

Allan MacRae: Prophecies of Daniel: Lecture 10

I wanted to bring out to you the fact that this word "Messiah" or "anointed one" is used in the Old Testament for a king in about half the cases. It is used for the people of Israel in a number of cases; it is used for priest in four or five cases; it is used even for a prophet in a couple of cases. It is used for a king in about half the cases where it is used. Now, here is a commentary, *The Prophecy of Daniel* by E.J. Young. A commentary which has some very good things in it. Dr. Young has made a very thorough study of the book of Daniel, and when he is not prejudiced on a certain point, his material is often of great value. But there are a few points where he has great prejudices, and when covering a debated subject like that, he sometimes jumps to conclusions rather quickly. Here he makes the statement that in the verse which I referred you to in Daniel 9 verse 25 where it says, "Messiah the prince," he says, "This must refer to Christ. It must be a prediction of Christ because he is the only one who was both a king and a priest." Well, now, in the phrase "Messiah the prince," the word "prince" suggests it is referring to the king. But does Messiah mean it is referring to a priest? Well, you have gathered your own evidence by looking at the use of the word "Messiah" in the Hebrew or in the Old Testament. The Hebrew word "Messiah" is translated as "anointed" in most cases and in half the cases it is used of a king. So "Messiah the prince" might be one who is a king and a priest, but it doesn't have to be; it is simply one whom God has set apart for an important task. So in that verse, whether it is talking about Christ or not is a matter to be decided on other grounds and not simply to be decided by the fact that the King James Version used this word, or by an inadequate argument as this one, which unfortunately Dr. Young gave. As you see, as you look at the original Hebrew, Dr. Young's argument looks quite out of place.

Now, so much for that assignment, although I should mention that the next assignment deals with those same verses in chapter 9. It is brief passage which has had a tremendous amount of discussion in the Christian world. And it only relates to one verse in the passage; and the assignment is quite a simple thing which you could probably do in

a few minutes, but it takes longer to explain what it is. Therefore I have posted the three copies of the assignment on the board. I believe once you read it you will have practically all of it in mind. You won't need to copy but a tiny bit that is on the board.

Now, we are looking at Daniel 11. The last two lectures we spent quite a bit of time on Daniel 11. Daniel 11, as we have noticed, contains a great many statements which would be very difficult to interpret in advance. But they are statements which when the events occurred, some of them you could say fit this or that historical time period well but it could fit with about a dozen other times. But there are other statements which fit very specifically only one historical situation. And we noticed in chapter 11 how it starts in verse 2 and refers to the fact that “There will be yet three kings in Persia and the fourth will be far richer than all of them. And by his strength through his riches he will stir up all against the realm of Greece.” And you would not know exactly what is going to happen if you lived in Daniel’s days, although you could form a pretty good guess that there would be three more kings of Persia and the fourth one would be richer than any of the previous ones, as Xerxes was, and that he would make a great attack on Greece. And it was the greatest attack perhaps that has ever been made on Greece. Perhaps one of the greatest attacks in all history was that tremendous army which Xerxes turned against Greece. He made such an impression on the Greeks, from their managing to survive that attack, that it was very important in all their thinking 200 years later. They were psychologically prepared for Alexander the Great to go back and attack the Persian Empire and destroy it.

And then in the third verse we notice, “A mighty king shall arise, who shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will.” And of course this could be said of many different people, but the following verse speaks specifically about Alexander the Great, so we know that verse 3 here was a description of Alexander the Great, the mightiest king the world had perhaps seen up to that time, who nothing seemed to be able to stand before him. But you notice between verse 2 and 3 there is an unmentioned interval of over 150 years. Daniel simply passes from Xerxes who attacked Greece, to

Alexander the Great, who destroyed the Persian Empire. Daniel skips over 150 years without any reference to it.

Then in verse 4 it tells about the division of Alexander's Empire. In advance it might be hard to know what is meant, "And when he stood up his kingdom will be broken." In other words, he didn't have his power very long; he was just a young fellow in his early thirties when he died rather suddenly. And His Kingdom was broken although they tried to keep it together, but they soon got to fighting. Pretty soon it was divided into three large important sections and a few smaller sections. So it was divided, not according to the dominion of his rule, nor according to his posterity for within the next fifteen years every relative of Alexander: his mother, his brothers, his children, every relative of his was killed. His kingdom was not according to his posterity or the dominion of which he ruled, it was given to others.

