The Reign of Rebellion, Part 1
Daniel 11:1-35
27-28

We are living in an age of rebellion. In fact, the first 35 verses and even the whole chapter chronicles for us the reign of rebellion upon the earth ... the time that man kicks against the traces, as it were, man defies God. And the Scripture establishes for us that the time of man's rebellion will go on only until the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, within this larger picture of the world's rebellion against God, something else is going on and that is the chastening of the nation Israel. Israel, in the Old Testament, clearly were called of God as a chosen people and they disobeyed repeatedly, they were idolatrous, they went after false gods, they lived in immorality, they defied God, they spurned His love, they turned their backs upon His loving kindness and grace. And as a result, God set about to chasten the nation Israel, to punish them for their idolatry and their sin and disobedience.

They were warned of this and there are many passages in which this warning was given, but I want to just read you a couple. In Deuteronomy chapter 4 verse 25,

When thou shalt beget children and children's children and you shall have remained long in the land and shall corrupt yourselves and make a carved image or a likeness of anything and shall do evil in the sight of the Lord thy God to provoke Him to anger, I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day that you shall soon utterly perish from off the land where unto you go over the Jordan to possess it, you shall not prolong your days upon it but shall utterly be destroyed and the Lord will scatter you among the nations and you shall be left few in number among the nations where the Lord shall lead you. And there you shall serve gods, the work of men's hands, wood and stone, which neither see nor hear nor eat nor smell. But if from there thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find Him if thou seek Him with all thy heart and with all thy soul. When thou art in tribulation and all these things are come upon thee, even in the latter days, if thou turn to the Lord thy God and thou shalt be obedient unto His voice.

Now the Bible says that if Israel is corrupted and idolatrous and disobedient, they will go into scattering and that scattering will remain until the latter days. And if at that time truthfully and honestly they look upon God, turn to Him and obey Him, they shall be restored to the promise. In the twenty-eighth chapter of Deuteronomy we find a very similar word given in verse 62:

And you shall be left few in number whereas you were as the stars of heaven for multitude because you would not obey the voice of the Lord your God. And it shall come to pass that as the Lord rejoiced over you to do you good and to multiply you, so the Lord will rejoice over you to destroy you and to bring you to nothing and you shall be plucked from off the land to which thou goest to possess it and the Lord shall scatter thee among all peoples from the one end of the earth, even unto the other, and where thou shall serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, even

wood and stone. And among these nations shalt thou find no comfort, neither shall the soul of thy foot have rest but the Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart and failing of eyes and sorrow of mind. And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee and thou shalt fear day and night and shalt have no assurance of thy life. In the morning thou shalt say would God it were evening and at evening thou shalt say would God it were morning. For the fear of thine heart where with thou shalt fear and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see.

Now God says I'm going to punish you and you're going to wish that it was night when it was day and you're going to wish that it was day when it's night, you're going to be in agony and you're going to be scattered and you're going to be weak and you're going to be few in number if you corrupt yourselves. Now that is exactly what they did. And they're still scattered around the world and they will be until they're restored in the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now you have to understand this element of history or you cannot understand the vision and prophecy of Daniel 11. Jeremiah, the prophet, said that Israel would go into captivity for seventy years. Daniel had read that. The 70 years had come to an end. Daniel fully expected that all of the land of Israel would be restored and that the city of Jerusalem would be rebuilt and the temple would be refurbished and all of the people in captivity would return. But it didn't happen. Only a small remnant, 40 thousand went back. The city remained in ruins and the nation was nothing significant at all. And Daniel was greatly disappointed. He thought the chastening only needed to last for 70 years. But you see, that was only the first phase. They never really responded to that chastening that's why they never went back. They were solidly entrenched in pagan life style and they really weren't interested in returning to the broken-down land they had left. And so this was not the end of their chastening, it was only the beginning.

Now when Daniel realizes that the 70 years are up and when he realizes that only 40 thousand have gone back, he does what he always did, he got on his knees and began to pray. And his prayer is sort of along the line of "Why, God?" "Why hasn't it worked out like I thought it would? Why haven't all these people returned? Why isn't the city being rebuilt, the temple restored? Why isn't the great and glorious land of God's people being what it used to be?" And he's praying. And finally after prayer for three weeks, the answer comes.

And you'll remember how it came, first of all in chapter 10, Daniel had a vision of the Son of God and he fell on the ground and his legs trembled and shook beneath him and he quivered and he couldn't speak, he was literally devastated in the presence of the Son of God. And then you'll remember that in verse 10, an angel touched him and he got back up and the angel said, "I'm here to deliver the answer to your prayer. It's taken me three weeks because I had to fight my way through a demon up in space that was holding me up and Michael had to come to my rescue. But I'm here to give you the message of God, I'm going to tell you why it is that everybody didn't go back at the end of 70 years, I'm going to tell you why it is that Jerusalem has not been returned to its former glory, I'm going to tell you why it is that the wall is not rebuilt, that the land is not what you thought it would be." And that is the message of chapter 11 and into chapter 12. And the message concisely is this, because the chastening of Israel is going to continue until the time of the refreshing, or until the time of the restoration, or until the time of the Messiah coming in His Kingdom, this was only the beginning.

