

CHAPTER 11

The angel Gabriel, in this chapter, performs his promise made to Daniel in the foregoing chapter, that he would “show him what should befall his people in the latter days,” according to that which was “written in the scriptures of truth:” very particularly does he here foretell the succession of the kings of Persia and Grecia, and the affairs of their kingdoms, especially the mischief which Antiochus Epiphanes did in his time to the church, which was foretold before (²¹⁰Daniel 8:11-12). Here is,

- I.** A brief prediction of the setting up of the Grecian monarchy upon the ruins of the Persian monarchy, which was now newly begun (v. 1-4).
- II.** A prediction of the affairs of the two kingdoms of Egypt and Syria, with reference to each other (v. 5-20).
- III.** Of the rise of Antiochus Epiphanes, and his actions and successes (v. 21-29).
- IV.** Of the great mischief that he should do to the Jewish nation and religion, and his contempt of all religion (v. 30-39).
- V.** Of his fall and ruin at last, when he is in the heat of his pursuit (v. 40-45).

²¹⁰DANIEL 11:1-4

RUIN OF THE PERSIAN MONARCHY

Here,

1. The angel Gabriel lets Daniel know the good service he has done to the Jewish nation (v. 1): “*In the first year of Darius the Mede, who destroyed Babylon and released the Jews out of that house of bondage, I stood a strength and fortress to him, that is, I was instrumental to protect him, and give him success in his ward, and, after he had conquered Babylon, to confirm him in his resolution to release the Jews,*” which, it is likely, met with much opposition. Thus by the angel, and at the request of *the watcher*, the golden head was broken, and the axe laid to the root of the tree. Note, We must acknowledge the hand of God in the strengthening of

those that are friends to the church for the service they are to do it, and confirming them in their good resolutions; herein he uses the ministry of angels more than we are aware of. And the many instances we have known of God's care of his church formerly encourage us to depend upon him in further straits and difficulties.

2. He foretels the reign of four Persian kings (v. 2): *Now I will tell thee the truth*, that is, the true meaning of the visions of the great image, and of the four beasts, and expound in plain terms what was before represented by dark types.

(1.) There shall stand up *three kings in Persia*, besides Darius, in whose reign this prophecy is dated, ²⁰¹Daniel 9:1. Mr. Broughton makes these three to be Cyrus, Artaxasta or Artaxerxes, called by the Greeks *Cambyses*, and Ahasuerus that married Esther, called *Darius son of Hystaspes*. To these three the Persians gave these attributes — Cyrus was a father, Cambyses a master, and Darius a hoarder up. So Herodotus.

(2.) There shall be a fourth, *far richer than they all*, that is, Xerxes, of whose wealth the Greek authors take notice. By *his strength* (his vast army, consisting of 800,000 men at least) and *his riches*, with which he maintained and paid that vast army, he *stirred up all against the realm of Greece*. Xerxes's expedition against Greece is famous in history, and the shameful defeat that he met with. He who when he went out was the terror of Greece in his return was the scorn of Greece. Daniel needed not to be told what disappointment he would meet with, for he was a hinderer of the building of the temple; but soon after, about thirty years after the first return from captivity, Darius, a young king, revived the building of the temple, owning the hand of God against his predecessors for hindering it, ⁴⁰⁷Ezra 6:7.

3. He foretels Alexander's conquests and the partition of his kingdom, v. 3. He is that *mighty king* that shall *stand up* against the kings of Persia, and he shall *rule with great dominion*, over many kingdoms, and with a despotic power, for he shall *do according to his will*, and undo likewise, which, by the law of the Medes and Persians, their kings could not. When Alexander, after he had conquered Asia, would be worshipped as a god, then this was fulfilled, that he shall *do according to his will*. That is God's prerogative, but was his pretension. But (v. 4) his *kingdom* shall soon be *broken*, and *divided* into four parts, *but not to his posterity*, nor shall any of his successors reign *according to his dominion*; none of them shall have

such large territories nor such an absolute power. His *kingdom was plucked up for others besides those* of his own family. Arideus, his brother, was made king in Macedonia; Olympias, Alexander's mother, killed him, and poisoned Alexander's two sons, Hercules and Alexander. Thus was his family rooted out by its own hands. See what decaying perishing things worldly pomp and possessions are, and the powers by which they are got. Never was the vanity of the world and its greatest things shown more evidently than in the story of Alexander. *All is vanity and vexation of spirit.*

❧ DANIEL 11:5-20

THE REIGN OF ANTIOCHUS MAGNUS

Here are foretold,

I. The rise and power of two great kingdoms out of the remains of Alexander's conquests, v. 5.

1. The kingdom of Egypt, which was made considerable by Ptolemaeus Lagus, one of Alexander's captains, whose successors were, from him, called the *Lagidae*. He is called the king of the *south*, that is, Egypt, named here, v. 8, 42, 43. The countries that at first belonged to Ptolemy are reckoned to be Egypt, Phoenicia, Arabia, Libya, Ethiopia, etc. Theocr. Idyl. 17.