And then verse 5 says, "The king of the south shall be strong," and one of Alexander's generals who took the most southern part of his empire, Ptolemy who took Egypt, was a very strong king. You couldn't have predicted exactly what this would mean in the future, but when it came to pass you would say, "Well isn't this wonderful that Daniel predicted this three hundred years in advance." Then we continue "The king of the south shall be strong and one of his princes shall be strong above him and have dominion." And when you find one of Ptolemy generals, Selucius, going up and getting control of the whole eastern half of the Persian Empire, that certainly is the remarkable fulfillment of this. You wouldn't know in advance what was going to happen but when it happened you can see how tremendously accurately Daniel had predicted this. "He shall be strong above him." Selucius had a far wider area than Ptolemy. So this part of the prophecy fits: "And have dominion, his dominion will be a great dominion."

And then verse 6, "In the end of years they will join themselves together, for the king's daughter of the south will come to the king of the north to make an agreement." Here between verses five and six you skip over Seleucius's son and you skip to his grandson, so there is an unmentioned interval of about 30 years here. And then you find the attempt to bring the two portions of the prophecy together, "And the king's daughter

of the south will come to the king of the north to make an agreement.” Well, in the treaty as you know, Bernice, the daughter of Ptolemy II, was married to Antiochus II. “But she shall not retain the power of her arm, neither shall he stand or his arm, but she shall be given up and they that brought her and he that begot her and he that strengthened her in these times.” And we took time to notice the conflict between Bernice and Seleucius' former wife. In the end Bernice and her child were killed and her father died in about the same time. The man who married her was thought to be poisoned by his first wife. This is a very exact fulfillment of this prophecy. You might not know exactly how it would be in the future but when it happened you'd say, “How wonderful that Daniel could predict these details.”

In verse seven, “But out of a branch of her roots shall one stand up.” This implies descended from her ancestors, a rather poetic way to describe her brother who came up with his army and attacked, and the next two verses we have his tremendous victory over the next king. And then in verse 10, referring on to the king of the north, “His son shall be stirred up and assemble a great multitude.” And their fighting goes on through two or three verses but then you have the account of Antiochus III as we have already noticed. We went through the details of his conquering Palestine specifically referred to here and to the people in Israel who tried to help him so they could get away from Ptolemy in order to establish their vision, their idea of being better off but which proved not to work. We also mentioned Antiochus III conflict with Rome.

And then in verse twenty we had his son, “There shall stand in his estate a raiser of taxes in the glory of the kingdom but within a few days he shall be destroyed neither in anger nor in battle.” It would hard to tell beforehand what it is going to be, but after it happened we saw that Antiochus III had to pay such tremendous reparations to Rome that it was necessary that his son devote himself to try to reestablish fiscal stability in the kingdom and spent most of his time raising taxes and making up for the great expenses of his father. Yes, he raised the taxes or he sent someone to raise the taxes; it could either way. But his principal activity was reestablishing fiscal stability.

Then verses 21 and following we notice that we have the account of Antiochus IV called Epiphanes. At the end of the last hour we discussed his career and I don't want to go over details of it much now. Again, I looked a couple of days ago at the latest edition of the Encyclopedia of Britannica. You may know it was completely rewritten just a few years ago with an entirely different plan. And I looked up the article on Antiochus IV. In the previous issues of the encyclopedia they continued articles from edition to edition and you didn't know when it was written. If you've got Encyclopedia of Britannica from ten years ago, you don't know whether an article was written that year or fifteen years before. There were just little changes all the time. But in this new edition there was a complete change. And so I was interested to see what they would say about Antiochus IV. And they said that Antiochus was a very able king and very effective king, and an able fighter but quite inadvertently he gave an occasion for the establishment of a Jewish State. That is quite a modernistic way of saying he tried to destroy the Jewish religion, that he took over the temple in Jerusalem and established the worship of the pagan gods there. He killed Jews who would not sacrifice to idols and made things so terrible that the Maccabean uprising developed that resulted in an independent Jewish state that lasted for the next century. It is easy to see the bias of the man who wrote that particular article about Antiochus. But the interesting thing is, that in the beginning of the article we read, "Antiochus IV Epiphanes was also called Epimanes." And that is the only detrimental word he said about Antiochus in the article, and unless you know Greek it would not convey any meaning to you. But he called himself "Epiphanes"--Antiochus Epiphanes, which means "Antiochus the outshining god." All the Seleucid kings before this called themselves gods but he was the first one to put it on his coins. He put the word Epiphanes, he was "the outshining god"--the Epiphanes. But his people saw his crazy antics; as we noticed he would steal from the temple and then he would throw money around; he would kill somebody on just a crazy impulse and then he would take some other poor person and lift him up and give him lots of honors. He was erratic in many ways. So the people, instead of calling him Epiphanes "the outshining god," they called him "Epimanes," "the mad or crazy one". This article, it is funny how they say, "also

called Epimanes,” yet everything else they say about him is very favorable. But the account of him that is given here in Daniel is not particularly favorable, as you can expect when Antiochus IV tried to destroy all knowledge of God and to put a complete end to the Old Testament religion.