Now you'll remember, cause it's an important thing to understand the opening of chapter 11, that the angel who was sent by God to give Daniel this message was withheld by a demon. And Michael, you'll remember, had to come and sort of together they could knock off this demon, the prince of

Persia he's called, and proceed with the mission. And you'll remember that the tenth chapter closes with this angel telling Daniel about the particular angelic conflict that's going on in space. He says, in fact, in verse 20, "When I'm through with you, I have to return to the fight with the prince of Persia."

Now, Persia was the ruling power over the children of Israel still in captivity. There must have been millions of them. Persia still ruled them. And the prince of Persia was a demon who influenced Persia to no doubt oppress and annihilate these Jewish people. So this angel had been assigned to counter-attack the attack of the prince of Persia and preserve the people of God even in their captivity. And so we are let in on an angelic conflict and the angel says in verse 21 that he and Michael worked together to protect the people of God. And by the way, when Israel is finally restored and finally given its kingdom, guess who the main figure is in bringing it all to pass? Chapter 12 verse 1, "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince who stands for the children of thy people."

When it comes to the end day, it is Michael again who will restore the people and this tells us that all through the time of Israel's chastening Michael in particular, and other angels also, have been the protectors of the nation Israel. Even though they've been chastened, they have been marvelously preserved for a future redemption.

Now to begin in chapter 11, we have to look at verse 1 and really connect verse 1 back with chapter 10. Also 1, says the angel, in the first year of Darius the Mede, even I stood to confirm and strengthen him. That is Michael. Now this is very interesting. The angel said, "I was held up by a demon and Michael had to come and deliver me." And that's in the third year of Darius, as it says in the beginning of chapter 10. But two years before that, in the first year of Darius, I had to go and help Michael. So they work together.

Now what happened two years before this? Two years before this was when the decree was given for the people to return to the land. And surely at that point, the prince of Persia wanted to stop them from going back at all and it was then that Michael was working and this angel went to assist him and together they allowed at least that decree to be made and 40 thousand of them to return. So we get a little bit of an insight into how God's holy angels are busy preserving His people and carrying out His will for His people in spite of demon activity.

So, Daniel is alerted then to the fact that he's going to have information about what God has planned for His people. It's coming through this angel. And in addition to that, Daniel gets incredible insight into the whole issue of the fact that whatever happens in Israel's history is being attended to by mighty angelic beings. Now this is a wonderful confirmation to Daniel because Daniel is about to hear that God's people, Israel, are going to be in a kind of punishment, a kind of suffering clear until the Messiah comes, clear until the last days, the end of time. And if they are to be under all of this for all that time, it is comforting to know that the holy angels are going to be their protectors. And that is the reason, I believe, that God gave to Daniel that insight as a comfort to his own heart when he was made fully aware that his people were going to have to suffer for millennia of time, until the coming of Christ.

Now having given us this picture of the protective working of the angels, the angel now beginning in verse 2 begins to unfold the revelation. This is the last revelation in the book of Daniel. And it reveals the history of the suffering of the people of Israel clear up until the Tribulation, chapter 12 verse 1 starts with the Tribulation. And chapter 12 verse 2 and 3, you have what follows the Tribulation, the

resurrection into the Kingdom. So we see, then, and this is remarkable, from chapter 11 verse 2 to the end of the chapter, the sweep of history from the time of Daniel to the time of the Kingdom.

Now this has happened a couple of other times, hasn't it, in the book of Daniel, where we get the whole flow of history and we get it again here. Only this time, rather than focusing on the Gentile powers particularly, although they will be alluded to here, it focuses on the nation of Israel and the suffering that Israel will endure.

Now, I'm going to give you a footnote that I want you to remember. The details of this prophecy, particularly from verse 2 to 35, are so accurate, they are so remarkable they are so verifiable that it is this section of Scripture that has been the cause of all the attacks on the book of Daniel. There are two main books in the Old Testament that are attacked by the critics: Isaiah and Daniel. And they want to deny the prophecies that are there and in the case of Daniel, from verses 2 through 35, Daniel prophesies specific events about the Persian and Greek Empires. Now mark this. We know they came to pass because we know Persian and Greek history, there's no question about it. We have many, many sources for that. And the critics have found that the prophecies are so absolutely accurate that they therefore have concluded that they must have been written after these events happened. Therefore, they take the whole book of Daniel and they shove it up past the fulfillment because they say it's impossible that anyone should be so accurate. Now, of course, their basic supposition is that God didn't write the Bible. And their secondary supposition is that Daniel was a liar because Daniel said he was receiving these revelations from God before the time. So they're ... they've got two problems. Number one, they've got a God who doesn't know the future and number two, they've got a man like Daniel who has impeccable character of whom the other prophets said he was one of the three most honorable men that ever lived and they're making him into a first-rate liar. But isn't it interesting what the critics will do to try explain away reality? These are incredible accurate prophecies.

