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The Despicable Antiochus Epiphanes IV

Okay, turn to Daniel 11. This is a continuation of probably the most complex prophecy in the OT. But don't let it frustrate you. Just keep in mind the general framework of prophecy that Daniel has received in other dreams and visions; namely that from 605BC there will be four successive Gentile kingdoms followed by a fifth Jewish kingdom.

The first Gentile kingdom is Babylon; it is depicted as the head of gold and the lion with wings whose wings are plucked and then stands up and is given the mind of a man. The imagery really relates primarily to Nebuchadnezzar himself as the greatest Gentile leader and depicts in detail three periods of his reign. The second Gentile kingdom is Medo-Persia, it is depicted as the chest and arms of silver and as a bear raised up on one side with three ribs in its mouth and as a ram with two horns, one growing up later than the other but growing larger and defeating all foes until its horns are suddenly shattered. The imagery portrays Medo-Persia as a kingdom that formed as an alliance, first the stronger was Media, then Persia. It conquered great territory including Babylon, Lydia and Egypt but was suddenly defeated. The third Gentile kingdom is Greece and it is depicted by the waist and thighs of bronze and as a leopard with four wings and four heads and as a buck goat with one horn that is broken and replaced by four horns and a little horn growing up from one of the four. This imagery pictures Greece as a kingdom that will rise to power through the rapid military conqueror Alexander the Great who in turn dies suddenly and whose kingdom is divided amongst his four generals; Casander, Lysimachus, Ptolemy and Seleucid. And out of the Seleucid branch would come one ruler who was exceedingly difficult for the Jews, namely Antiochus Epiphanes IV. The fourth Gentile kingdom is Rome and it is depicted by legs of iron and feet partly of clay and partly of iron and as a dreadful beast with ten horns and then an eleventh little horn growing

up and pulling out three horns and becoming mighty and magnifying himself greatly. This imagery depicts Rome as first a very powerful kingdom and lastly as partly powerful and partly weak. During the final form ten kings will arise contemporaneous to one another and then an eleventh will arise who will subdue three of the ten and make himself out to be God and who will persecute the Jews greatly. Then he will be destroyed and the fifth kingdom, a Jewish one will come. This kingdom is portrayed as a stone cut out without hands that crushes and demolishes the entire metal statue all at once and grows to fill the whole earth with righteousness and as the Son of Man who comes up to the Ancient of Days and receives the kingdom that is global and eternal. This imagery means that the kingdom will be supernaturally established suddenly and totally replace all prior Gentile kingdoms and will be the first and only one to ever rule over men in a humane way that recognizes human nobility and integrity as the image of God. This kingdom will remain forever.

That is the broad picture of the future Daniel has had revealed to him. Daniel 10, 11 and 12 are specific details related to the picture of Medo-Persia and Greece. And interestingly none of it is in symbolic language. Everything is simple, ordinary language. It is only hard to follow because it is so complex. In Daniel 11:2 the angel explained to Daniel that there were four more Persian kings to come. The fourth king would gain many riches but in doing so he would arouse the Greeks against him. The Greek king that took action is found in verse 3 to be a prediction of Alexander the Great, the mighty and arrogant king who rose and conquered the Persians at astounding speed. However, in verse 4 as soon as he reached the pinnacle of power he would die and his kingdom would be divided up to his four generals, none of whom were his own descendants; Casander, Lysimachus, Ptolemy and Seleucus. In verse 5 the angel turns Daniel's attention to the Ptolemaic and Seleucid branches of the Greek Empire. The Ptolemy kings ruled in the South which is Egypt and the Seleucid kings ruled in the North which is modern day Syria. All the way down to verse 20 the angel predicts the wars between these kings that would be waged for over a century. What bothered Daniel was that his people lived directly in between these kings and therefore would be caught up in all the wars of these kings. This of course was divine discipline on the nation Israel in order to get them to repent so the kingdom of God could come. Always the kingdom is contingent on the nation Israel's repentance. Tonight in Daniel 11:21-35 the eighth Seleucid king arises who is called a