Well, we saw various aspects of his life last time and noticed how they were carried out. And so, we want to go on from 2 to 3 in our outline; what the Bible tells us about it. Number three: “The outline of Daniel 11:21- 12:3.” Now I have put some other figures at the right in red. And you don’t need to worry much about them quite yet; I will explain their meaning later. We read about Antiochus IV's character in verses 21-24 and in 36-39 We have another description of the character of king. In verses 25 to the end of the first half of 30 we read a general account of his political activities. And we have an account of the political activities of the king in verses 40-45. And we read about the trouble and relief for God's people in the last part of verses 30-35. And in verses 1 to 3 in chapter 12 we have there what could be described as trouble and relief for God’s people. So you go through three subjects about Antiochus and then you again go through three subjects about what appears to be another king. And of course, according to the critical view, you are dealing with the same man. And you are told these things about Antiochus and then you go through it all over again in different words. This is their view. But it doesn’t work out. So I have incidentally mentioned those figures here that we will speak about later.

Now, let's go on briefly to mention specific point of clear fulfillment. There are remarks made about him as there are about other rulers that could be made about anybody or any great conqueror. We won't concern ourselves particularly with them; they fit him so they are a proper part of the prophecy. But we note civic matters, such as in verses 21 to 23 we find that he was not the legitimate ruler. We find that he came in by an unusual arrangement. Verse 21, “In his estate shall stand up a vile person,” "Vile" in old English doesn’t mean necessarily a wicked person; it may mean a person of unworthy standing, a person who did not have the right to take what he got. In this case Seleucus IV's son, who was a hostage in Rome was the one who was according to the laws entitled

to come over and become Antiochus IV's successor. But before he could come, a man who had killed Seleucus was trying to establish himself as ruler in the name of Seleucus' infant child. While that was being done, Antiochus IV managed to come in and kill the man who killed his brother and the child. He established himself as king. So, "in his estate shall stand up a vile person whom they shall not give the honor of the kingdom but he shall come in peaceably."

Peaceably here means, he did not make a conquest. He got the king of a neighboring area to lend him some money and help him to get there with a small force and then came in and declared he was the son of Antiochus the Great (III) and killed the murderer and took power before people realized what was happening. And he took over the power, obtained the kingdom by flatteries, and he became strong with a few people. He worked deceitfully. These three verses tell about his succession and exactly fit him and would not have fit any of the kings we looked at before.

Then we find in verse 24 the strange contrast in his character. "He entered peaceably even upon the fattest places of the providence." This word "peaceably" here is more the idea by stealth: by taking something without people realizing what was happening. He would take a hold of things and get into the temples and seize their treasures. He did that not only with the temple of Jerusalem but with temples of various gods. He raised very large exactions with people who had very large amounts of money. Then he would scatter among them the prey and spoil and riches. This was a man who made seizures and also squandered the money he got. This was typical of his character. He was not the only man who had such a contrast, but it was not common.

Then we have his attack on Egypt, in verse 25 and following. Of course, many of the Seleucid kings made attacks on Egypt, but here we find out about the treasury of Pharaoh's supporters in verses 25-26. Those were supposed to be helping Antiochus' nephew, the legitimate king of Egypt, but he was a young boy and they conspired against him.

Then we find verse 27 where he told his nephew he was going to help him. "The two kings sat at one table telling lies," making the other think he would stand with him

but was really against him. And then in the first part of 28, “His return to his home, Antioch, with great wealth, but on the way back his heart was against the holy covenant and he did exploits.” The word "exploits" is inserted into the King James.

He did things in Jerusalem and returned to his own land. He tried to rob the temple. He gave strict orders that the Jews were not to be circumcised that they were not to follow the Mosaic laws. He returned to Antioch with great wealth but returned to Jerusalem and robbed it. We have these matters predicted in such a way that you would not know exactly what was going to happen, but that when it did happen you could see that it was indeed exactly fulfilled.

