

DANIEL (DARE TO BE GOD'S MESSENGER)
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SERIES: Daniel (Dare To Be God's Messenger)

TITLE: Program 48 – People Who Know Their God!

WEDNESDAY

OPEN

One of our workers in South America told us what happened when a group of armed guerillas came into the church. They told everybody, I know that you think that you are Christians and you profess to be Christians, but if you are willing to walk away from your faith, you leave right now. The rest of you that will not deny Jesus Christ, you stay right here and we'll tell you what we're going to do with you. And what did they do? We'll talk about it today.

PART ONE

The people in that church sat there facing those guns knowing that their time had come. Some of them quietly got up, hanging their heads in shame, they slipped out of the church. He gave them one more chance. He says I'm going to give you another chance, to deny what you say that you believe and you can leave right now. You can get up and you can walk out of this

church. A few more slipped out. When all had walked away he turned around and he looked at those that were sitting there and he says you, we can trust. The rest have just been put to death because they were traitors, but because you were willing to die, we know that you can be trusted. And they lived. You know there's a verse in Daniel, chapter 11 and I absolutely love it. You won't find it in the NIV, but you will find it in the King James Version, you will find it in the New American Standard, you will find in every word for word translation. And this is what it says: But the people who know their God will stand firm and take action. They will be able to stand firm; they will be able to display strength. They will be able to move forward for God. Well this is what we see during the days of Antiochus Epiphanes, because that is the setting of this verse. Israel, remember was between the kings of the North and the kings of the South, between the Seleucids and the Ptolemy's. You're getting it, aren't you? That's good, I'm proud of you. And it was be, between them. And Antiochus Epiphanes wanted to come down and he wanted to rule over Egypt. As a matter of fact he came down and he conquered Egypt. He came down a second time thinking that when he got to Egypt, he would be crowned. But things turned out differently for him. And because when they turned out differently for him, then they turned out differently for Israel. Let's look at it. Let's go back now to Daniel, chapter 11 to this final vision and in verse 20, remember all the way through verse 35 we have a description of the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes. Now what has happened? A lot of years have passed from chapter 2, verse 3 all the way down through verse 19 and then all of a sudden things slowed down and you have all these verses devoted to the reign of this one man. Why? Because this one man is a description to us of the antichrist who is to come. They're both going to be despicable people. They're both going to have this tactical way of, of dealing with Israel. So watch what happens. This is a man who gets the throne by intrigue. We saw that. And it says in verse 25, it says; well let me go back to verse 24. In the

time of tranquility he will enter the richest parts of the realm, and he will accomplish, Antiochus Epiphanes, what his fathers never did, nor his ancestors. In other words his rule is going to be far greater and far more powerful than any of the other Seleucids. He will distribute plunder, booty, possessions among them, and he will devise his schemes against strongholds, but only for a time. Verse 25: He will do this, but only for a time. He will stir up his strength and courage against the king of the South. That's Egypt. With a large army; so the king of the South will mobilize an extremely large and mighty army for war; but he, the king of the South, will not stand, for schemes will be devised against him, against the king of the South. In other words, this king of the North was so full of intrigue and so despicable, is going to manipulate so that he overcomes the king of the South. Verse 26: And those who eat his choice food will destroy him. So what is God doing? God is giving you little details in history so that when it comes to pass you will go ahhh, and you will be awed with the accuracy of the Word of God, which you have studied, which you are learning. So he goes on to say and his army will overflow, but many will fall down slain. As for both kings their hearts will be intent on evil and they will speak lies to each other at the same table. I mean it sounds a little bit like some of our political gatherings at times. But it will not succeed. Now listen, it will not succeed, for the end is still to come at the appointed time. Now this is where you need to mark. Remember we've been marking the references to the end and it's talking about the end of the end, before the God of heaven sets up his kingdom. We've been marking it in red. Everything is not going to come to pass like they want it because the end is still to come at the appointed time. So you want to put a time phrase there. So what is God doing right now? And this is so important. He's telling you hey, this guy looks just like the little horn, so to speak of Daniel, chapter 7. He's the small horn of Daniel, chapter 8. And he looks like the little horn of Daniel, chapter 7, but he's not because this is not the end time. So he is a forerunner. He is a