I'm going to try my best to help you to understand what they're saying. There is so much here that...in fact, I couldn't even figure out an outline. And usually that comes real easy. And I worked and worked and finally it all came to me, there are five major kings mentioned and all of their names begin with "All and I went into immediate paradise. I couldn't believe it. It was so wonderful. I mean, I have this alliterative problem, why do you think our family is Matthew, Mark, Marcy, Melinda, Mom and Me and our dog is Mutt? No... But anyway, I want to take you through this and show you the amazing remarkable prophecy that is predicted here. By the way, there are multitudinous reasons why we know this couldn't have been written at the later date...all kinds of reasons, linguistic reasons, historical reasons, many, many reasons. Most of all, because Daniel is not a liar, he has too great a character for that and because God can predict the future as well as He can tell us about the past.

All right, let's begin and we'll flow through this period of history from Daniel's day, we'll go up to the time of the Antichrist. Number one king, Ahasuerus ... Ahasuerus, A-h-a-s-u-e-r-u-s ... Ahasuerus, verse 2: "And now will I show thee the truth." Here comes the revelation. "Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia; and the fourth shall be far richer than they all and by his strength through his riches he shall stir up all against the realm of Greece."

Now the angel says, Look, there are going to be three kings and then following those three there is going to be a fourth, he'll be stronger and richer than the others and he is going to try to stand up against the nation of Greece. Now the prophecy then centers on the fourth king. Let me just say this

as a note. There were more than four kings in Persia but the angel picks out the key right here. There were three who ruled just before a fourth and that fourth one was the one who led a major attack on Greece. And that's the thing we want to see. The first of that line of four was a man named Cambyses who was the son, by the way, of Cyrus who was king at this time. The second, history tells us, is a man named pseudo-Smerdis. He was, by the way, a usurper and an impostor. He looked so much like Cambyses that he claimed to be Cambyses and through all kinds of deception he got himself into the throne. The third king was a man named Darius Hystaspes. And the fourth one was named Xerxes, but he had another name and his other name was Ahasuerus. He is the king mentioned in the book of Esther. He is one of the greatest Oriental rulers of all time. He had fabulous wealth. he commanded the largest army in the Ancient World. In fact, he commanded the largest army that we know about in ancient history. And he decided that he wanted to attack Greece. The mood with the other three kings was moving that way, and in fact that third king, Hystaspes, made a sort of small piddly little attack on Greece. But this fourth one really stirred up all he had against the realm of Greece. By the way, he was totally and utterly in a devastating way defeated by the power of Greece. And the Greeks never forgot about it.

After that, 150 years went by and a lot of other little nondescript kings came along, but they never forgot what Ahasuerus did and 150 years later, the Greeks finally got their act together and decided to retaliate based upon what this guy had done 150 years before. And they came. And when they came, they came led by another king whose name is Alexander, and he's the second king...Alexander, verse 3. Of course, you know that following the Persian Empire came the Greeks: "And a mighty king shall stand up that shall rule with great dominion and do according to his will." A mighty king, none other than Alexander the Great of Greece. All Bible commentators agree that that is who is in mind. He retaliated for what had happened earlier to Greece. He seized the entire Persian Empire. It says he had great dominion. I'm telling you, the man was a man who stands out in history as perhaps the most remarkable military leader ever. By the age of 33 he had conquered the world. His army wouldn't go any further. They were literally worn out. They had conquered everything from Europe to India and he was weeping because there were no more worlds that he could conquer. He changed the course of history more than any other ruler. He was the son of Philip of Macedon and it says in verse 3 that he did according to his will. He was an absolute monarch, an absolute sovereign who had not only the power of personality and the power of leadership but the power of military might.

And of course, both the Persian Empire and Alexander overran the nation Israel. The Persians possessed it and controlled it. The Greeks under Alexander, possessed it and controlled it. But you remember that he died at 33. And what happened? Verse 4, "And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken." It seems no sooner does he stand up and get his kingdom than it is shattered. And watch, "It will be divided toward the four winds of heaven."

Now remember, this is all before the man is even born. I mean, this is a couple of hundred years before he's even born. "And it will not go to his posterity, nor according to his dominion which he ruled." In other words, it won't go to his children and it won't be to the extent that it was when he was ruling. It will be plucked up and given to others.

