

When Kingdoms are Shaken, Part 4

Daniel 11:30–35¹

Truth: *Our righteous God eternally rules over the shaken kingdoms of evil men.*

Daniel 11:29–35 ²⁹ *At the time appointed he [Antiochus IV] shall return, and come toward the south [Egypt/Ptolemaic Empire]; but it shall not be as the former, or as the latter.* ³⁰ *For the ships of Chittim shall come against him: therefore he shall be grieved, and return, and have indignation against the holy covenant: so shall he do; he shall even return, and have intelligence with them that forsake the holy covenant. [i.e. we would act favorably to those who would forsake their commitment to obey God's Word and embrace Hellenization]* ³¹ *And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate.* ³² *And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he corrupt by flatteries: but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits.* ³³ *And they that understand among the people shall instruct many [i.e. instruct people about the significance of Providence in their struggles]: yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days.* ³⁴ *Now when they shall fall, they shall be holpen with a little help: but many shall cleave to them with flatteries. [i.e. some will join the revolt but for dubious reasons]* ³⁵ *And some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge, and to make them white, even to the time of the end: because it is yet for a time appointed.*

A Historical Prophecy Concerning Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175–164 B.C.)

Again, we will examine the historical consequent to this prophetic antecedent in Daniel 11.

- Antiochus sought to win the Egyptian territories, expecting the battle to be “a breeze.” However, he would not have the same success as he had in the past.
- Hearing about Antiochus IV’s invasion into the Ptolemaic territories, Rome (who had just conquered Macedonia) sent a fleet of ships to intervene. Rome’s consul, Gaius Popillius Laenas, humiliated Antiochus as the following account portrays:
 - ▶ “Popillius refused to acknowledge Antiochus’s greeting and presented him with a Roman ultimatum which was very straightforward in its demand: immediate cessation of the war and complete withdrawal from Egypt in the shortest time possible. When Antiochus asked for time to consider, Popillius drew a circle with a stick around the kind and bade him give his answer to the note within the circle’ ... The humiliated Seleucid king agreed to the ultimatum and acted accordingly.”²
 - ▶ “During the time of Antiochus’ second Egyptian campaign, there had been a rebellion in Jerusalem, as Jason (the former high priest) made an attempt to overthrow Menelaus and retake Jerusalem. In light of recent events, perhaps Antiochus felt compelled to communicate a message that insurrection would not be tolerated. Such opposition to Hellenization and Seleucid authority could only be interpreted as sympathy for Egypt, for only from Egypt could the rebels hope to receive support for the liberation movement. Therefore, upon reaching Jerusalem, he had the walls of the city torn down, slaughtered thousands of Jews, and sold many more into slavery (cf. 2 Macc. 5:11–14). In addition, he himself entered the holy of holies with Menelaus as his guide (cf. 2 Macc. 5:15–16). Antiochus’ policy was to show favor to (or honor) “those who forsake the holy covenant,” i.e., he would act favorably to those Jews willing to turn from the biblical faith and embrace his plans of Hellenization for Judah.”³
 - ▶ [Concerning the slaughter of Jews]: “¹¹ Now when this that was done came to the king’s ear, he thought that Judea had revolted: whereupon removing out of Egypt in a furious mind, he took the city by force of arms, ¹² And commanded his men of war not to spare such as they met, and to slay such as went up upon the houses.

¹Unless otherwise noted all Scripture quotations taken from the Holy Bible King James Version.

²Hölb, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*, 147–48, as quoted in the EEC *Daniel*, authored by J. Paul Tanner.

³Tanner, *Daniel*, 677–78.

¹³ Thus there was killing of young and old, making away of men, women, and children, slaying of virgins and infants. ¹⁴ And there were destroyed within the space of three whole days fourscore thousand, whereof forty thousand were slain in the conflict; and no fewer sold than slain.” (2 Maccabees 5:11–14)⁴

► [Concerning the abomination in the temple by Antiochus]: “¹⁵ Yet was he not content with this, but presumed to go into the most holy temple of all the world; Menelaus, that traitor to the laws, and to his own country, being his guide: ¹⁶ And taking the holy vessels with polluted hands, and with profane hands pulling down the things that were dedicated by other kings to the augmentation and glory and honour of the place, he gave them away.” (2 Maccabees 5:15–16)

- After leaving one of his generals in Jerusalem to curb any other Jewish uprisings, Antiochus soon added extremely stringent policies which were intended to squash the Jewish religion. Some of these policies included forbidding what God had commanded (e.g. circumcision, Sabbath, etc.), the destruction of God’s Word, forced to sacrifice to false deities, etc.
- 1 Maccabees records that Antiochus put a pagan altar on top of the Jewish altar to sacrifice to pagan deities: Now the five and twentieth day of the month they did sacrifice upon the idol altar, which was upon the altar of God” (1:59).
- The result of Antiochus’ blasphemous actions was the Maccabean Revolt which would eventually culminate in the rededication of the temple in Jerusalem on December 14, 164 and the daily sacrifice was restored. The Feast of Dedication (or, Hanukkah) was instituted to commemorate this joyous event.

Principles

[Previous]:

1. Our God reigns (cf. Dan. 4:17, 25). Though men may rise and fall in history, there is only one Sovereign whose reign will persist for eternity.
2. We know that it is the wicked, depraved heart that leads men away from the righteous rule of our God. There are none who seek after God (Rom. 3:10–12).
3. These wicked rulers will not succeed in overthrowing the rule of King Jesus. Rebels will try to resist Christ’s righteous rule but none will succeed (Rev. 20:7–10). God’s kingdom will never be shaken (cf. Heb. 12:27–28).

Continuing:

4. In the face of persecution God’s saints will endure with strength. We know that enduring persecution and trials produces endurance (cf. 1 Pet. 1:3–9).
5. All throughout history those who oppose the Almighty God have both undermined and sought to eradicate His Word. Nothing will be able to take it away for God’s Word shall stand forever (Is. 40:8).
6. Satan’s “dress rehearsal” with Antiochus was appointed by God. So also shall Satan’s “masterpiece” in the Antichrist be yet another “appointed end” by our loving and sovereign God.
7. Believers have a responsibility to share God’s divine viewpoint and its significance with others in our day.
8. We must encourage the faith of those who are weak to remember what God has said from His Word. When intense persecution comes, we must cling to the unchanging truths of Scripture to remind us that our pain is for a purpose.

⁴Please note: the apocrypha is *not* Holy Scripture. It has been historically viewed as such. However, it does record events and Jewish history in a way that gives insight into the Jewish perspective regarding the “silent years” (inter-testamental period).