

# Daniel: Reigning on High

## Chapter 11 :: The Power behind all Power

### LEADER'S NOTES

#### Introduction

What has been the most terrifying or worrying event in your life? What did it take for the terror or the worry to dissipate?

You may want to be ready for people to share quite deeply and personally at this point! The thrust of this study is that we are encouraged to trust God even in the midst of great terror, evil, disappointment or sadness and we see God's people doing that in this chapter.

#### Analysis

READ Daniel 11:2-35

Who is speaking these words and from whom are they from?

What are some of the key features of this long historical section?

I was going to provide you with a chart of all the historical annotations but I thought just a few would suffice:

Verse 3 – Alexander the Great

Verse 5 – Ptolemy 1 – the Egyptian King of the South

Verse 7-16 – constant war between the Ptolemies and the Seleucids

Verse 16 – a reference to Israel, God's Land.

Verse 21 – Antiochus Epiphanies IV – the rest of the chapter deals with him or one like him.



Can you see any connections between this chapter and chapter 8?

Read Daniel 11:36-45

Is this section historical, pictorial, both?

Simon Manchester writes:

Now let's come to verses 36-45. There was something especially sinister about Antiochus and that is why the bible does make a lot of him. He attempted to do something particularly evil which nobody had done before, or at least there had been a couple of little glimpses in the book of Daniel. But what Antiochus attempted to do was outlaw faith in God, and make compulsory allegiance to his God. Now in the past with God's people you know they'd been captured in Egypt but they'd been allowed to worship their own God. When they got to the promised land they were surrounded by other gods and they were tempted but they were allowed to worship their own God. Antiochus introduces something entirely new which is the worship of God is outlawed, and the worship of his god is compulsory. You see in verse 36, he exalted himself and uniquely blasphemed God. He had no interest in the popular gods, verse 37, including the god Adonis loved by the women. But he had his own god, verse 38, the god of fortresses. Very hard to work out what that means, and he was the first person, Antiochus, to put his face and god on the coins of the day. What Antiochus believed, he enforced. You will not worship the God of

Israel. Now even in this summary of his pride you can see in verse 37 that God's time will come for him, and Anticus according to history was on a reckless mission to rob a temple and he came to an untimely end, in his prime.

When we come to verses 40-45 which is the end of the chapter I want you to know that these verses look like history but their not history. I want to explain this to you, if you were to read verses 40-45, you would think that it is just going on describing more history but none of it fits history because verses 40-45 is not history. Verses 40-45 is like, listen carefully to this, it's like a picture not a photo. It's like a map not a battlefield. This is a sketch, this is a cartoon, it is not the reality of history. And therefore verses 40-45 suddenly reach an absolute climax, we've seen normal battles take place, we've seen Anticus do his worst, and now we move in 40-45 to something which is just a picture of general fighting, and the success of evil. That is what 40-45 is all about. Verse 40, evil succeeds hugely, verse 41, the believers are being attacked but the unbelievers are being rescued, everything's upside down. Verses 42-43, everybody seems to come under his control, verse 44, suddenly he's called away. He gets a message and he has to go. It reminds us of an incident in the Old Testament where an enemy of God's people was just about to completely dominate God's people and got a message and had to leave, and the people of God were miraculously spared. And verse 44, he is called away. Verse 45, just as he might attack Jerusalem, the holy mountain, this evil is finished and there is no one there to help him. So verses 40-45 is a picture of all evil for all time which looks so often as if it is in total control.

What does this section teach us about what happens to those who set themselves up in defiance of God?

## Application

This chapter tells us a lot about what happened, but does it tell us anything about what God was doing about it? Have a look at Daniel 11: 24, 27, 29 and 35. Who is really in charge here?

You may want to look at John 19:11 as another example of God being in charge of great evil.

This is from my sermon:

It is not the pagan leader Antiochus who's in charge of the universe, but God.

It is not fate that rules the universe, but God.

It is not chance that rolls the dice in the universe, but God.

It is not luck that turns the world, but God.

God runs the universe to the second and to the detail. And inside the framework of the plans of God, which are more complex than we could ever understand, He brings a tyrant onto the world stage and then He removes him exactly when He wants to. At the appointed time

God is the absolute master of every tyrant who ever flexes his muscles around this globe.

What is the right way to respond to evil, terror, sadness or disappointment? (Clue: Read Daniel 11:30-35)

Consider also Hebrews 12:1-11 as it provides further understanding of some of the reason behind our hard times.

How do we know that God is for us even though we find ourselves in times of evil, terror, sadness or disappointment?

See Romans 8:28-39 and the following

We must see God's control over the world in light of his submission to the world. What I mean is, never forget that God submitted himself to the worst possible suffering in all the world in the killing of His own son, and he allowed His son, although He could have stopped it, to suffer and die.

Far from being a detached despot, God is a devoted director of the world's affairs such that when they got out of control and began to spiral away from his love, he did not even spare his own Son, but gave him up so that from the suffering and dying of Jesus would come the offer of eternal life to all the world. God loved the world so much that to solve the problems in the world he submitted himself to the world to suffer in the world. That is the depth of his love.

What can we do to help each other in times of evil, terror, sadness or disappointment?

Try to get your group to think beyond "pray for one another" to the need to teach each other about the trustworthiness of God even in hard times.

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