Now look carefully at that verse. It will not go to his posterity. Alexander had a half-brother who was mentally retarded. H e had an illegitimate son and he had a baby born posthumously. In other words, the mother of the child was already pregnant when he died and the child was born after he died. All three, his mentally retarded illegitimate son ... or rather his mentally retarded halfbrother, his

illegitimate son and his new-born baby, all three were murdered and he had no posterity. The angel was exactly right The kingdom did not go to his posterity. It was thrown to the four winds. What does that mean? A great battle ensued for who was going to rule andthe battle was won by four generals and the kingdom was divided into four parts: Cassandra took Macedonia, Lysimachus took Thrace and Asia Minor, Ptolemy--remember that--took Egypt, and Seleucus took Syria. Egypt is south of Israel, Syria is where? North of Israel. Those two become the ones we focus on the remaining of the chapter because they are the ones that are right around the nation Israel. And in Egypt, a Ptolemaic line of kings was established and in Syria a Seleucid dynasty was established and through the centuries, those two dynasties warred with each other and they fought most of their wars on the soil of Israel. So Israel became the pawn in this. From here on to the twentieth verse, we cover about 200 years when these wars waged on the borders and throughout the land of Israel.

Now let's find out how it went. By the way, each one had a diminished dominion therefore what he said about it will be not according to his dominion did come to pass. Each of the four had a diminished dominion. All right, now we come to 5, "And the king of the south," who would that be? That would be the Ptolemies in Egypt because everything geographically is indicated in reference to Israel. You'll notice down in verse 6, in the middle of the verse, the king of the north, that's Syria. Now mark this in your mind. You're going to see for many verses now, the king of the south, the king of the north. That doesn't necessarily mean one king, we'll go through a lot of different kings in the Seleucid dynasty and a lot of different kings in the Ptolemaic dynasty. The point is the king of the south--the king of the north is simply whoever's reigning in that are at the time. But I want you to watch how fabulously this unfolds.

"And the king of the south," that would be the Ptolemaic dynasty, "shall be strong and of his princes." That is of the princes of Alexander. And he shall be strong above him and have dominion. His dominion shall be a great dominion. And in the end of years they shall join themselves together for the king's daughter of the south shall come to the king of the north to make an agreement."

Now let me fill you in. The Seleucid dynasty is built in the north, the Ptolemaic dynasty is built in the south. The Ptolemaic dynasty starts out a little more powerful but it doesn't take very long until the north becomes more powerful as the expansion of the..of the north develops. Finally the two realized the tension that's existing and so in verse 6 it says they're going to make an alliance. And how do they do it? This was the old way to make an alliance, the king's daughter of the south comes to the king of the north to make an agreement. You give your daughter to the nation you want to make a treaty with. She marries the guy and you hope that makes the right kind of relationship. And that's exactly what happened. The angel was right on. Antiochus Theos ... can you imagine taking the name Antiochus Theos? Theos means God ... that will show you the kind of problem he had.

Antiochus Theos who was the third king of Syria needed to make a treaty with Egypt. The king of Egypt was a man named Ptolemy Philadelphus. And so he decided that what he wanted to do was marry the daughter of the king of Egypt, or the king of the south. Unfortunately, he was already married. But that was no problem, he divorced his wife. He divorced his wife and he married this daughter of the southern king. Well, his wife wasn't real thrilled about it. So she murdered his new wife. She not only murdered his new wife, but she murdered all her attendants, too. And she poisoned him to death.

It says in the middle of verse 6, "... She shall not retain the power of the arm, neither shall he stand nor his arm." In other words, the power of both of them, the whole thing fell apart. "But she shall be

given up and they that brought her and he that begot her and he that strengthened her in these times." In other words, everybody involved is going to go. And that is exactly what happened.

Now this brought to the throne in the north, because now the Seleucid king Antiochus Theos is dead, so this brought to the throne a man named Callinicus(?). Look at verse 7. "But out of a branch of her roots," that is, out of the roots of the murdered wife, Berenice, there was a man named Ptolemy Euergetes and it says, I think it's in verse 8, no it's in verse 7, that "One shall stand in his estate." I don't know if you're following me too good, but stay with me. "Out of the branch of the roots of the murdered wife comes a brother from the south and he comes with an army." And he comes against Callinicus and he defeats him. And verse 8 says, this is what I want you to note, "He carried away captives into Egypt, took their gods, their princes, their precious vessels, silver, gold and so forth and so on."

Now history tells us all about this. It tells us he took 40 thousand talents of silver, 2,500 idol statues, and it goes on and on. And even Callinicus died because he fell off his horse. And there's an interesting note there, I'm just trying to think where it is, yeah, at the end of verse 8, it says: "The king of the south shall continue more years than the king of the north." And that is exactly what happened. Callinicus fell off his horse, died and the one in the south continued four more years.