2. The kingdom of Syria, which was set up by Seleucus Nicanor, or the *conqueror*; he was one of Alexander's princes, and became stronger than the other, and *had the greatest dominion of all*, was the most powerful of all Alexander's successors. It was said that he had no fewer than seven-two kingdoms under him. Both these were strong against Judah (the affairs of which are particularly eyed in this prediction); Ptolemy, soon after he gained Egypt, invaded Judea, and took Jerusalem *on a sabbath*, pretending a friendly visit. Seleucus also gave disturbance to Judea.

II. The fruitless attempt to unite these two kingdoms as iron and clay in Nebuchadnezzar's image (v. 6): "*At the end of certain years, about seventy after Alexander's death, the Lagidae and the Seleucidae shall associate, but not in sincerity. Ptolemy Philadelphus, king of Egypt, shall*

marry his daughter Berenice to Antiochus Theos, king of Syria,” who had already a wife called *Laodice*. “Berenice shall come to the *king of the north*, to make an agreement, but it shall not hold: *She shall not retain the power of the arm*; neither she nor her posterity shall establish themselves in the kingdom of the north, neither shall Ptolemy her father, nor Antiochus her husband (between whom there was to be a great alliance), *stand*, nor their arm, but *she shall be given up and those that brought her*,” all that projected that unhappy marriage between her and Antiochus, which occasioned so much mischief, instead of producing a coalition between the northern and southern crowns, as was hoped. Antiochus divorced Berenice, took his former wife Laodice again, who soon after poisoned him, procured Berenice and her son to be murdered, and set up her own son by Antiochus to be king, who was called *Seleucus Callinicus*.

III. A war between the two kingdoms, v. 7, 8. A branch from the same root with Berenice *shall stand up in his estate*. Ptolemaeus Euergetes, the son and successor of Ptolemaeus Philadelphus, shall come with an army against Seleucus Callinicus, king of Syria, to avenge his sister's quarrel, and shall prevail; and he shall carry away a rich booty both of persons and goods into Egypt, and shall *continue more years than the king of the north*. This Ptolemy reigned forty-six years; and Justin says that if his own affairs had not called him home he would, in this war, have made himself master of the whole kingdom of Syria. But (v. 9) he shall be forced to *come into his kingdom and return into his own land*, to keep peace there, so that he can no longer carry on the war abroad. Note, It is very common for a treacherous peace to end in a bloody war.

IV. The long and busy reign of *Antiochus the Great*, king of Syria. Seleucus Callinicus, that king of the north that was overcome (v. 7) and died miserably, left two sons, Seleucus and Antiochus; these are his sons, the sons of the *king of the north*, that shall be *stirred up, and shall assemble a multitude of great forces*, to recover what their father had lost, v. 10. But Seleucus the elder, being weak, and unable to rule his army, was poisoned by his friends, and reigned only two years; and his brother Antiochus succeeded him, who reigned thirty-seven years, and was called *the Great*. And therefore the angel, though he speaks of *sons* at first, goes on with the account of *one only*, who was but fifteen years old when he began to reign, and he shall *certainly come, and overflow, and over-run, and shall be restored* at length to what his father lost.

1. The *king of the south*, in this war, shall at first have very great success. Ptolemaeus Philopater, moved with indignation at the indignities done by *Antiochus the Great*, shall (though otherwise a slothful prince) *come forth, and fight with him*, and shall bring a vast army into the field of 70,000 foot, and 5000 horse, and seventy-three elephants. And the *other multitude* (the army of Antiochus, consisting of 62,000 foot, and 6000 horse, and 102 elephants) shall *be given into his hand*. Polybius, who lived with Scipio, has given a particular account of this battle of Raphia. Ptolemaeus Philopater, having gained this victory, grew very insolent; *his heart was lifted up*; then he went into the temple of God at Jerusalem, and, in defiance of the law, entered the most holy place, for which God has a controversy with him, so that, though he shall *cast down many myriads*, yet he shall *not be strengthened by it*, so as to secure his interest. For,

2. The *king of the north, Antiochus the Great*, shall return with a *greater army than the former*; and, at the *end of times (that is, years)* he shall *come with a mighty army, and great riches*, against the *king of the south*, that is, Ptolemaeus Epiphanes, who succeeded Ptolemaeus Philopater his father, when he was a child, which gave advantage to Antiochus the Great. In this expedition he had some powerful allies (v. 14): *Many shall stand up against the king of the south*. Philip of Macedon was confederate with Antiochus against the king of Egypt, and Scopas his general, whom he sent into Syria; Antiochus routed him, destroyed a great part of his army; whereupon the Jews willingly yielded to Antiochus, joined with him, helped him to besiege Ptolemaeus's garrisons. They *the robbers of thy people shall exalt themselves to establish the vision*, to help forward the accomplishment of this prophecy; but *they shall fall, and shall come to nothing*, v. 14. Hereupon (v. 15) the *king of the north*, this same Antiochus Magnus, shall carry on his design against the king of the south another way.

