

The Rise of Antiochus IV Epiphanes

Daniel 11:21-35

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Great detail is supplied about Antiochus IV Epiphanes because of his coming oppressions of the Jewish people and because he is a prophetic picture of the final end-time Antichrist.

- I. Antiochus IV was not the rightful king of Syria, but would usurp the throne through political maneuvering. (v. 21)
- II. He would successfully repel an attempt by Egypt to retake the Promised Land. (v. 22a)
- III. He would meddle in the affairs of the Jewish high priesthood. (v. 22b)
- IV. He would use lies and bribery to consolidate his power. (v. 23-24)
- V. He would attack Egypt and be briefly successful partially due to political intrigue among the Ptolemies. (v. 25-26)
- VI. An uneasy peace would be negotiated while both sides secretly plotted against one another. (v. 27)
- VII. While returning to Syria, Antiochus IV would plunder the temple in Jerusalem and kill many Jews. (v. 28)
- VIII. A second war with Egypt would be averted when Rome intervened. (v. 29-30a)
- IX. Antiochus would then vent his frustration and wrath by cruelly oppressing the people of Judah. (v. 30b-31)

Jesus answered: "Watch out that no one deceives you. For many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am the Messiah,' and will deceive many. You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of birth pains.

"Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me. At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. Because of the

increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

“So when you see standing in the holy place ‘the abomination that causes desolation,’ spoken of through the prophet Daniel—let the reader understand— then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. Let no one on the housetop go down to take anything out of the house. Let no one in the field go back to get their cloak. How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers! Pray that your flight will not take place in winter or on the Sabbath. For then there will be great distress, unequalled from the beginning of the world until now—and never to be equaled again.

“If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive, but for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened. At that time if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Messiah!’ or, ‘There he is!’ do not believe it. For false messiahs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. See, I have told you ahead of time. (Matthew 24-4-25)

X. This would incite conflict between apostate (Helenized) Jews and true believers in Judah. (v. 32)

XI. True believers would call the people to repentance but many would suffer as a result. (v. 33-34)

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom... (Proverbs 9:10a)

Listen! The Lord is calling to the city— and to fear your name is wisdom— “Heed the rod and the One who appointed it. (Micah 6:9)

Then the king’s officers who were enforcing the apostasy came to the city of Modein to make them offer sacrifice. Many from Israel came to them; and Mattathias and his sons were assembled. Then the king’s officers spoke to Mattathias as follows: “You are a leader, honored and great in this city, and supported by sons and brothers. Now be the first to come and do what the king commands, as all the Gentiles and the men of Judah and those that are left in Jerusalem have done. Then you and your sons will be numbered among the friends of the king, and you and your sons will be honored with silver and gold and many gifts.”

But Mattathias answered and said in a loud voice: “Even if all the nations that live under the rule of the king obey him, and have chosen to do his commandments, departing each one from the religion of his fathers, yet I and my sons and my brothers will live by the covenant of our fathers. Far be it from us to desert the law and the ordinances. We will not obey the king’s words by turning aside from our religion to the right hand or to the left.”

When he had finished speaking these words, a Jew came forward in the sight of all to offer sacrifice upon the altar in Modein, according to the king’s command. When Mattathias saw it, he burned with zeal and his heart was stirred. He gave vent to righteous anger; he ran and killed him upon the altar. At the same time he killed the king’s officer who was forcing them to

sacrifice, and he tore down the altar. Thus he burned with zeal for the law, as Phinehas did against Zimri the son of Salu.

Then Mattathias cried out in the city with a loud voice, saying: “Let every one who is zealous for the law and supports the covenant come out with me!” And he and his sons fled to the hills and left all that they had in the city. (1 Maccabees 2:15-28)

There were others who were tortured, refusing to be released so that they might gain an even better resurrection. Some faced jeers and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were put to death by stoning; they were sawed in two; they were killed by the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, persecuted and mistreated—the world was not worthy of them. They wandered in deserts and mountains, living in caves and in holes in the ground.

These were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised, since God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect. (Hebrews 11:35-b-40)

XII. God’s good purpose in all of this was that His people would be refined and purified.

(v. 35)

He changes times and seasons; he deposes kings and raises up others. (Daniel 2:21)

This man was handed over to you by God’s deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. (Acts 2:23)

For my own name’s sake I delay my wrath;
for the sake of my praise I hold it back from you,
so as not to destroy you completely.
See, I have refined you, though not as silver;
I have tested you in the furnace of affliction.
For my own sake, for my own sake, I do this.
How can I let myself be defamed?
I will not yield my glory to another. (Isaiah 48:9-11)

This third I will put into the fire;
I will refine them like silver
and test them like gold.
They will call on my name
and I will answer them;
I will say, ‘They are my people,’
and they will say, ‘The LORD is our God.’” (Zechariah 13:9)