contemptible person; he is the one all the background between the Ptolemies and Seleucids have been leading up too. History reports him to be known as Antiochus Epiphanes IV. And he's nastier to the Jews than any of the other Ptolemaic or Seleucid kings and so his nature and career are extensively predicted. And I suggest that the reason God revealed so much about him is that he is a foreshadowing of the ultimate persecutor of the Jews still to come, the one we know as anti-Christ. So if you know Antiochus then you'll be able to recognize anti-Christ when he comes on the scene. And we'll try to compare the characteristics of these two at the conclusion tonight. Then in Daniel 11:36-45 the prophecy jumps all the way from the Greek Antiochus to the Roman anti-Christ. Some people think the anti-Christ is a Jew because of verse 36 but we'll see he's not a Jew but a Roman. And we'll learn his character as well as some of the specifics of his career. Finally the explanation continues on into Daniel 12 where we learn that when the anti-Christ comes on the world stage the angelic conflict will intensify with the result that the Jews will be rescued. At that time the four Gentile kingdoms will have run their course, the discipline will have served its purpose, the Jews will have repented and the righteous Jews will be resurrected to enter the kingdom of God.

That's the overview, now for the details of Antiochus Epiphanes IV in Daniel 11:21 and we are studying him for background to the anti-Christ. Starting in verse 20 we see Antiochus' father, Antiochus III the Great coming to his demise and his son Seleucus IV Philopater rising and sending his treasurer to the Temple in Israel to steal the temple riches. But he doesn't last long and that sets the stage for Antiochus IV Epiphanes to take the throne. **Then in his place [Antiochus III the Great] one will arise who will send an oppressor through the Jewel of his kingdom; yet within a few days he will be shattered, though not in anger nor in battle.** There are three people here; first, Antiochus the Great, he was the greatest king since Alexander the Great because he was more successful at conquering than any king since Alexander. But he was no Alexander, he failed to reunite the Greek Empire. **In his place one will arise who will send an oppressor.** The one who rose in his place was his son and rightful heir to the throne, Seleucus IV Philopater. His problem was that when he inherited the kingdom he inherited his father's debt from all the wars his father waged. And so he sent **an oppressor through the Jewel of his kingdom.** The **oppressor** was his treasurer, Heliodorus, who was a tax collector and Seleucus had

hiked up the taxes to pay of all the debt. Sounds familiar. But his greatest source of wealth was the Jewel of his kingdom which is the Temple treasury in Jerusalem. So this Heliodorus was sent to clean out the Temple treasury. **yet the text tells us, within a few days he, meaning Seleucus IV will be shattered, though not in anger nor in battle.** History attests that he was killed in an act of treason by his own treasurer Heliodorus who poisoned him.

Now this sets the stage for Antiochus IV Epiphanes to come in and take the throne because Heliodorus was weak and Antiochus was skilled in the arts of intrigue and deception and so he's going to come to power rather easily.

We've already met him in the prophecy of Daniel 8 where the buck goat with one horn signifying Alexander, was shattered and in it's place four horns grew up signifying the four branches of Alexander's Empire, and then out of one of the horns another little horn grew up, so a small horn growing out of a larger horn, and this small horn depicted Antiochus Epiphanes IV. And this little horn became great and deceived some of the Jews acting like he was their best friend. But that's all it was, an act, because he then turned and trampled them. He even went into their Temple and stopped the regular sacrifices by setting up an abomination of desolation on the altar and even made himself out to be equal to God. So he ran roughshod over the Jews even against the resistance of the Maccabees but he finally came to his demise. So we've already seen him. Here he is again in Daniel 10:21 described as a **despicable person. In his place a despicable person will arise, on whom the honor of kingdom has not been conferred, but he will come in a time of tranquility and seize the kingdom by intrigue.** Let's get a little background on Antiochus. He gave himself the title Epiphanes which means "The Illustrious One," but the people called him Epimanes which means "The Madman." And that may reflect what you have there in verse 21 where he's called a **despicable person.** The Hebrew word refers to someone who has no value, someone who is so terrible they are worthless. And that is God's evaluation of Antiochus. Now the kingdom was not rightfully his as you see because the angel says **the honor of the kingdom has not been conferred upon him.** The rightful heir to the throne was a man by the name of Demetrius Soter, but he was being held hostage in Rome and that's one reason Heliodorus took the opportunity to poison Seleucus IV. The other reason was Antiochus himself was in Athens. Well, Heliodorus was an easy target and so Antiochus started to make his power play. And he did so the text says **in a time of tranquility.** So he took advantage of a peaceful

situation. And he did it **by intrigue**. The Hebrew word means “slippery,” he’s a slippery fellow. It also means “by flattery,” “by fine promises.” He uses a lot of smooth talk but that’s all it is, talk. So it means he will make promises but they are empty promises. Now the way this played out was he started going around to other power players in the region and making promises. If you support my *coup de tat* then I will do this for you. And he made these promises to the king of Pergamos and several high officials in Syria and even with Rome which was rising in power at the time. And so Antiochus **seized the kingdom by intrigue**.