Now the reason I just point this out is because you need to know how accurate the Word of God is. But the point behind it all is that in the middle of this sits Israel. And all these wars are going on raging across their land.

Now look at verse 10. We come to another king. The third one is Antiochus the Great. We've seen Ahasuerus. We've seen Alexander. Now we come to Antiochus the Great. And history again doesn't even argue. You can read a liberal commentary or you can read a conservative commentary and they all come up with the same Names because there's so much evidence in this area.

Now, remember that the Ptolemy of the south at this particular point in verse 10 has conquered. So he's kind of ruling in Israel. He's kind of got the power base. He's defeated Callinicus in the north. Ptolemy Euergetes, if you want the name, has defeated Callinicus in the north. Callinicus fell off his horse and died. And now the north doesn't like the south winning. So Callinicus has two sons, verse 10, "His sons," plural, "shall be stirred up and shall assemble a multitude of great forces and one of them shall certainly come and overflow, pass through and return and be stirred up even to the fortress."

One of Callinicus' sons died. The other one became the king of the north. His name, Antiochus the Great. And he came. And it says he would come with a multitude of great forces. History tells us he had 75,000 soldiers. And he came to attack Egypt and he stomped right through the land of Israel. Verse 11 says, "And the king of the south was moved with anger." Wouldn't you be? Somebody arrive at your border with 75,000 soldiers? "And he comes forth and he fights with the king of the north and he shall set forth a great multitude." And so the multitude begins a fight. Now the king of the south is Ptolemy also by the name of Philometor, he has 73,000 men, history tells us, 5,000 cavalry and he also had 73 elephants. They used elephants like battering rams and to carry things and so forth. And so this tremendous war goes on.

Verse 12, "And when he hath taken away," and the "he's" and the "him's" are very difficult to figure

out in here unless you know the history and so we'll just run by it as quick as we can. "And when he hath taken away the multitude, his heart shall be lifted up and he shall cast down many ten thousands but he shall not be strengthened by it."

The king of the south was very effective in the battle. History says that they caused the north, Antiochus the Great, to lose 10,000 footmen, 300 cavalry, and five of their elephants. This we know from the historian Polybius. But this didn't really strengthen the king of the south, it just made the king of the north more angry. And so in verse 13, the king of the north is to return. "And he'll come down with a multitude greater than the last multitude and he'll certainly come, after certain years."

Amazing, it was 13 years later that he came back. Exactly as the angel had said. With a great army, and great riches, and he came back to get his revenge. Verse 14, "In those times there shall many stand up against the king of the south." Boy, he had a great army and people were joining it along the way because they hated the south so much. And look at this, "Also, the robbers of thy people." Who were Daniel's people? The Jews. Who were the robbers? Well, the Hebrew term here means "sons of breaking, children of breaking." And what that means is people who don't keep their promise, covenant breakers. They are the rebels. It could be translated men of violence who break the law. Frankly, what they are is strong-willed apostate Jews who are revolutionaries. They are like mercenary soldiers and they join the cause of the king of the north. And they aid him in his attack.

Really, most historians feel they wanted Judean independence, these mercenaries, these apostate Jewish revolutionaries. They thought that by war, if they could get in with Antiochus the Great, knock off Egypt, maybe Antiochus would give them freedom for their assistance. That's really what they wanted. But at the end of verse 14, it says they shall fail. They didn't get their goal. He didn't give them what they had hoped to get.

Verse 15, "So the king of the south [John should have said north] comes, casts a siege mount." And it goes on to describe how the battle takes place. And by the way, if you want to know who won, it's very simple. The north won. The north literally routed the south, destroying them.

And then verse 16, this is the key. "But he that cometh against him shall do according to his own will and none shall stand before him," that is the king of the north, Antiochus the Great, "and he shall stand in the glorious land."

What is the glorious land? What land is that? That's the land of Israel. And here again we see the same kind of thing. They didn't get their independence, the mercenaries didn't get what they wanted. All they got was domination by Syrian power from the north, the Seleucids. Antiochus the Great took a lasting dominion over Palestine. Now he was a smart man. Because some of them had assisted him in the battle with the south, he gave them some money, he treated them with some favor, but he was basically their captor.

He decides in verse 17 to strengthen his power and to keep Egypt on his side. So he does something that's kind of interesting. "He sets his face to enter with the strength of his whole kingdom and upright ones with him, and he gives him the daughter of women." Now that's probably a term referring to somebody who is the height of femininity. He picks out some fabulously lovely person, in fact it turned out to be his daughter who was named Cleopatra, and he gave Cleopatra to the Ptolemy king and he said, "Here, take her and marry her as a sign of good faith." And what he really

wanted was to plant a spy in the palace.

But you know what happened? She loved her husband more than her father. And the whole thing failed. Verse 17 says at the end, "...She shall not stand on his side nor be for him." So it didn't work.

