

ALEXANDER, ANTIOCHUS AND ANTICHRIST

Daniel 11

PLEASE do not read these comments until you have read the Scripture for this lesson. First let the Holy Spirit teach you directly from His Word.

Introduction

Today's lesson is part of the message that the angel brought to Daniel from God. It took him 21 days to reach Daniel because an evil angel stopped him and would not let him go until Michael came to help him. The fulfillment of the first 35 verses of chapter 11 has been so exact that liberal scholars do not believe Daniel wrote it. They believe someone wrote it after it happened and put Daniel's name on it to make it look like prophecy. But God wanted Daniel to write about two very evil men that Satan was going to use to try to destroy His plan for restoring godliness on planet earth. God does know the future and He has revealed some of it to His prophets.

God sent his angel to tell Daniel about an a vile man that would attack His people and pollute His Temple. His name was not given to Daniel, but his actions were. That man turned out to be Antiochus Epiphanes, who did these evil things (most 400 years after Daniel wrote these words. He is a type of Antichrist. Some of his evil works are also recorded in this prophecy. He will persecute Israel before the second coming of Christ, which is still in the future. God allows evil men to persecute His people to make them turn from their sins and be bold witnesses for Him.

Aim of the Lesson

Pray for believers to be bold witnesses for Christ even when Satan uses evil men to hurt them.

Paul asked believers to pray for him, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel" (Eph 6:19).

Outline of the Lesson (Use the Study Notes to add to this lesson outline as the Spirit leads you.)

PROPHECIES ABOUT RULERS IN CERTAIN EMPIRES – 11:1-39

The natural way of interpreting prophecy is the only way to understand Daniel 11:1-35. The words he used are to be understood as people normally use words. What he prophesied came to pass exactly as he said it would because he got those words from God. Do not try to see a deeper or hidden meaning in reading prophecy. When Daniel described the wicked deeds by two men against Israel, his prophecy about one of those men has already been fulfilled exactly as he wrote it in words with normal meanings. So understand his words about the second man in a natural way because they will be fulfilled that way.

We must understand the words of prophecy in the same way as we would read a letter from a dear missionary friend that is being attacked by ungodly men. Then we should pray for them to be bold in witnessing to lost siners.

I. MEDO-PERSIAN EMPIRE – 11:1-2

11:1-2 – Darius the Mede as king of Babylon was assisted and strengthened in his first year by the angel that gave this prophecy to Daniel. This was about the time when he was thinking of making Daniel the chief president under him.:2 – Xerxes was the king that used his great store of riches to attack Greece. He lost the war and his attack infuriated the Greeks to attack Medo-Persia 150 years later.

We learn how God works out His plan through the good deeds of kings and through the bad deeds of kings, He sends His angels to work behind the scenes to accomplish His purposes. We need to pray for one another so that God can use us as His witnesses in this wicked world.

II. GRECIAN EMPIRE – 11:3-35

11:3-4 – Alexander the Great is the mighty king that defeated Medo-Persia and founded the Grecian Empire (331-323 BC). Daniel was given this prophecy about Alexander 200 years before it happened. When Alexander died, his kingdom was divided among his four generals.

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11:5-20 – Of the four divisions only the kingdoms of the Ptolemies and Seleucids were of importance to Israel. The Ptolemies ruled Egypt to the south of Israel and the Seleucids ruled Syria and Mesopotamia to the north of Israel. The kings of these nations fought each other and Israel was ruled by one or the other. Daniel prophesied about these events, which happened over a period of 150 years.

11:21-35 – Antiochus Epiphanes, a vile king from the Seleucids, ruled over Israel for the next 11 years (175-164 BC). More is prophesied about this king than the other kings of this period because he would be like Antichrist. Antiochus did vile things that Antichrist is likely to do. **(1)** He won the kingdom by flatteries (intrigues) – 11:21. **(2)** He attacked the Jews – see references to the “covenant” in 11:22, 28-32. **(3)** He attacked wealthy communities suddenly that were at peace with him – 11:24. **(4)** He divided the booty from these attacks among the people to win their loyalty – 11:24. **(5)** He weakened the places of strength in his kingdom so they could not oppose his evil activities – 11:24. **(6)** He defiled the Temple of God, took away the daily sacrifice and commanded the Jews to sacrifice to his pagan god (11:31-32).

The Maccabees arose against Antiochus, but suffered greatly in their battles with him. With dedication to their cause and determination not to quit, they drove him out of Jerusalem (11:32b-35). As a result of their efforts they gained independence for about 100 years until the Romans put them under their rule.

The prophecy of Daniel 11:1-35 is truly remarkable. Even though it was prophesied about 270 years before the events took place, it was fulfilled just as Daniel wrote it.

We need to pray for believers that suffer under wicked rulers like Antiochus Epiphanes. We need to pray so they remain strong in their faith and witness with boldness. Fulfilled prophecy should be an encouragement to us that God has a plan and will use our prayers to accomplish that plan.

III. ROMAN EMPIRE REVIVED – 11:36-39

A break in the prophecy occurs between verses 35-36. The events of verses 1-35 are left behind and the prophecy jumps ahead to a day far into the future. The preceding trials (cf. v. 35) had the purpose of purifying the Jews. Then a time element is introduced in v. 35: “the time of the end” and “a time appointed.” Both of these terms draw the reader’s attention to the period of the Tribulation (cf. 8:17, 19; 9:26-27; 11:40; 12:1). Antichrist is the subject of 11:36-39; he is the king of the revived Roman Empire.

A. Introduction to Antichrist – 11:36-39

11:36 – With the new time period, a new “king” is introduced. He is like Antiochus Epiphanes in the preceding verses, but will have a far different role in God’s plan. God used the *actions* of Antiochus Epiphanes in Daniel 11:21-35 to draw attention to a future “king,” who will represent Satan (Rev 13:2-7).

1. Antichrist’s Pride – 11:36

He shall function according to his own will and he shall exalt himself above all gods and even challenge the true God (speak blasphemies against God). God will allow him to prosper until His determined indignation against the Jews and Gentiles is fulfilled (cf. Isa. 10:25; 26:20; Dan. 8:19).

2. Antichrist’s Selfishness – 11:37

He shall reject the God of his fathers (some believe this indicates that he will be an apostate Jew); he believes he is god. He shall have no desire for women; his love will be for himself and no other.

3. Antichrist’s Military Power – 11:38

Instead of faith in a Supreme Being, his faith will be in the might of his military. All of his financial resources will be employed in building a powerful army.

4. Antichrist’s Political Power – 11:39

He shall employ his military muscles to bring others into his political camp. Those who bow to his desires shall be given puppet positions over lands allotted by bribery and graft.

We know rulers with these characteristics still threaten godly believers. We must pray that these believers; will not be intimidated by these wicked men, but will witness boldly for Christ.