Now, concerning his second invasion of Egypt: You find in verse 29f, which we looked at last time. Remember how the Roman emissary, came and told him to withdraw from Egypt when he was about to have it all in his hands and he said, “I will require consideration.” And he said, “you can consider it as long as you are in that circle.” And he gave in to the Romans but he was very, very much irritated by it naturally. And when he returned he took it out on the Jews.

And so we have in verse 30 the reference to: “the ships of Kittim come against him,” Kittim is a word regularly used for the regions to the west: the Mediterranean. Therefore he grieved and returns and he has “indignation against the holy covenant.” And that was his reaction to it. It was partly to hold his great gains in Antioch, to which he invited people from all over the then known world and on which he spent tremendous sums of money. But the other part of his scheme to consolidate his empire was to try to unify the religion of his empire by destroying all who would not worship Zeus. And it was now that his armies seized the temple in Jerusalem and so polluted it that no pious Jew could possibly go into it again until it had been purged and cleansed. So we have his severe persecution of Judaism described in verse 30, the second part: “So shall he do; he shall return and have favor on them that forsake the holy covenant.” Verse 31: “They shall pollute the sanctuary of strength and take away the daily sacrifice and place the abomination that makes desolate.” And when they put up the statue of Zeus right in the

temple of the Lord in Jerusalem, it made the place so desecrated in the eyes of any pious Jew that he could not even think of going into it.

And so, verse 32 tells about the beginning of the Maccabean revolt. Verses 32-35 tells how the people, some of them, rose up against Antiochus and they succeeded a little bit. Others joined with them that weren't really thoroughly with them, but in the end the Maccabean revolt did free Judea, making it an independent kingdom for nearly a century. Yet, the leadership of Judea was quite mixed. If somebody were to tell you back in 1750, if somebody made a prediction, "There will be a great ruler who will rise up in one of the countries of Europe and he will lead armies making rapid marches across most of Europe and conquer many countries and take great wealth but he will be completely defeated and his regime utterly destroyed." Well, you could say that was exactly fulfilled in Napoleon. But then again, you could find that it was exactly fulfilled in Hitler. Well, it may be fulfilled in somebody else yet, but I would have to say it has to be fulfilled in one or the other. It could be a prediction of Napoleon, or if it didn't fit with Napoleon, you would say it still has to come and you would find the fulfillment in Hitler. Now, somebody could say, "Well, Napoleon was just a type of Hitler." Napoleon was merely a symbol of what Hitler would be like. Well, you could also be saying today that Hitler is just a symbol of somebody who is coming 20 years from now. It seems to me that there is great danger in that sort of thing. Now, there are cases where the Scripture sees two things that are related, that are similar but coming at different times. There is sort of a composite picture. But that is rare and I would say be very slow about accepting such things. If you find definite fulfillment of something I would say it is complete. So when it says, "Ships of Kittim will come against him," well that might refer to the American ships going during the last war and putting an end to Hitler's regime, ships from the West. But I don't think it does. My feeling is that in almost every case when something is predicted you look for one fulfillment, not multiple fulfillments.

Now, of course, there are two exceptions that should be mentioned. One is, if you say there will be many conquerors who conquer many countries, that could include both Napoleon and Hitler because you have used the plural. Or there can be a succession. For

example in Deut. 18, the people asked Moses, "What shall we do? How will we know the Lord's will after you are gone?" He says, "God will raise up a prophet like unto me, him shall you hear." And after Moses was gone God raised up a succession of prophets. "How are we to know Moses's God?" "Well, look to God to raise up a prophet." And God raised up one prophet after another, and as time went on the Jews understood that this succession of prophets was what was predicted and would have its culmination in the greatest of all the prophets. And so they said to John the Baptist, "Are you that prophet? Are you the one? The great climax of the succession of prophets?" But in general I say look for one fulfillment of any statement that is given in the prophets. That is a little aside, but it relates to our whole subject, so thanks for your question.

But we do want to get on with our discussion of Antiochus. We have then these very remarkable fulfillments of the history tracing through right up to telling us about Antiochus III and at length telling exactly about his son Seleucus IV and finally telling about the other son--Antiochus IV--in considerable detail. We have all these things which, when the events occurred, you would see how it would fit but you would not know in advance the details of God's plan. Well, so much for Antiochus Epiphanes.