Now why does the Bible put a little thing ... you're saying, "Why does the Bible put any of this in here?" Just to show you how absolutely God knows history before it ever happens. If you for a minute think anything happens in history without God's control, you're wrong. He determines all the boundaries of the nations. History is, as someone said, "His story."

Verse 18, "After this shall he turn his face to the coastlands." You know, once Antiochus the Great had conquered that part of the world, he decided to go to the coastlands and that meant, if you will, the Mediterranean Islands and the borders of Greece. He was going to get Greece. W ell, you know who had the power out there by this time? Rome did. And so as he turns his face to the coast and takes many, "A prince on his own bebalf causes the reproach offered by him to cease; without his own reproach he shall cause it to turn upon him."

What it simply means is that it brought him into conflict with Rome, the prince, and Rome utterly routed him. In 190 B.C. he was routed by the Roman soldiers.

Verse 19, "He shall turn his face toward the fortress of his own land but he shall stumble and fall and not be found." You know what he did after Rome beat him? He was so distressed, he went back to his own land and in a fit one time he tried to plunder the temple in his own land and steal all the treasures in there and the people got so mad they murdered him on the spot. He wasn't found any more.

He was followed by another ruler, verse 20, this is interesting. A guy who stood up in his estate was a raiser of taxes. Now what is that supposed to mean? You know what? When Rome defeated him, they said from then on: Syria, you will pay taxes to Rome. And they were required to pay a thousand talents periodically to the Roman power. Therefore, the next king had to be a raiser of taxes ... exactly what God said would happen happened. The detail, people, is thrilling. The Bible is accurate.

So, we meet Ahasuerus, Alexander, Antiochus the Great, fourthly, Antiochus Epiphanes. Now we're going to really fly through this one so hold on to your seat. Antiochus Epiphanes, and I don't want to get all bogged down in too much detail but I do want you to get the message. And all of this was written by God and He has a purpose for it. "And in his estate shall stand up a vile person." Howwould you like to have that for your epitaph? Or for your introduction? A vile, contemptible, wretched, rotten person. And he will stand up in theplace of Antiochus the Great and they'll...to whom they shall not give the honor of the kingdom. They don't give it to him, but he comes in a sneaky way and obtains it by flattery.

Do you know that Antiochus Epiphanes who is referred to here had no right to reign? He had no legitimate claim to the throne. He had absolutely no right at all, but he gained it by intrigue and by flattery and by buying off certain individuals. And he got in there. Verse 22, "And with the arms of a flood shall they be overthrown from before him and shall be broken," and that is the south, he literally devastated the Egyptians and the king.

Verse 23, "And after the league made with him, he shall work deceitfully for he shall come up and shall become strong with a small people." He tried to adopt a policy of friendship with Egypt but he violated it and he broke it and he did everything he could, he plotted, he worked out all kinds of things. It's very interesting in verse 24 that he entered peaceably upon the fattest places of the province. Boy, when he saw there was crop or money or something to be gained, he came in all hearts and flowers and with peace and so forth and so on and he did what his fathers never did...before he was wily and smart and he gained greater acceptance. And then when he got spoil, he scattered it among the people and he let them share in it and he made it all look so good. And then at the end of verse 24, "He was plotting against the strongholds." Whenever he saw a strong village or a strong group, he would plot their destruction. So on the one hand he looks like Robin Hood. On the other hand, anything that begins to move in his kingdom, be puts it down fast. He's building an incredible power base.

In verse 25, he has another war with Egypt. "He stirs up his power and his courage against the king of the south with a great army and the king of the south is stirred up to battle with a very great and mighty army, but he shall not stand for they shall plot against him." Another war with Egypt, this time at Pollusium(?), and Egypt lost. And it tells you why. Because the counselors of the Egyptian king himself betrayed him. In fact, his trusted counselors turned against him. It says his own men plotted against him.

Verse 26, "Yea they that feed of the portion of his food shall destroy him." His own troops, his own soldiers. "And his army shall overflow and many shall fall down slain." Verse 27, "And both these kings' hearts shall be to do mischief." Both of them were evil Here's this war. Egypt has lost. So they decide to sit at a table. They want to come to the table. We still do that, don't we? You see all these guys around a big table and they're all signing these meaningless treaties. You know how many treaties have been broken in the history of the world? All of them. Just wanted to get that in.

"They sit at a table. They speak lies. And their supposed talk doesn't prosper, for yet the end shall be at the time appointed." They promises they never meant to keep. And God had it all in the plan anyway.

"Then after this, he returns to his land with great riches, his heart shall be against the holy covenant. And he shall do exploits and return to his own land." Now listen, here we are right back in Israel, after Antiochus Epiphanes has this deceitful meeting in the south, he comes back and again he does things against the holy covenant. He comes back into the land of Israel and desecrates the land. In fact, he marched on Jerusalem after he left this meeting in Egypt, he marched on Jerusalem and he sacked the city and he cruelly slaughtered people and he brought about horrible suffering.