(1.) He shall surprise his strong-holds; all that he has got in Syria and Samaria, and the arms of the south, all the power of the king of Egypt, shall not be able to withstand him. See how dubious and variable the turns of the scale of war are; like buying and selling, it is winning and losing; sometimes one side gets the better and sometimes the other; yet neither by chance; it is not, as they call it, the *fortune of war*, but according to the will and counsel of God, who brings some low and raises others up.

(2.) He shall make himself master of the land of Judea (v. 16): *He that comes against him* (that is, the king of the north) shall carry all before him and do what he pleases, and *he shall stand* and get footing *in the glorious land*; so the land of Israel was, and *by his hand* it was wasted and consumed, for with the spoil of that good land he victualled his vast army. The land of Judea lay between these two potent kingdoms of Egypt and Syria, so that in all the struggles between them that was sure to suffer, for to it they both bore *ill will*. Yet some read this, *By his hand it shall be perfected*; as if it intimated that the land of Judea, being taken under the protection of this Antiochus, shall flourish, and be in better condition than it had been.

(3.) He shall still push on his war against the king of Egypt, and *set his face to enter with the strength of his whole kingdom*, taking advantage of the infancy of Ptolemy Epiphanes, and the *upright ones*, many of the pious Israelites, siding with him, v. 17. In prosecution of his design, he shall give him his daughter Cleopatra to wife, designing, as Saul in giving his daughter Cleopatra to David, that she should be a *snare to him*, and do him a mischief; but she *shall not stand on her father's side*, nor be *for him*, but for her husband, and so that plot failed him.

(4.) His war with the Romans is here foretold (v. 18): He shall *turn his face to the isles* (v. 18), the isles of the Gentiles (¹⁰⁰⁵Genesis 10:5), Greece and Italy. He took many of the isles about the Hellespont — Rhodes, Samos, Delos, etc., which by war or treaty he made himself master of; but a *prince*, or *state* (so some), even the Roman senate, or a *leader*, even the Roman general, shall *return his reproach* with which he abused the Romans *upon himself*, or shall *make his shame rest on himself*, and *without his own shame*, or any disgrace to himself, shall *pay him again*. This was fulfilled when the two Scipios were sent with an army against Antiochus. Hannibal was then with him, and advised him to invade Italy and waste it as he had done; but he did not take his advice; and Scipio joined battle with him, and gave him a total defeat, though Antiochus had 70,000 men and the Romans but 30,000. Thus he caused the *reproach offered by him to cease*.

(5.) His fall. When he was totally routed by the Romans, and was forced to abandon to them all he had in Europe, and had a very heavy tribute exacted from him, he *turned to his own land*, and, not knowing which way to raise money to pay his tribute, he plundered a temple of Jupiter, which

so incensed his own subjects against him that they set upon him, and killed him; so he was overthrown, and *fell*, and *was no more found*, v. 19.

(6.) His next successor, v. 20. There rose up one in his place, a *raiser of taxes*, a *sender forth of the extortioner*, or extorter. This character was remarkably answered in Seleucus Philopater, the elder son of Antiochus the Great, who was a great oppressor of his own subjects, and exacted abundance of money from them; and, when he was told he would thereby lose his friends, he said he knew no better friend he had than *money*. He likewise attempted to rob the temple at Jerusalem, which this seems especially to refer to. But *within a few days he shall be destroyed, neither in anger nor in battle*, but poisoned by Heliodorus, one of his own servants, when he had reigned but twelve years, and done nothing remarkable.

V. From all this let us learn,

1. That God in his providence sets up one, and pulls down another, as he pleases, advances some from low beginnings and depresses others that were very high. Some have called great men the *foot-balls of fortune*; or, rather, they are the *tools of Providence*.
2. This world is full of *wars and fightings*, which come *from men's lusts*, and make it a theatre of sin and misery.
3. All the changes and revolutions of states and kingdoms, and every event, even the most minute and contingent, were plainly and perfectly foreseen by the God of heaven, and to him nothing is *new*.
4. No word of God shall fall to the ground; but what he has designed, what he has declared, shall infallibly come to pass; and even the sins of men shall be made to serve his purpose, and contribute to the bringing of his counsels to birth in their season; and yet *God is not the author of sin*.
5. That, for the right understanding of some parts of scripture, it is necessary that heathen authors be consulted, which give light to the scripture, and show the accomplishment of what is there foretold; we have therefore reason to bless God for the human learning with which many have done great service to divine truths.