Then verse 22 - here we have enemy armies trying to undo Antiochus once they realized he had made empty promises. They’re mad. And yet, **The overflowing forces will be flooded away before him and shattered, and also the prince of the covenant**. So they attacked Antiochus in fury with **overflowing forces** but they were unsuccessful, Antiochus **shattered** them. **Also** you see the note that Antiochus shattered **the prince of the covenant**. Now the covenant refers to the Mosaic Covenant and at the time it was high priest who oversaw the administration of the covenant. The high priest at the time was Onias III and he was actually a good high priest but Antiochus had him deposed. The way it worked out was through bribery. There was a lot of corruption among the leadership in Jerusalem. And Onias’ brother Jason bribed Antiochus to remove his brother and install him as the high priest. Now the bribe Jason offered was - I’ll implement your Hellenistic policies Antiochus if you put me in that office. Antiochus was trying to unify his kingdom and his strategy was to Hellenize everyone, that means spread Greek culture. He was a genius in that he understood that if you want everyone to play your game you have to have everyone in the kingdom aspire to the same ideals. Those ideals for Antiochus were Greek ideals. So Jason said, I’ll implement all your Greek ideals and that will help you solidify your kingdom. Antiochus said that’s a good idea. He shattered Onias and put Jason in office. Then this happened again when Jason’s brother Menelaus made Antiochus an even bigger bribe and so Antiochus had Jason removed. The point is Antiochus is trying to stretch his arm out and control the Jews by changing their culture, making them Greek. And this meant no circumcision, this meant competition in Greek games, this meant the theater, everything contrary to the Mosaic Covenant. So you have the rise of corruption within the religious and political leadership of Israel. They’re being taken in by this man of smooth words.

Verse 23, **After an alliance is made with him he will practice deception, and he will go up and gain power with a small force of people.** So he's going to make **an alliance** but we know he's all talk, it's all deception. He's smart and he deceives the leadership into thinking they're going to have security, that he will protect them, so he gains power with a small group of people in Israel and this is the high priest and the other religious and political leaders.

Verse 24, **In a time of tranquility he will enter the richest parts of the realm, and he will accomplish what his fathers never did, nor his ancestors; he will distribute plunder, booty and possessions among them, and he will devise his schemes against strongholds, but only for a time.** Now you see he's an opportunist. He's got his kingdom calmed down, things are tranquil and it's at that time that everyone is relaxed that he **enters the richest parts of the realm** and look at the policy he implements; something none of his ancestors did. What policy do you see there in verse 24? **he will distribute plunder, booty and possessions among them.** What policy? Redistribution of wealth. The socialist policy of stealing from the rich and giving it to the poor. Now the reason for this policy, ultimately, is to control society, make it manageable. And you have to weaken certain parts of a kingdom to do that and you have to win the hearts of others. So the way you do that is steal from the rich and give it to the poor. So Antiochus is stealing from the richest parts of his realm in order to decrease the rich's ability to resist his tyranny and at the same time he's redistributing it to the poor in order to win their hearts, win their loyalty. It's a fool's paradise but a genius policy Antiochus implemented in order to control his kingdom and thwart any internal attempts at resistance.

Once he's done that, verse 25, **He will stir up his strength and courage against the king of the South with a large army; so the king of the South will mobilize an extremely large and mighty army for war; but he will not stand, for schemes will be devised against him. 26 Those who eat his choice food will destroy him, and his army will overflow, but many will fall down slain.** So now he's ready to expand his kingdom since everything is secure on the home front. He sets his heart and strength toward Egypt. He wants to go up against the king of the South who was Ptolemy VI Philometer. And to do so he assembled a **large army**. Now his

intent of course is to conquer Egypt but **the king of the South will mobilize an extremely large and mighty army for war.** They're going to meet first at the border of Egypt, the great but smaller force of Antiochus against the much greater army of Ptolemy. The results however were in Antiochus' favor, even though he had a much smaller army in comparison.