Verse 29. "He returned and came toward the south but it wasn't as the former or as the latter."

Now, have you ever seen a picture where the Indians and the cowboys were in a battle and off in the distance you hear the sound of the cavalry to the rescue ? That's what happens in verse 30. Chittim...the ships of Chittim ... that's an ancient name for Cyprus and probably is general reference to the Roman army, the Roman Empire, the Roman power. The ships of Chittim would be the Roman fleet. By now the Ptolemies are so sick of Antiochus Epiphanes, that they say to Rome, "Send us a fleet." And so they do and they come against Antiochus. He is grieved and returns ... because he can't do anything against Egypt because of the Roman navy that he fears.

So what does he do? Verse 30, watch this, "He has indignation against the holy covenant," against the holy covenant. "He even returns and has intelligence, or special meetings... watch this ... with those who forsake the holy covenant." He gets back with these apostate Jews. He begins to raise support from them.

And then it happens. Then it really happens. Verse 31, "And the forces shall stand on his part and they shall pollute the...what?..the sanctuary and take away the daily sacrifice and place the abomination that maketh desolate." He is so frustrated now by the Romans, he goes back into the place of Israel, back into Jerusalem. First thing he does is he puts guards all around the temple, nobody can worship. He stops the sacrifice. He halts all worship. And then on a given Sabbath, he sends his soldiers into the city and be slaughters all the children they can find. And then he slaughters all the women. And then he makes heathen idolatry mandatory. And then he has nakedness flaunted by supposed atheletes in full view of the temple ground. He enforces Greek culture upon the Jews. He erects a statue of the main god of the Greeks, Zeus, on the very altar in the temple. He slays a pig on the altar in the temple and makes the priests eat the pork. This is the abomination of desolations. He abominates the temple to make it desolate and he even had some Jews in with him.

Verse 32, "And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he corrupt by flatteries." Found some apostate Jews to even agree to get involved. But the end of verse 32, "The people who do know their God shall be strong and do right, do exploits," however you want to translate that. The people that really know God resisted.

Now I want to read 33 and 34, "And they that understand among the people shall instruct many, yet they shall fall by the sword and by flame, by captivity and by spoil for many days. Now when they shall fall, they shall be helped with a little help but many shall cling to them with flatteries."

The angel says, "Daniel, if you think the 70 years is the end, you've missed it. They'll be 70 years. And then at the end of that 70 years they'll be an Ahasuerus who will dominate your land. And then there will be an Alexander who will dominate your land. And then there will be Antiochus the Great who will overrun your land. And then there will be an Antiochus Epiphanes," and by the way, Epiphanes was the name he took for himself, it meant "Great One," and they called him "Epimanes" which meant "maniac, mad man."

There will always be this and finally it will culminate in a desecration that is beyond your belief. And it says in verse 33, they'll fall by the sword, by flame, by captivity, by spoil. And that's exactly what happened. But verse 34, when they shall fall, they'll be helped with a little help. What was that? During this time of horrible persecution, and it was mass slaughter of the Jews in their land by Antiochus Epiphanes, in fact, he's called "The Antichrist of the Old Testament" because he so pictures the Antichrist. There arose a group of Jews who were known as Hasidians.

Have you ever heard of an Hasidic Jew? That's a term that came out of the Maccabean period. This group of Hasidians, they stood for the law. They're talked about in the Maccabees, First Maccabees chapter 2. They had a leader and their leader was Judas Maccabeus. This is a time of history that is not spoken of in the Bible, it occurred in the 400 years between the Old and the New Testament. But Judas Maccabeus was able to lead a successful revolt and he is the one who helped with a little

help. It was just temporary relief from persecution. And by the way, Judas Maccabeus got all those apostate Jews and he treated them bloody severity. But like many revolutions, it says at the end of verse 34 it had a lot of folks hanging on just for what they could gain. Some people went with the revolution to gain their own ends. Verse 35, "And some of them of understanding shall fall, to test them and to purge and to make them white." Now wait a minute. Why is all this happening? Why are You doing this, God? Here it is. To test ... to purge ... to make them white. What does that mean? To burn off the sin, right? To burn off the dross. Nothing is as effective in driving people to God as suffering. You understand that? When you stand in the face of inevitable destruction, your thoughts go straight up. I watched the TV this afternoon. A man was standing in a burning house out there in Bradbury where the house had burned to the ground. Tears in his eyes, the man said to him, "What did you think about when you saw this?" He said, "I'll tell you one thing, it makes a man think a lot about dying."

