

Daniel #17

June 30, 2024

Series Title: Daniel's Visions Of the Ages

Today's Message: The Book of Truth: Chronicles of the Fore-ordained Future of Israel, pt 2; Daniel 11:21-45

(Reprint of opening paragraph from Part 1 of this message.) The book of Daniel has let us see an unfolding of a segment of world history. From the first great vision of Nebuchadnezzar when he saw the great golden idol statue in Daniel chapter two, to the future antichrist in Daniel 9. By now you probably have figured out that Daniel's vision of history is not literally encompassing the entire earth, but rather more focused on the eschatological future of Israel. It's like this: Daniel had visions of the future concerning Israel. And as we read it we can look back in the chronicles of history and see Daniel's visions coming to life, providing us with a renewed confidence that God is faithful to His promises concerning Israel, and therefore faithful to fulfill His eschatological promises to believers and the Church of our Lord Jesus!

After the message last week, I was asked a good question concerning what I think was the "The Book of Truth?" Was the angel expounding on the Scriptures? Or is *The Book of Truth* similar to the other special, heavenly books mentioned in the Bible such as, *The Books* (of works and judgment) and *The Book of Life* (Revelation 20:12), *The Book of the Living* (Psalm 69:27-28), and *The Book of Remembrance* of Malachi 3:16? It would seem to me that *The Book of Truth* fits in the category of one of the heavenly books. These books are most likely symbolic (because God knows everything because He has perfect knowledge) and are described as *books* so that we can comprehend at least to some degree, that God will accurately and justly judge every human being.

Consider these heavenly books and why they are described as such for us.

The Book of the Living, referenced by David in Psalm 69:27-28, is the record of all the living people on the planet at any given time. The book is updated continually. Probably there is not an actual book, but we are to learn from this that God does not miss even one person. Their life and existence is known by God.

The Book of Remembrance, from Malachi 3:16. This book assures us that God remembers the good deeds and those who perform them by faith. God remembers what good you do by faith and never forgets to remember! (See Daniel 7:10; Matthew 10:42; Hebrews 6:10)

The Books referenced in Revelation 20:12 is a record of the works of "the dead" who were standing before the Great White Throne Judgment. Here God recalls the works of those whose names are not written in the book of life. God is telling us that He doesn't forget the deeds of the dead. And they will suffer eternal judgment.

The Book of Life also referenced in Revelation 20:12 and elsewhere, includes those who will inherit eternal life whose faith was rooted in the works of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, Savior of His people!

The Book of Truth, which we are reading in Daniel 11-12, is that book of the Chronicles of the fore-ordained future of Israel. This book chronicles the acts and actions of empires, kings, generals, armies and people groups in relationship to Israel. *The book of Truth* concludes with the eschatological end of the age when God's Messiah will finally and utterly overthrow the powers opposed to His rule and reign and expel the evil and sin from the presence of His people consisting not only of *redeemed and believing Israel*, but also of the Gentiles, the Church! Glory to God!

Today we will continue in Daniel 11 by looking at two evil kings. The evil Antiochus IV, and the Antichrist.