☞ DANIEL 11:21-45

THE REIGN OF ANTIOCHUS EPIPHANES

All this is a prophecy of the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes, the *little horn* spoken of before (☞ Daniel 8:9) a sworn enemy to the Jewish religion, and a bitter persecutor of those that adhered to it. What troubles the Jews met with in the reigns of the Persian kings were not so particularly foretold to Daniel as these, because then they had living prophets with them, Haggai and Zechariah, to encourage them; but these troubles in the days of Antiochus were foretold, because, before that time, prophecy would cease, and they would find it necessary to have recourse to the written word. Some things in this prediction concerning Antiochus are alluded to in the New-Testament predictions of the antichrist, especially v. 36, 37. And as it is usual with the prophets, when they foretel the prosperity of the Jewish church, to make use of such expressions as were applicable to the *kingdom of Christ*, and insensibly to slide into a prophecy of that, so, when they foretel the troubles of the church, they make use of such expressions as have a further reference to the kingdom of the antichrist, the rise and ruin of that. Now concerning Antiochus, the angel foretels here,

I. His character: He shall be a *vile person*. He called himself *Epiphanes* — *the illustrious*, but his character was the reverse of his surname. The heathen writers describe him to be an *odd-humoured* man, rude and boisterous, base and sordid. He would sometimes steal out of the court into the city, and herd with any infamous company *incognito* — *in disguise* he made himself a companion of the common sort, and of the basest strangers that came to town. He had the most unaccountable whims, so that some took him to be silly, others to be mad. Hence he was called *Epimanes* — *the madman*. He is called a *vile person*, for he had been a long time a hostage at Rome for the fidelity of his father when the Romans had subdued him; and it was agreed that, when the other hostages were exchanged, he should continue a prisoner at large.

II. His accession to the crown. By a trick he got his elder brother's son, Demetrius, to be sent a hostage to Rome, in exchange for him, contrary to the cartel; and, his elder brother being made away with by Heliodorus (v. 20), he took the kingdom. The states of Syria did not *give it to him* (v. 21), because they knew it belonged to his elder brother's son, nor did he get it

by the sword, but *came in peaceably*, pretending to reign for his brother's son, Demetrius, then a hostage at Rome. But with the help of Eumenes and Attalus, neighbouring princes, he gained an interest in the people, and *by flatteries obtained the kingdom*, established himself in it, and crushed Heliodorus, who made head against him *with the arms of a flood*; those that opposed him were *overflowed* and *broken before him*, even *the prince of the covenant*, his nephew, the rightful heir, whom he pretended to covenant with that he would resign to him whenever he should return, v. 22. But (v. 23) *after the league made with him he shall work deceitfully*, as one whose avowed maxim it is that princes ought not to be bound by their word any longer than it is for their interest. And *with a small people*, that at first cleave to him, he shall *become strong*, and (v. 24) *he shall enter peaceably upon the fattest places* of the kingdom of Syria, and, very unlike his predecessors, shall *scatter* among the people the *prey, and the spoil, and riches*, to insinuate himself into their affections; but, at the same time, he shall *forecast his devices against the strong-holds*, to make himself master of them, so that his generosity shall last but for a time; when he has got the garrisons into his hands he will scatter his spoil no more, but rule by force, as those commonly do that come in by fraud. He that comes in like a fox reigns like a lion. Some understand these verses of his first expedition into Egypt, when he came not as an enemy, but as a friend and guardian to the young king Ptolemaeus Philometer, and therefore brought with him but few followers, yet those stout men, and faithful to his interest, whom he placed in divers of the strong-holds in Egypt, thereby making himself master of them.

III. His war with Egypt, which was his second expedition thither. This is described, v. 25, 27. Antiochus shall *stir up his power and courage* against Ptolemaeus Philometer king of Egypt. Ptolemy, thereupon, shall *be stirred up to battle* against him, shall come against him *with a very great and mighty army*; but Ptolemy, though he has such a vast army, shall not be able to stand before him; for Antiochus's army shall *overthrow* his, and overpower it, and great multitudes of the Egyptian army shall *fall down slain*. And no marvel, for the king of Egypt shall be betrayed by his own counsellors; those that *feed of the portion of his meat*, that eat of his bread and live upon him, being bribed by Antiochus, shall *forecast devices against him*, and even *they shall destroy him*; and what fence is there against such treachery? After the battle, a treaty of peace shall be set on foot, and these two kings shall meet *at one council-board*, to adjust the

articles of peace between them; but they shall neither of them be sincere in it, for they shall, in their pretences and promises of amity and friendship, *lie to one another*, for their hearts shall be at the same time to do one another all the mischief they can. And then no marvel that *it shall not prosper*. The peace shall not last; but *the end* of it shall be *at the time appointed* in the divine Providence, and then the war shall break out again, as a sore that is only skinned over.