Now this is one the strange things about Antiochus. Even though he is arrogant and manipulative and a liar and full of deceit he prospers. Every other time we've seen a king get arrogant, like Nebuchadnezzar or Belshazzar or Alexander, God has humbled them, brought them down to China town. But not Antiochus. He's prospering. This is very strange. But ultimately God is doing this to discipline the Jews because of their rebellion.

Alright, the reason given for Antiochus' victory are stated at the end of verse 25 as **schemes devised against him, him** being the Egyptian king. People within the Egyptian government betrayed their king. This is how Antiochus would work; he would get in with high officials on the other side, corrupt them and then make his power play. Verse 26 describes the officials as **Those who eat his choice food.** They were the Egyptian king's most trusted advisors, his highest court officials and somehow Antiochus got to them and this became the undoing of the Egyptian king and his extremely large and mighty army.

Ptolemy himself was even taken hostage by Antiochus and then they sat down to negotiate. By the way, this was an uncle and a nephew sitting down. Antiochus was the uncle and Ptolemy was the nephew. Verse 27, **As for both kings, their hearts will be intent on evil, and they will speak lies to each other at the same table; but it will not succeed, for the end is still to come at the appointed time.** Alright, you observe this is just a great family. Two relatives both **intent on evil** and they will sit at the dinner table and lie to each other's face. What happened was when Ptolemy was defeated by his uncle Antiochus, the Egyptians put Ptolemy's brother Ptolemy VII Euergetes on the throne. This created a problem for both Antiochus and his nephew Ptolemy VI. So they sat down at the table together and Antiochus lied by trying to convince his nephew that he was there for him and wanted to help him get back his rule of all Egypt when all he really wanted was his help to take it all for himself. The nephew Ptolemy VI lied to his uncle by acting as if he was going along with his plan but his own intent

was to take Egypt back for himself. And yet the text says **it will not succeed**. The whole thing failed. What happened was the city of Memphis. Egypt was re-taken by Antiochus and the nephew Ptolemy VI did rule as king in Memphis. However, he made an alliance with his brother and they withstood Antiochus who was forced to go back to his land. The reason given is because **the end is still to come at the appointed time**. This refers to the timing of God's plan. Their success was not a part of God's plan for how things would work out in history. And this shows you that man does not control the direction history takes. Men have plans and men take steps to realize those plans but God is the one who either allows or disallows those plans to be realized. So when you see this thrown in the text that the reason man's plans failed is because it was not God's plan it shows you what we mean by saying God is sovereign. God controls whatsoever comes to pass and yet men are doing exactly as they want to do but their purposes are often frustrated.

Now this frustrated Antiochus, he wanted all of Egypt, he wanted to become the next Alexander the Great and unify the Greek Empire under his thumb, he has a globalist mentality, but he failed and so in verse 28 he had to go home. **Then he will return to his land with much plunder; but his heart will be set against the holy covenant, and he will take action and then return to his own land.** So while he did take much plunder from his military campaigns in Egypt he came back angry and his anger turned against the Jews. This man was a radical anti-Semite. **he set his heart against the holy covenant.** What better way to vent your anger than to take it out on some Jews? So on his way through he learned of a minor rebellion against the high priest Menelaus who was implementing Greek policies and so he aided Menelaus in putting down the rebellion. He also took several of the choice vessels out of the temple, things like the golden menorah, the table of showbread, the cups, the bowls, etc....**and then he returned to his own land.**

Verse 29, **At the appointed time he will return and come into the South,** so he makes another attempt at taking Egypt, this time **at the appointed time**, that is, God's time for this to occur for His purposes to be fulfilled. So he sets out to conquer Egypt **but this last time it will not turn out the way it did before.** This was two years later, the year was 168BC,

but whereas the first attempt to conquer Egypt he had some success, this second attempt he had no success.