Now, number five in the outline is "Daniel 11:36 - 12:3." As I pointed out to you a few minutes ago we have, as I gave under number three, the character and succession of Antiochus Epiphanes in verses 21-24. Now we go back again to the description of the character of a king in verse 36 and following. We have Antiochus' political activities in verse 25 to the first part of verse 30, and then we have the political activities of the king again given in verses 40-45. We have trouble and relief for God's people in verses 30-35 and verses 1-3 of chapter 12. We have a section that could very well be called "Trouble and Relief for God's People." Now, of course, the holders of the critical view insist verse 36 and on is still talking about Antiochus IV. We are still talking about him. It is strange but yet not impossible that verse 36 on tells it all over again about Antiochus IV's character after you have already been told all these things before. It is strange but yet not impossible to have told so much about his career and go back again and tell all about his career, or about additional events in his career, and then having told a little bit about his

trouble and relief, you again go into it. That is not all impossible. But it doesn't fit. Most of what is said here has no precise fulfillment in Antiochus Epiphanes. And so the critics are in great difficulty when they say it is still talking about Antiochus Epiphanes.

And so we have this question: if this passage is not talking about Antiochus Epiphanes who is it talking about. And this commentary by Edwin J. Young, to which I referred a few minutes ago, speaks of this section and says that there have been many interpretations of it. He says, "The following are the principal interpretations: 1) Antiochus Epiphanes, 2) Constantine the great, 3) Omar the Islamic conqueror, 4) the Roman empire." And then he says, "Number 5, the Dispensational interpretations, 6) the Pope of Rome, 7) Herod the Great and 8) the Antichrist." And number 8 is the one he insists is the correct one. He says, "The Antichrist. This may be called the traditional interpretation in the Christian Church. It was advocated by St. Jerome in about A.D. 400 and in this he has been followed by many." Now, the term "Antichrist" is not a particularly a good term. The apostle John says, "there are many antichrists." "Antichrist" is a very general term. But here is a specific person referred to in 2 Thessalonians where Paul says, "there is one of whom Isaiah said that the Lord will destroy him at his coming. One who it is said will sit in the temple of God giving forth that he is a god and should be worshiped." One who Paul describes as doing terrible things before the coming of Christ. It is quite common for us to refer to this one as "The Antichrist." You notice Young does that when he calls him "The Antichrist," and I see no harm in that usage as long as we see there is no Scriptural support for it. The Scripture uses the term "antichrist" in the more general way for "all great enemies of the Lord's work." But, you notice a strange thing about Dr. Young's commentary. As I have mentioned, he is very good on many of his treatments; there is much that is excellent in the commentary, but he has a strong prejudice against what he calls "Dispensationalist." And if anybody whom he calls a "Dispensationalist" holds a view, that is almost enough in his mind to condemn the view. And so we notice here on page 246 that as the fifth interpretation, he gives the "Dispensationalist," which, of course, are wrong as are all the first seven interpretations there, and as the eighth he gives "The Antichrist." Now he

gives two Dispensationalist interpretations. He says, “A. The king, verse 36, is the little horn of Daniel 7 who is an apostate, not from Judaism but from Christianity. He establishes his palace in Jerusalem during the great tribulation, the last three and a half years of Daniel’s 70th week.” Well, now, that would certainly be the one who would be called the Antichrist. He doesn’t use the term "Antichrist" there; he says it is the, “little horn of Daniel 7 who is an apostate, not from Judaism but from Christianity.”

The other so-called Dispensationalist interpretation he gives is, “B. He is the Antichrist. Not to be identified either with the little horn of chapter 7 or with that of chapter 8. This willful king will be a Jew and in the midst of Jewish people who will assume kingly honors being recognized by the Jewish apostates as Messiah King and by the Christian apostates as the Antichrist. In the middle of the 70th week he will come and take his seat in the Jerusalem temple and will claim divine worship.” The only difference between these two interpretations is that one says the man is an apostate from Christianity and the other says he is a Jew. But they both agree that he is a man who can be called "Antichrist" because he is the great enemy of God at the end of this age. And then his 8th interpretation is that he is the Antichrist and that is the one he says is right. And so, I would think it better if he subsumed the two Dispensationalist interpretations under his 8th interpretation and say he is either a Jew or a Christian but in either case he is the Antichrist. Well, he doesn’t mention any church father here under number 5. But he says one Dispensationalist view is that he is the Antichrist who is Jew and the other is he is the Antichrist who is a gentile and the correct view is that he is the Antichrist. But I believe that most Christian interpreters have held that these verses are a description of the Antichrist. A very interesting thing though in addition to that, about Dr. Young’s commentary, in chapter 2, chapter 7, and chapter 9 he is very much against the idea of an unmentioned interval between two great events. But here he assumes a jump of at least two thousand years without it being mentioned between verse 35 and 36.