IV. Another expedition against Egypt. From the former he *returned with great riches* (v. 28), and therefore took the first occasion to invade Egypt again, *at the time appointed* by the divine Providence, two years after, in the eighth year of his reign, v. 29. He shall come *towards the south*. But this attempt shall not succeed, as the two former did, nor shall he gain his point, as he had done before once and again; for (v. 30) *the ships of Chittim shall come against him*, that is, the navy of the Romans, or only ambassadors from the Roman senate, who came in ships. Ptolemaeus Philometer, king of Egypt, being now in a strict alliance with the Romans, craved their aid against Antiochus, who had besieged him and his mother Cleopatra in the city of Alexandria. The Roman senate thereupon sent an embassy to Antiochus, to command him to raise the siege, and, when he desired some time to consider of it and consult with his friends about it, Popilius, one of the ambassadors, with his staff drew a circle about him, and told him, as one having authority, he should give a positive answer before he came out of that circle; whereupon, fearing the Roman power, he was forced immediately to give orders for the raising of the siege and the retreat of his army out of Egypt. So Livy and others relate the story which this prophecy refers to. *He shall be grieved, and return*; for it was a great vexation to him to be forced to yield thus.

V. His rage and cruel practices against the Jews. This is that part of his government, or mis-government rather, which is most enlarged upon in this prediction. In his return from his expedition into Egypt (which is prophesied of, v. 28) he *did exploits* against the Jews, in the sixth year of his reign; then he spoiled the city and temple. But the most terrible storm was in his return from Egypt, two years after, prophesied of v. 30. Then he took Judea in his way home; and, because he could not gain his point in Egypt by reason of the Romans interposing, he wreaked his revenge upon the poor Jews, who gave him no provocation, but had greatly provoked God to permit him to do it, ~~2183~~ Daniel 8:23.

1. He had a rooted antipathy to the Jews' religion: *His heart was against the holy covenant*, v. 28. And (v. 30) *he had indignation against the holy covenant*, that covenant of peculiarity by which the Jews were incorporated a people distinct from all other nations, and dignified above them. He hated the law of Moses and the worship of the true God, and was vexed at the privileges of the Jewish nation and the promises made to them. Note, That which is the hope and joy of the people of God is the envy of their neighbours, and that is *the holy covenant*. Esau hated Jacob because he had got the blessing. Those that are strangers to the covenant are often enemies to it.

2. He carried on his malicious designs against the Jews by the assistance of some perfidious apostate Jews. He kept up *intelligence with those that forsook the holy covenant* (v. 30), some of the Jews that were false to their religion, and introduced the customs of the heathen, with whom they made a covenant. See the fulfilling of this, 1 Mac. 1:11-15, where it is expressly said, concerning those renegado Jews, that they *made themselves uncircumcised and forsook the holy covenant*. We read (2 Mac. 4:9) of Jason, the brother of Onias the high priest, who by the appointment of Antiochus set up a school at Jerusalem, *for the training up of youth in the fashions of the heathen*; and (2 Mac. 4:23, etc.) of Menelaus, who fell in with the interests of Antiochus, and was the man that helped him into Jerusalem, now in his last return from Egypt. We read much in the book of the Maccabees of the mischief done to the Jews by these treacherous men of their own nation, Jason and Menelaus, and their party. These upon all occasions he made use of. "*Such as do wickedly against the covenant, such as throw up their religion, and comply with the heathen, he shall corrupt with flatteries, to harden them in their apostasy, and to make use of them as decoys to draw in others,*" v. 32. Note, It is not strange if those who do not live up to their religion, but in their conversations *do wickedly against the covenant*, are easily *corrupted by flatteries* to quit their religion. Those that make shipwreck of a good conscience will soon *make shipwreck of the faith*.

3. He profaned the temple. *Arms stand on his part* (v. 31), not only his own army which he now brought from Egypt, but a great party of deserters from the Jewish religion that joined with them; and they *polluted the sanctuary of strength*, not only the holy city, but the temple. The story of this we have, 1 Mac. 1:21, etc. He *entered proudly into the sanctuary, took away the golden altar, and the candlestick*, etc. And therefore (v. 25)

there was a great mourning in Israel; the princes and elders mourned, etc. And (2 Mac. 5:15, etc.) Antiochus went into the most holy temple, Menelaus, that traitor to the laws and to his own country, being his guide. Antiochus, having resolved to bring all about him to be of his religion, took away the daily sacrifice, v. 31. Some observe that the word *Tammidh*, which signifies no more than *daily*, is only here, and in the parallel place, used for the *daily sacrifice*, as if there were a designed liberty left to supply it either with *sacrifice*, which was suppressed by Antiochus, or with *gospel-worship*, which was suppressed by the Antichrist. Then he set up the abomination of desolation upon the altar (1 Mac. 1:54), even an idol altar (v. 59), and called the temple the temple of *Jupiter Olympius*, 2 Mac. 6:2.