The reason is given in verse 30, **For ships of Kittim will come against him; therefore he will be disheartened and return.** Now the **ships of Kittim** are the ships of the Cyprians, those from the island of Cyprus and coastlines in the region. This is where the Roman navy was stationed and so the Roman navy came and allied with the Egyptians against Antiochus. “History indicates that Antiochus’ army never fought in this campaign. Antiochus was met by the Roman emissary, Popilius Laenas, and handed a letter from the Roman Senate, forbidding him to make war against Egypt. When Antiochus did not acquiesce readily, the Roman, it is said, drew a circle on the sand around Antiochus and told him that he must respond before stepping from the circle. After a moment of further humiliating silence, Antiochus agreed to the demand. He apparently recognized that if he did not agree, he would be faced with an undesirable war with Rome.” He was, as verse 30 says, **disheartened** because he had taken his army all the way from Syria for nothing and so he had to **return** and the text says he will **become enraged at the holy covenant and take action.** So again he’s going to take his anger out on the Jews while he passes through. And again he’s going to side with the high priest Menelaus and his people who were implementing his Greek policies against the **holy covenant** of Moses. **So, middle of verse 30, he will come back and show regard for those who forsake the holy covenant. 31 Forces from him will arise, desecrate the sanctuary fortress, and do away with the regular sacrifice. And they will set up the abomination of desolation. 32 By smooth words he will turn to godlessness those who act wickedly toward the covenant, but the people who know their God will display strength and action. 33 Those who have insight among the people will give understanding to the many; yet they will fall by the sword and by flame, by captivity and by plunder for many days. 34 Now when they fall they will be granted a little help, and many will join with them in hypocrisy. 35 Some of those who have insight will fall, in order to refine, purge and make them pure until the end time; because it is still to come at the appointed time.**

Alright, this is all descriptive of what Antiochus did to the Jews in 168BC after he was humiliated by the Romans. He’s venting his anger; he’s like a

step-father taking it out on his step-son. The first thing he does in verse 31 is send troops into the Temple to desecrate it. The temple was the *miqdash* or **sanctuary** and it served as a fortress in times of trouble. So his soldiers go in and the first thing they do is **desecrate the** temple. What they did was offer a pig on the altar and then sprinkled the blood and the broth inside the temple. That officially desecrated the altar and made it unacceptable for **the regular sacrifice** that was offered both in the evening and the morning. In place of the regular sacrifice he had **set up the abomination of desolation**. Now this was some image that he had erected and placed on the altar. This may have been an image of Jupiter who is Zeus to the Romans and you can see all these things looking forward to and foreshadowing the abomination of desolation that the anti-Christ will have set up which will be an image of himself.

In verse 32, **By smooth words he will turn to godlessness those who act wickedly toward the covenant**, this is the small group that was pro-Antiochus, they were pro-Greek policy and Antiochus will pervert them further by the use of flattery and smooth speech. Probably he made promises to them that if they rooted out the rebels then they would be rewarded accordingly. The rebels you see at the end of verse 32, **but the people who know their God will display strength and action**. These are the Maccabees, led by Judas Maccabeus and recorded in 1 and 2 Maccabees as leading a quite successful revolt against Antiochus and his armies. They displayed **strength and action** for God, a true manifestation of their true knowledge of God.

Yet many of them would die, verse 33, **Those who have insight among the people will give understanding to the man; yet they will fall by the sword and by flame, by captivity and by plunder for many days**. The actual number of days was 1500, a little over four years. The way it all began was the pig was slaughtered, desecrating the Temple, that started the 1,500 days, then he set up the abomination of desolation on the altar, some image, an idol, probably of Zeus, then each month on a specified day of the month the leaders of the families had to come to the temple and offer a pig in celebration of Antiochus' birthday. Now on the first of these Mattathias Maccabeus, who was a ruler among the Jews and had five sons, was asked to be the first to offer the pig in the Grecian way. And when another Jew came forward to sacrifice he cut him down as well as Antiochus' officer. Then he

and his sons and those who wanted to remain loyal to the covenant fled to the mountains and began their famous Maccabean revolt. These were those who had insight into the word of God and they spread this insight to the people such that they had understanding. Now the consequences for those who joined in the rebellion was often disastrous. For example, 1 Maccabees 2:29-38 records the massacre of many of these loyal souls:

²⁹ Then many that sought after justice and judgment went down into the wilderness, to dwell there: ³⁰ Both they, and their children, and their wives; and their cattle; because afflictions increased sore upon them. ³¹ Now when it was told the king's servants, and the host that was at Jerusalem, in the city of David, that certain men, who had broken the king's commandment, were gone down into the secret places in the wilderness, ³² They pursued after them a great number, and having overtaken them, they camped against them, and made war against them on the sabbath day. ³³ And they said unto them, Let that which ye have done hitherto suffice; come forth, and do according to the commandment of the king, and ye shall live. ³⁴ But they said, We will not come forth, neither will we do the king's commandment, to profane the sabbath day. ³⁵ So then they gave them the battle with all speed. ³⁶ Howbeit they answered them not, neither cast they a stone at them, nor stopped the places where they lay hid; ³⁷ But said, Let us die all in our innocency: heaven and earth will testify for us, that ye put us to death wrongfully. ³⁸ So they rose up against them in battle on the sabbath, and they slew them, with their wives and children and their cattle, to the number of a thousand people.

Many others were killed as the verse says **by the sword...by flame...by captivity and by plunder**. This went on **for many days**, exactly 1,500 days, until Antiochus came to his demise in 164BC.

Verse 34, **Now when they fall they will be granted a little help**, this is probably help from God that was **granted** to them for their loyalty to the covenant. The help came in the form of a group of mighty men called the Chasidim who were zealous for the Law and joining the Maccabees they enjoyed many successful and miraculous battles against Antiochus. For example, 1 Macc 3:10-26 records,

¹⁰ Then Apollonius gathered the Gentiles together, and a great host out of Samaria, to fight against Israel. ¹¹ Which thing when Judas perceived, he went forth to meet him, and so he smote him, and slew him: many also fell down slain, but the rest fled. ¹² Wherefore Judas took their spoils, and Apollonius' sword also, and therewith he fought all his life long. ¹³ Now when Seron, a prince of the army of Syria, heard them say that Judas had gathered unto him a multitude and company of the faithful to go out with him to war; ¹⁴ He said, I will get me a name and honour in the kingdom; for I will go fight with Judas and them that are with him, who despise the king's commandment. ¹⁵ So he made him ready to go up, and there went with him a mighty host of the ungodly to help him, and to be avenged of the children of Israel. ¹⁶ And when he came near to the going up of Bethhoron, Judas went forth to meet him with a small company: ¹⁷ Who, when they saw the host coming to meet them, said unto Judas, How shall we be able, being so few, to fight against so great a multitude and so strong, seeing we are ready to faint with fasting all this day? ¹⁸ Unto whom Judas answered, It is no hard matter for many to be shut up in the hands of a few; and with the God of heaven it is all one, to deliver with a great multitude, or a small company: ¹⁹ For the victory of battle standeth not in the multitude of an host; but strength cometh from heaven. ²⁰ They come against us in much pride and iniquity to destroy us, and our wives and children, and to spoil us: ²¹ But we fight for our lives and our laws. ²² Wherefore the Lord himself will overthrow them before our face: and as for you, be ye not afraid of them. ²³ Now as soon as he had left off speaking, he leapt suddenly upon them, and so Seron and his host was overthrown before him. ²⁴ And they pursued them from the going down of Bethhoron unto the plain, where were slain about eight hundred men of them; and the residue fled into the land of the Philistines. ²⁵ Then began the fear of Judas and his brethren, and an exceeding great dread, to fall upon the nations round about them: ²⁶ Insomuch as his fame came unto the king, and all nations talked of the battles of Judas.

And so the Lord helped them. And yet, verse 34 also says, **many will join with them in hypocrisy.** The reason there were infiltrators of course was because they feared reprisals if they did not. The Maccabees were a dangerous force, they went around circumcising the uncircumcised Jews and killing Jews who refused. So many Jews joined them just for fear of them and yet they would not truly be loyal to them, they were hypocrites.