That's right. And when you think about dying, you begin to think about the inevitability of judgment. To test, to purge, to make them white, until the time of the end because it is yet for a time appointed. God gave to Daniel through this angel the most incredible layout of the suffering of the Jews through the reign of the Persians and the reign of the Greeks and you know who came in after the Greeks? The Romans. And the Roman period is described by the last final great Roman ruler, the Antichrist, the final "A" in our five kings. And that's for next week.

But God has ordained it all. The flow, the sequence, the intimate minute tiny little details. Now listen to me, don't turn me out now ... in this last couple of minutes. God is not finished with the purging process, you understand that. Why is it hard for Israel today? Because the purging is still going on. When the Messiah came the first time, He said to them, "You will not come to Me that you might have life. 0 Jerusalem, Jerusalem, H e says. "Thou that killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto you, how oft I would have gathered you as a hen gathereth her brood but you would not." In Romans 10:21, Paul speaking the words of God, "All day long have I stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and contrary people." They haven't turned yet.

But you want to know something? The suffering is a gracious suffering. You say, "Why do you say that, John?" Simply for this reason. God has every right to forget them, doesn't He? But He doesn't. God has every right to say, "Because of your constant harlotries, because of the incessant disobedience, I forever turn by back on you, because you have known so much, received so much, had so much, yours are the covenants and the promises, because you've had it all, and you've turned your back on Me, I write you off." But He never says that. He continues the purging process until the end time, the time appointed. And that time will come and in that latter day in the future, Paul says in Romans 11, "All Israel shall be...what? ... saved." Isn't that great?

Zechariah the prophet saw that. In chapter 12 verse 10 he said, "I will pour upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and supplication and they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced and they shall mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for Him as one that is in bitterness for his first born. And in that day there shall be a great mourning in Jerusalem." The day is going to come when they weep and wail in the agony of recognition, when they see that Him whom they pierced was none other than their own God. And what will happen? Zechariah says, "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness."

God's going to wash them. That's right. In that day. They're going to come to a day of true

repentance and God's going to give them a day of true salvation. That day is coming. Gloriously, beloved, the whole thing ends up in the Kingdom for Israel, but there has to be a long time of purging.

You know what's wonderful to think about, and we'll get to this when we get into Romans, that during this time of purging, Paul says in Romans, chapter 11 verses 1 to 6, "There will always be a remnant," and there's a remnant right no w, isn't there? The nation is purged. Many of you sitting right out here are part of that remnant, aren't you? You're Jews and you know and love the Lord Jesus Christ. Right in the middle of the passage that talks about the chastening of Israel in Romans there is this great word, "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be ... what? ... saved." And throughout the Persian area, the Greek, the Roman, right on out till the Kingdom, there will always be that remnant from Israel...because God is a gracious God. And then in the end, here's what Isaiah says will happen: "The Redeemer shall come to Zion and unto those who turn from transgression in Jacob, as for Me this is My covenant with them, says the Lord, My Spirit that is upon thee and My words which I have put in thy mouth shall not depart out of thy mouth nor out of the mouth of thy seed nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, said the Lord."

In other words, the Lord said I will redeem them and that word will never change ... never. What a great promise. Yes, it's a time of chastening for them, but be encouraged, Michael's watching over them and I'm watching over them, says this other angel, and there's going to come a day when Michael stands up for the people of God and a day when the Spirit descends upon them and they're redeemed and receive their kingdom. But in the meantime, there must be a chastening.

Beloved, my word to you in closing is this, I hope you have a heart for the Jewish people. I hope you realize that that remnant is there and that God calls us to reach them. An old missionary hymn put it this way: "Shall we whose souls are lighted with wisdom from on high, shall we to souls benighted the lamp of life deny?" Let's pray together.

Father, we thank You again tonight for the study of Your Word. We know that this has been a study that demands our concentration and we can't remember all the individual parts, but we have this overwhelming reality in our minds that You control history, every event. That Your Word can predict the future and when it speaks of the future, it's absolutely accurate to the most minute detail. And we're overwhelmed with its accuracy and we sense that if it's accurate about that, it's accurate about us, too. And that its spiritual truths are just as verifiable. And we sense, Lord, that history is marked out by divine plan. And we are reminded again that You're chastening Your people Israel and we can watch it just by reading the newspapers, hearing the news, watching their struggle for survival, watching the Arab world pressing in, the Russian bear hovering to the north. We're going to see next week how that all comes to pass. We sense, Lord, the chastening that they've undergone for all these centuries. But we've been reminded again of Your unending promise that You'll redeem Your people and that Your Word will never change. Father, in the meantime, we ... may we be faithful to share with that remnant the message that whosoever believeth on the Lord Jesus shall be saved? May we know that You control the destiny of every man and every woman and there are only two alternatives: an eternal hell, or an eternal heaven ... the kingdom of darkness or the Kingdom of Your dear Son. God, help us to make the right choice for Christ's sake. Amen.

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