4. He persecuted those who retained their integrity. Though there are many who forsake the covenant and do wickedly against it, yet there is a people who do know their God and retain the knowledge of him, and they shall be strong and do exploits, v. 32. When others yield to the tyrant's demands, and surrender their consciences to his impositions, they bravely keep their ground, resist the temptation, and make the tyrant himself ashamed of his attempt upon them. Good old Eleazar, one of the *principal scribes*, when he had swine's flesh thrust into his mouth, did bravely spit it out again, though he knew he must be tormented to death for so doing, and was so, 2 Mac. 6:19. The mother and her seven sons were put to death for adhering to their religion, 2 Mac.

7. This might well be called *doing exploits*; for to choose suffering rather than sin is a great exploit. And it was *by faith*, by being *strong in faith*, that they did those exploits, that they were tortured, not accepting deliverance, as the apostle speaks, probably with reference to that story, ~~8:15~~ Hebrews 11:35. Or it may refer to the military courage and achievements of Judas Maccabaeus and others in opposition to Antiochus. Note, The right knowledge of God is, and will be, the strength of the soul, and, in the strength of that, gracious souls do exploits. *Those that know his name will put their trust in him*, and by that trust will do great things. Now, concerning this people that knew their God, we are here told,

(1.) That they shall instruct many, v. 33. They shall make it their business to show others what they have learned themselves of the difference between truth and falsehood, good and evil. Note, Those that have the knowledge of God themselves should communicate their knowledge to

those about them, and this spiritual charity must be extensive: they must *instruct many*. Some understand this of a society newly erected for the propagating of divine knowledge, called *Assideans*, godly men, *pietists* (so the name signifies), that were both knowing and zealous in the law; these instructed many. Note, In times of persecution and apostasy, which are trying times, those that have knowledge ought to make use of it for the strengthening and establishing of others. Those that understand aright themselves ought to do what they can to bring others to understand; for knowledge is a talent that must be traded with. Or, They shall instruct many by their perseverance in their duty and their patient suffering for it. Good examples instruct many, and with many are the most powerful instructions.

(2.) *They shall fall* by the cruelty of Antiochus, shall be put to the torture, and put to death, by his rage. Though they are so excellent and intelligent themselves, and so useful and serviceable to others, yet Antiochus shall show them no mercy, but *they shall fall for some days*; so it may be read, ~~(40)~~ Revelation 2:10, *Thou shalt have tribulation ten days*. We read much, in the books of the Maccabees, of Antiochus's barbarous usage of the pious Jews, how many he slew in wars and how many he murdered in cold blood. Women were *put to death* for having their children *circumcised*, and their *infants were hanged about their necks*, 1 Mac. 1:60, 61. But why did God suffer this? How can this be reconciled with the justice and goodness of God? I answer, Very well, if we consider what it was that God aimed at in this (v. 35): *Some of those of understanding shall fall*, but it shall be for the good of the church and for their own spiritual benefit. *It shall be to try them, and to purge, and to make them white*. They needed these afflictions themselves. The best have their spots, which must be washed off, their dross, which must be purged out; and their troubles, particularly their *share in the public troubles*, help to do this; being sanctified to them by the grace of God, they are means of mortifying their corruptions, weaning them from the world, and awakening them to greater seriousness and diligence in religion. They try them, as silver in the furnace is refined from its dross; they purge them, as wheat in the barn is winnowed from the chaff; and they *make them white*, as cloth by the fuller is cleared from its spots. See ~~(41)~~ 1 Peter 1:7. Their sufferings *for righteousness' sake* would try and purge the nation of the Jews, would convince them of the truth, excellency, and power of that holy religion which these *understanding* men died for their adherence to. The blood of

the martyrs is the seed of the church; it is precious blood, and not a drop of it should be shed but upon such a valuable consideration.

(3.) The cause of religion, though it be thus run upon, shall not be run down. *When they shall fall* they shall not be utterly cast down, but *they shall be holpen with a little help*, v. 34. Judas Maccabaeus, and his brethren, and a few with them, shall *make head* against the tyrant, and assert the injured cause of their religion; they *pulled down the idolatrous altars, circumcised the children that they found uncircumcised, recovered the law out of the hand of the Gentiles, and the work prospered in their hands*, 1 Mac. 2:45, etc. Note, Those that stand by the cause of religion when it is threatened and struck at, though they may not immediately be delivered and made victorious, shall yet have *present help*. And a *little help* must not be despised; but, when times are very bad, we must be thankful for *some reviving*. It is likewise foretold that *many shall cleave to them with flatteries*; when they see the Maccabees prosper some Jews shall join with them that are no true friends to religion, but will only pretend friendship either with design to *betray them* or in hope to *rise with them*; but the *fiery trial* (v. 35) will separate between the *precious and the vile*, and by it *those that are perfect will be made manifest* and those that are not.