- I) (11:21-35) The Fore-Ordained History of the evil ruler, Antiochus IV Epiphanes.
- A) Summary of the history of Antiochus IV Epiphanes, and his career involving Jerusalem.
- 1) Ruled from 175 -164 B.C.
 - 2) Self-proclaimed *Epiphanes*, which means “God manifest”.
 - (a) Yet his behavior was so bizarre that the Jewish people called him *Epimanes* (mad one).
 - 3) He expanded the Seleucid empire, rapidly swallowing up all of Israel.
 - (a) He became the first world ruler to force a conquered nation to change its culture and religious practices. Israel was severely pressured to adopt Hellenistic (Greek) culture and religion.
 - (i) No more keeping the Sabbath or food distinctions. Eventually, idols filled the temple. Namely, a statue of Zeus was installed on the Altar of Sacrifice, and sacrifices offered.
 - (ii) Severe punishment or death for any Jew who held to the Sabbath laws, etc.
 - (b) To enact his plan to Hellenize the Jews, he ousted the faithful High Priest named Onias, and replaced him with a corrupt successor named Jason. Jason was committed to Hellenization.
 - (i) Sometime later, when Jason fell out of favor with Antiochus IV, an even more corrupt Jewish leader out-bid his rivals and became the High Priest, further corrupting the priesthood and forsaking Jewish customs and religious practices.
 - (ii) Antiochus IV severely persecuted the faithful Jewish people,
 - (iii) And desecrated the temple by sacrificing pigs to Zeus.
 - (c) Around 167 the Maccabean Rebellion began.
 - (i) Judas Maccabaeus led a successful revolt to reclaim the temple. Antiochus was forced out and the temple was cleansed, and worship began again in 165 B.C. The Maccabees expanded the cleansing of Judea by killing the families of the corrupted Jews. Order was maintained by the Maccabees until about 160 B.C.
 - (a) A new sect called The Pharisees was formed in an effort to reform the Jews of Judea.
 - 4) Died 164 B.C.
- B) (11:21-35) The Acts of Antiochus IV Epiphanes. (I will refer to him as A-IV from here on out.)
- 1) (11:21) A-IV usurped the throne (175 B.C.)
 - (a) He did not have the right to the throne. Through intrigue and murder, he became king.
 - (i) Remember it is thought that the “tax collector” of 11:20 was in league with A-IV and poisoned the rightful king, Seleucus IV Philopater.
 - (ii) ***The Book of Truth calls him “a contemptable person.”**
 - 2) (11:22-24) Rise to power and introduction of Hellenistic ideology among the Jews
 - (a) A-IV defeats and diminishes the power and influence of Egypt under Ptolemy Philometor.
 - (b) “Prince of the covenant destroyed”: A-IV replaces faithful HP Onias with corrupt Jason.
 - (i) Hellenistic practices enforced: No more Sabbaths or Jewish practices. All-Greek.
 - (c) (11:23) rise to power. With Jason’s help A-IV gains influence over the people of Judea.
 - (i) Gains the favor of influential Jews through **deception**.
 - (d) (11:24) He shared the plunder of nations with those influential Jews he deceived.
 - 3) (11:25-28) Once again A-IV sets his sights on completely overtaking Egypt by taking Alexandria.
 - (a) But, some sort of alliance is formed by way of treaty.
 - (b) “At the table together”: hearts bent on evil; lie to each other.
 - (i) He and Ptolemy Philometor aligned against the rival Ptolemy Physoc.
 - (a) The alliance produced nothing leading to great frustration for A-IV.
 - (ii) A-IV receives great wealth from Alexandria
 - (c) But his goal of the conquest of Alexandria is muted.

- (i) He turned away from Egypt. On his way back through Judea he vented his wrath against the Jews creating havoc throughout all Judea. (the desecration doesn't happen yet.)
 - 4) (11:29-35) A-IV fades into history and God encourages the faithful.
 - (a) (11:29-30a) A-IV attempts to conquer Egypt but fails when Rome comes to the aid of Egypt.
 - (b) 11:30b-32a) In a rage A-IV leaves Egypt, having lost heart.
 - (i) But his rage is turned against Jerusalem and the people of the covenant.
 - (a) He shows favor to those Jews who sided with him, but fury to the faithful.
 - (ii) Using the full force of his army he desecrates the temple, offering pigs on the altar before Zeus. This is the **abomination that causes desolation**.
 - (iii) (11:32a) I get the feeling that even those who sided with A-IV to reject Jewish practices felt terribly guilty. But...
 - (a) "through flattery he will corrupt those who violated the covenant."
 - 1. He will pacify their guilty consciences. **How sad and tragic is it when the conscience is seared!**
 - a. **1 Tim. 4:2: speaks of searing the conscience by believing lies.**
 - (c) (11:32b-35) A faithful but suffering remnant
 - (i) Those who are faithful will:
 - (a) Resist evil,
 - (b) Be wise and instruct others to be faithful.
 - 1. Even though it will cost them their lives.
 - (c) May even stumble. But they will not be forsaken.
 - 1. God will see them through the **refining and purifying fires of failure!!**
 - (ii) I believe Hebrews 11:37-40 is speaking about these very souls!
 - (a) "They were put to death by stoning; they were sawn in two (Isaiah?); they were killed by 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 commended for their faith, yet none of them received what was promised, since God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect."
 - 1. **The Lord doesn't forget His faithful servants!**
- II) (11:36-45) **The Fore-Ordained Historical future of the most-evil ruler ever, Antichrist.**
 - A) There is great consensus among students of eschatology, both premillennialists, including "Futurists" (our eschatological position) as well as "A-millennialists" that this character in 11:36-45 is the future Antichrist described so well in Revelation.
 - B) Reasons for concluding that this is a future, ultimate Antichrist:
 - 1) The language describes a more immense personality than A-IV
 - (a) "He will magnify himself above every god and say unheard of things against the God of gods."
 - (b) "He will be successful until the time of wrath is completed"
 - (i) The Lord Jesus will end him in the day of His wrath (see Revelation 19:19-21)
 - (c) (11:37) There is a high probability that he will be Jewish (see KJV). A-IV was not.
 - (d) (11:40) He will be ruling "at the time of the end."
 - (e) (11:45) He will establish his throne in the temple in Jerusalem.
 - (i) 2 Thes. 2:4: "He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he." sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming Himself to be God."
 - (f) (11:45) He will come to his end with no one to help him. Jesus Christ will destroy him once for all! Again, see Revelation 19:19-21.