Verse 35, **Some of those who have insight will fall, in order to refine, purge and make them pure until the end time; because it is still to come at the appointed time.** Refining of the nation Israel is a key concept both in the OT and in the NT. The nation Israel must be refined, purged of rebels and made pure so that the godly remnant will be prepared to enter the kingdom. That is what the divine discipline is designed to accomplish. And even some among those who were godly and had **insight** would fall at the hands of Antiochus, God's disciplinary agent in the refining process. And indeed I think this refining looks beyond that accomplished by Antiochus because he says **until the end time** which looks ultimately beyond Antiochus to the times of the anti-Christ whose persecutions will be disciplinary in nature. The nation Israel must go through a refining discipline that brings them through fire into the bond of the covenant.

And this is why Malachi 3 and 4, the last two chapters of the OT are so important, they are the last words of God before He went silent for 400 years and they are words of refining discipline that Israel must undergo before the kingdom can come. And that is why Matt 3, one of the opening chapters of the NT is so important because they are the words of John the Baptist that the nation Israel has a baptism of fire and Spirit to undergo; fire to refine and purge the nation, Spirit to bring them into the bond of the covenant. Then and only then can the kingdom come. The nation of course rejected their Messiah and so there is an interadvent age during which partial blindness has come upon the nation Israel. So the final refining baptism of fire and the Spirit is yet to come in **the end time** Tribulation and it will be accomplished by the anti-Christ who is the next subject in Daniel 11:36. So I take these last words of Daniel 11:35 are transitional words that take us all the way from Antiochus, the Greek persecutor of the Jews to the one he foreshadowed, the last Roman persecutor of the Jews, who is anti-Christ. And yet both of these persecutors are given an allotted period of time to rule and do their business, it only goes on until the **appointed time**, which is God's time. Then they will meet their demise. Antiochus met his demise in 164BC, the anti-Christ is yet to come.

Alright, what conclusions can we draw and learn from Daniel 11:21-35? First and foremost, there is hope for Israel. The Jews will face intense divine discipline at the hands of Gentile rulers but they will survive. There is light at the end of the tunnel for the nation Israel. In the end God will refine and

purge Israel and bring the remnant into the bond of the covenant and her kingdom will come. Second, men make plans but God's plans control the success or failure of those plans. Antiochus and his nephew made plans but it was not time for those plans to succeed, therefore they failed. We can learn from this that God has an overarching plan that is quite definite. And while men always do what they want to do, what happens in history is what God wants to do. His plan cannot be thwarted; men's plans can be thwarted.

Third, God disciplines His chosen nation through foreign rulers. Always when you see Israel being resisted and attacked by Gentile nations it is because those Gentiles are God's prescribed means of disciplining Israel. Israel should learn to detect God's hand of discipline and repent, believing in the Lord Jesus Christ. Fourth, the six characteristics of Antiochus are characteristics of the anti-Christ. First and chiefly they are deceivers. Antiochus used smooth words and deception to infiltrate the Jewish leadership. Anti-Christ will do the same by entering into a peace treaty with Israel for seven years, a treaty he will break after the first 3 ½ years. Second, they are intensely anti-Semitic. Antiochus vented his anger on the Jews when his plans failed, going in and desecrating the temple and the altar by setting up an abomination of desolation. Ultimately the anti-Semitism is fueled by the fact that the Jews are God's chosen people to whom God made promises to fulfill. If they can be destroyed God can be defeated because His promises will have been thwarted. Anti-Christ is also intensely anti-Semitic and will try to destroy the Jews.

Third, they are religious. Antiochus set up his god on the altar as an image to be worshipped by the Jews in support of Greek culture. He realized that for a global kingdom you must have a uniting religious factor, that factor is a religion. The anti-Christ will also set up his god on the altar in the temple in Jerusalem, but that god will be himself and he will force the whole world to worship him. Fourth, they use socialist economics to solidify their kingdom. It is necessary to redistribute the wealth of the rich to prevent any successful resistance as well as to win the loyalty of the poor. Antiochus did this and I suspect Anti-Christ will do the same. Global socialism. Fifth, they are men of war. Antiochus led many campaigns to extend his kingdom and he enjoyed some success but ultimately failed. Anti-Christ will do the same. He will wage many wars to extend his kingdom to global proportions and will enjoy some success but will ultimately fail. Sixth and finally, they are arrogant and yet allowed to prosper for a time. Antiochus was successful for a time but then came to his demise. So it will be for the anti-Christ. He will prosper for 3

½ years but will meet his demise when Jesus Christ casts him into the lake of fire.

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