(4.) Though these troubles may continue long, yet they will have *an end*. They are *for a time appointed*, a limited time, fixed in the divine counsels. This warfare shall be accomplished. *Hitherto* the power of the enemy shall come, and *no further*; here shall its *proud waves* be *stayed*.

5. He grew very proud, insolent, and profane, and, being puffed up with his conquests, bade defiance to Heaven, and trampled upon every thing that was sacred, v. 36, etc. And here some think begins a prophecy of the antichrist, the papal kingdom. It is plain that St. Paul, in his prophecy of the rise and reign of the man of sin, alludes to this (~~2~~ 2 Thessalonians 2:4), which shows that Antiochus was a type and figure of that enemy, as Babylon also was; but, this being joined in a continued discourse with the foregoing prophecies concerning Antiochus, to me it seems probably that it principally refers to him, and in him had its primary accomplishment, and has reference to the other only by way of accommodation.

(1.) He shall impiously dishonour the God of Israel, the only living and true God, called here the *God of gods*. He shall, in defiance of him and his authority, *do according to his will* against his people and his holy religion;

he shall *exalt himself* above him, as Sennacherib did, and shall *speak marvellous things against him* and against his laws and institutions. This was fulfilled when Antiochus forbade *sacrifices* to be *offered* in God's temple, and ordered the *sabbaths* to be *profaned*, the *sanctuary* and the *holy people* to be *polluted*, etc., to the end that they might forget the law and change all the ordinances, and this upon pain of death, 1 Mac. 1:45.

(2.) He shall proudly put contempt upon *all other gods*, shall *magnify himself above every god*, even the gods of the nations. Antiochus wrote to his own kingdom that every one should leave the gods he had worshipped, and worship such as he ordered, contrary to the practice of all the conquerors that went before him, 1 Mac. 1:41, 42. And *all the heathen agreed according to the commandment of the king*; fond as they were of their gods, they did not think them worth suffering for, but, their gods being idols, it was all alike to them what gods they worshipped. Antiochus did not *regard any god*, but *magnified himself above all*, v. 37. He was so proud that he thought himself above the condition of a mortal man, that he could *command the waves of the sea, and reach to the stars of heaven*, as his insolence and haughtiness are expressed, 2 Mac. 9:8, 10. Thus he carried all before him, *till the indignation was accomplished* (v. 36), till he had run his length, and filled up the measure of his iniquity; for *that which is determined shall be done*, and nothing more, nothing short.

(3.) He shall, contrary to the way of the heathen, disregard the god of his fathers, v. 37. Though an affection to the religion of their ancestors was, among the heathen, almost as natural to them as *the desire of women* (for, if you search through *the isles of Chittim*, you will not find an instance of a nation that has *changed its gods*, ^{<3120>}Jeremiah 2:10, 11), yet Antiochus shall not *regard the god of his fathers*; he made laws to abolish the religion of his country, and to bring in the idols of the Greeks. And though his predecessors had honoured the God of Israel, and given great gifts to the temple at Jerusalem (2 Mac. 3:2, 3), he offered the greatest indignities to God and his temple. His not regarding the *desire of women* may denote his barbarous cruelty (he shall spare no age or sex, no, not the tender ones) or his unnatural lusts, or, in general, his contempt of every thing which men of honour have a concern for, or it might be accomplished in something we meet not with in history. Its being joined to his not *regarding the god of his fathers* intimates that the idolatries of his country had in them more of the gratifications of the flesh than those of other

countries (Lucian has written of the Syrian goddesses), and yet that would not prevail to keep him to them.

(4.) He shall set up an unknown god, a new god, v. 38. *In his estate*, in the room of the god of his fathers (Apollo and Diana, deities of pleasure), he shall *honour the god of forces*, a supposed deity of power, a *god whom his fathers knew not*, nor worshipped; because he will be thought in wisdom and strength to excel his fathers, he shall *honour this god with gold, and silver, and precious stones*, thinking nothing too good for the god he has taken a fancy to. This seems to be Jupiter Olympius, known among the Phoenicians by the name of *Baal-Semen, the lord of heaven*, but never introduced among the Syrians till Antiochus introduced it. Thus shall he do *in the most strong holds*, in the temple of Jerusalem, which is called *the sanctuary of strength* (v. 31), and here the *fortresses of munitions*; there he shall set up the image of this *strange god*. Some read it, *He shall commit the munitions of strength*, or of the most strong God (that is, the city Jerusalem), *to a strange god*; he put it under the protection and government of Jupiter Olympius. This god he shall not only acknowledge, but shall *increase with glory*, by setting his image even upon God's altar. And he shall *cause those that minister to this idol to rule over many*, shall put them into places of power and trust, and they shall *divide the land for gain*, shall be maintained richly out of the profits of the country. Some by the *Mahuzzim, or god of forces*, that Antiochus shall worship, understand *money*, which is said to *answer all things*, and which is the great idol of worldly people.

