his follower's, knowing God is the only way to stand on the winning side.

But to know God, goes beyond having a theoretical knowledge of God's plans. It means to have a relationship with Him. It means to know His character, power, and goodness. Strength to carry on in the face of persecution would not come from alliances, wealth, or sheer power. No, they were not to rely on the same weapons of war that their enemies did. Their strength came from their relationship with God. The closer they were to Him, the stronger they would be.

Their faith would enable them to stand firm and not compromise in the face of persecution. And if they had faith in God, He would also help them take action. Taking action might be a reference to the Maccabean revolt and their hard-won freedom from the Seleucids.

The same principle is true for us today. If we know God, we too can stand firm and take action. Much of the world is trending toward a direction that is less welcoming toward Christians. Persecution in many countries is increasing.

That persecution is not always in the form of torture, imprisonment, or death. Sometimes it takes the form of cultural or economic persecution. You may be fired from your job if you don't accept your company's worldview, teachers everywhere are made to hide their faith while in the classrooms. You may be ostracized in the community if you don't go with the flow in supporting their anti-Christian ideals.

Your strength to stand firm should not come from conservative news outlets or political discussion boards. It should come from a deep, personal relationship with the Lord. When you know the outcome, the return of Jesus as the triumphant king, it gives you hope and strength. And when you know God, you know He has a perfect plan for you. You know He will never leave or forsake you. And you know that the Holy Spirit is within you and will give you the courage you need to stand firm just when you need it.

More than just the knowledge, a personal relationship with the Lord will give you the inner strength, resolve, and peace to do what is right even when the whole world is going the other way.