Of course we have to assume then that verses 36-39 are talking about Antiochus Epiphanes. But there is statement after statement in this section that just doesn’t fit Antiochus Epiphanes. And statements about things that he would do that we have no

historical evidence of his doing. One for instance, it describes an expedition against Egypt, which is very successful. Now, some who hold the critical view will say this is a repetition of what already has been said, that he will make an expedition against Egypt. Others say this describes a third expedition against Egypt, which is not mentioned in any of our histories. Well, it would be a little strange, if at that period he made a third expedition that wasn't mentioned in any of our histories. And it would be particularly strange since his second expedition was brought to an end when the Romans ordered him to go back and that was sufficient to lead him to go back. If he had made a third expedition, under those circumstances we can be sure the Romans would have come with power and it certainly would have made enough stir that there would have been some mention of it in history. Young, without saying so, assumes an unmentioned interval of at least 2000 years at this point between Antiochus Epiphanes and the Antichrist.

Notice that the section ends with the resurrection. Verse 2 of chapter 12: "Many of them that sleep in the dust shall awake. Some to everlasting life and some to shame and everlasting contempt." There is the resurrection there. According to the critical view, this is the vain hope of someone at a time of Antiochus Epiphanes who wrote the book of Daniel. But if you take it as a true message from God, it runs to the resurrection. So, even if there were not this unmentioned interval between Antiochus and the Antichrist, if some of this continued to be about Antiochus, there would have to be that unmentioned interval somewhere because you jump to the resurrection right then. Now, I don't know how much time we ought to take at looking at points in this that were not fulfilled in Antiochus. Let us look quickly at verses 36 to 39 where it speaks about his character. You notice in verse 36 it says, "He shall prosper till the indignations be accomplished." And Antiochus died while his persecution was still in progress. He did not prosper until it was accomplished. Verse 37, "Neither shall he regard the god of his fathers." Antiochus built great temples to the pagans gods and put up monuments to them here and there. Those that hold the critical view try to get around this by saying his ancestors worshipped Apollo and he worshipped Zeus but Apollo was the son of Zeus, so anyone who worshipped Apollo also worshipped Zeus. That is not a satisfactory interpretation.

“Neither shall he regard the god of his fathers.” That’s what suggests what Dr. Young referred to, that he is an apostate from Judaism or that he is someone with a Christian background who has turned away from it. But it certainly doesn’t fit anything in the life of Antiochus. Nor did the desire of woman. It is not quite clear what it means that: “He shall not regard the desire of woman.” Some have said that he destroyed a religious cult in Assyria which could be called “the desire of woman,” but there is no evidence of his ever doing such thing and it doesn’t fit with his general attitude towards paganism. “Nor regard any god, for he shall magnify himself above all.” He built a tremendous temple to Zeus in Athens in addition to the great temples he built in Palestine and Assyria. Verse 38, “In his estate shall he honor the god of forces.” And no one in ancient time could have even guessed what that would mean, “that he would honor the god of forces.” “But the god of forces he will honor.” What is that. “A god whom his fathers knew not shall he honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and pleasant things, and thus shall he do in the most secure strongholds with a strange god.” To people in ancient times this would make no sense whatever because all ancient rulers worshipped some god. But in our day it is quite common to find those who do not worship any god. In fact, a third of the world is held today by those who say there is no God, except the god of power. And they say that when--was it Winston Churchill who suggested to Stalin at a peace conference that they should have a representative of the Pope--and Stalin said, “How many divisions does the Pope control?” In other words, Stalin only considered how big an army you had, not any spiritual force. And that of course is the attitude of the communists. They have completely wiped out religion--at least outwardly--in China, no one is allowed to have any outward manifestation of any religion in China. And in Russia, while the church is not legally ruled out it is in actual practice tremendously persecuted. And a part of the belief of those who hold a third of the world, of those in power, and a belief of a great many leaders in other countries, is materialism, the god of forces, the god of fortresses. That is the god that they honor. So this is a very good description of how the character of the Antichrist will be very different from the character of Antiochus. We will not take time to go on further with these verses but we see there are specific things said in them

for which we find nothing comparable in the life of Antiochus Epiphanies. And so there seems to be a definite jump, an unmentioned interval, between verse 35 and 36. And here from verse 36 to 12:3 is a description of events that occur at the very end of the present age, just before the return of Christ. But we will continue there next time.

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