Now here is very much that is applicable to the *man of sin*; he *exalts himself above all that is called god or that is worshipped*; *magnifies himself above all*; his flatterers call him *our lord god the pope*. By forbidding marriage, and magnifying the single life, he pretends not to regard the desire of women; and honours the *god of forces*, the god *Mahuzzim, or strong holds*, saints and angels, whom his followers take for their protectors, as the heathen did of old their demons; these they make presidents of several countries, etc. These they honour with vast treasures dedicated to them, and therein the learned Mr. Mede thinks that this prophecy was fulfilled, and that it is referred to ^{<SOBE>}1 Timothy 4:1, 2.

VI. Here seems to be another expedition into Egypt, or, at least, a struggle with Egypt. The Romans had tied him up from invading Ptolemy, but now that *king of the south pushes at him* (v. 40), makes an attempt upon some

of his territories, whereupon Antiochus, the *king of the north*, comes against him like a whirlwind, with incredible swiftness and fury, with chariots, and horses, and many ships, a great force. He shall come through countries, and shall overflow and pass over. In this flying march many countries shall be overthrown by him; and he shall enter into the glorious land, the land of Israel; it is the same word that is translated *the pleasant land*, ~~2089~~ Daniel 8:9. He shall make dreadful work among the nations thereabout; yet some shall escape his fury, particularly Edom and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon, v. 41. He did not put these countries under contribution, because they had joined with him against the Jews. But especially the land of Egypt shall not escape, but he will quite beggar that, so bare will he strip it. This some reckon his fourth and last expedition against Egypt, in the tenth or eleventh year of his reign, under pretence of assisting the younger brother of Ptolemaeus Philometer against him. We read not of any great slaughter made in this expedition, but great plunder; for, it should seem, that was what he came for: *He shall have power over the treasures of gold and silver, and all the precious things of Egypt*, v. 43. Polybius, in Athenaeus, relates that Antiochus, having got together abundance of wealth, by spoiling young Philometer, and breaking league with him, and by the contributions of his friends, bestowed a vast deal upon a triumph, in imitation of Paulus Aemilius, and describes the extravagance of it; here we are told how he got that money which he spent so profusely. Notice is here taken likewise of the use he made of the Lybians and Ethiopians, who bordered upon Egypt; they were at his steps; he had them at his foot, had them at his beck, and they made inroads upon Egypt to serve him.

VII. Here is a prediction of the fall and ruin of Antiochus, as before (~~2085~~ Daniel 8:25), when he is in the height of his honour, flushed with victory, and laden with spoils, tidings out of the east and out of the north (out of the north-east) shall trouble him, v. 44. Or, He shall have intelligence, both from the eastern and northern parts, that the king of Parthia is invading his kingdom. This obliged him to drop the enterprises he had in hand, and to go against the Persians and Parthians that were revolting from him; and this vexed him, for now he thought utterly to ruin and extirpate the Jewish nation, when that expedition called him off, in which he perished. This is explained by a passage in Tacitus (though an impious one) where he commends Antiochus for his attempt to take away the superstition of the Jews, and bring in the manners of the Greeks,

among them (*ut teterrimam gentem in melius mutaret — to meliorate an odious nation*), and laments that he was hindered from accomplishing it by the Parthian war. Now here is,

1. The last effort of his rage against the Jews. When he finds himself perplexed and embarrassed in his affairs he shall *go forth with great fury to destroy and utterly to make away many*, v. 44. The story of this we have 1 Mac. 3:27, etc., what a rage Antiochus was in when he heard of the successes of Judas Maccabaeus, and the orders he gave to Lysias to destroy Jerusalem. Then *he planted the tabernacles of his palace, or tents of his court, between the seas*, between the Great Sea and the Dead Sea. He set up his royal pavilion at Emmaus near Jerusalem, in token that, though he could not be present himself, yet he gave full power to his captains to prosecute the war against the Jews with the utmost rigour. He placed his tent there, as if he had taken possession of *the glorious holy mountain* and called it *his own*. Note, When impiety grows very impudent we may see its ruin near.

2. His exit: *He shall come to his end and none shall help him*; God shall cut him off in the midst of his days and none shall be able to prevent his fall. This is the same with that which was foretold ~~2025~~ Daniel 8:25 (*He shall be broken without hand*), where we took a view of his miserable end. Note, When God's time shall come to bring proud oppressors to their end none shall be able to help them, nor perhaps inclined to help them; for those that covet to be feared by all when they are in their grandeur, when they come to be in distress will find themselves loved by none; none will lend them so much as a hand or a prayer to help them; and, if the Lord do not help, who shall?

Of the kings that came after Antiochus nothing is here prophesied, for that was the most malicious mischievous enemy to the church, that was a type of the son of perdition, whom the Lord shall consume with the breath of his mouth and destroy with the brightness of his coming, and none shall help him.