picture, so to speak, he is a prototype of what is to come. Now, verse 28: Then he will return to his own land with much plunder; but his heart will be set against the holy covenant. The king of the North is going to come down to conquer Egypt. He comes down and he plunders them and he has a victory; he thinks he's king, he thinks he's ruling over Egypt. He goes back through the land of Israel and remember, I told you in the last program, he has an anti-Semitic heart; and so with that anti-Semitic heart it says his heart will be set against the holy covenant. His heart is against God. His heart is against those who worship God. His heart is against the law, the mosaic covenant. And he will take action and then return to his own land. At the appointed time he will return and come into the South, but this last time it will not turn out the way it did before. Now let's stop and let me just tell you what happened. In 170 B.C. he goes down, he plunders Egypt. He gets this booty. He has all of this. He thinks he's conquered Egypt. He's going home. He has to pass right through the land of Israel. So he's going through Israel; his heart is set against the holy covenant. And what you have is the greatest religious persecution of the Jews in their history. It's 170 B.C. and he tore down some of the walls of Jerusalem. He killed women and children were sold into slavery. He was monstrously cruel; all sorts of cruel acts were done. He was against the Jewish religion. He didn't want any copies of the Torah, any copies of the Holy Scriptures around. And so what he did was he had them take their scriptures and give them to him or he stole them and then what he had his people do was desecrate them. And they drew all these symbols on these holy, sacred parchments. They were desecrating those scriptures. And as they desecrated those scriptures he also, because he was against the holy covenant, the sign of the covenant was circumcision, so he forbade circumcision. And he said you are not allowed to circumcise your children. And not allowing them to circumcise their children, then if they didn't circumcise their children then their children would be outside of the covenant and they would not be considered God's children. So here they

either had to obey God and circumcise their children or they had to suffer the consequences that Antiochus Epiphanes set for any Jew that circumcised their baby boy. And you know what the consequence was? They would take that baby boy, they would see that circumcision and they would kill the baby and then they would take that dead baby, tie a rope around that dead baby's body and neck and then tie that dead baby, to the mother or the father, probably, the father of that Jewish baby. And he would walk around, with his dead son tied to his body. Do you see the conflict? Do you see the awfulness of this persecution? And what would they do? Would they obey God or would they obey Antiochus Epiphanes? Would they go against the holy covenant? Well there was a group of them that were not going to go against God. That was the group that knew their God, that stood firm and eventually we'll see, would take action. We're going to talk more about this and we're going to look at it in greater depth. It is absolutely fascinating. But I want you to hear this very important announcement. Before you do, however, I just want to challenge you. I want to challenge you beloved to keep on studying with us, to keep on growing so that you might know God, that you might stand firm, that you might take action.

PART TWO

Welcome back. You know what has happened to us as a culture, don't you. As a Christian culture, we, in a sense, have been Hellenized. In other words, we have not impacted the culture. Rather, the culture has impacted us. You can see it in the church. You can look at the youth of the church. You can look at their interests. You can listen to their language. You can observe the way they dress. And believe me, it is very hard to tell most of them from the rest of the world. They have been Hellenized. In the time of Antiochus Epiphanes he wanted these Jews, completely Hellenized. And when he sold the priesthood, then the priests got money and built a gymnasium not far from the temple. Now a gymnasium is a Greek invention. And when the men

went to the gymnasium they were stark naked. Now how could they tell if they were Jew or Gentile? By looking at those men, that one's circumcised, that's a Jew. So the Jews, were so, some of them were so Hellenized, they were so absorbed with the culture, they were so enamored that they forsook the holy covenant, and what they did was, they went to doctors and they had their circumcision reversed. They went against the holy covenant because they wanted to be part of the culture. Are you getting it? Stop and examine your life. Do you want to be part of the culture? Are you one who cannot be trusted with the scriptures and with the holiness that God calls you to and enables you to have because you're going to turn traitor, you're going to go out in order to save your neck? You want to save your neck, you want to have the business, you want to have the friends, you don't want to stand on the front lines. Now listen, you and I belong to the kingdom of God. He is the commander in chief. And we are to go to the front lines and when we go to the front lines we are not to go over to the side of the enemy. We are to stand firm. We are to put on the full armor of God and we are to fight, and we are to know that we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer because if I die, I'm absent from the body and I am present with the Lord. And I have not denied my God and I have been true to His holy covenant. Oh beloved, it is time for us to shape up. Well the lines were drawn during the days of Antiochus Epiphanes and so in the gyms, you could find the men that had their circumcision reversed. They were men that came over to the other side. Well, Antiochus Epiphanes has done all this damage and even more, he could be bought. I mean if you would turn in a rebellious Jew then you would get their property. Now, let's go on and see what happens. Remember he goes down and he conquers the king of the South. He goes back, he's despising the holy covenant. It is 170 B.C. He's up there in Syria and in 168 B.C. he goes down to get his crown. When he gets to Egypt, whoa, there are some Romans there and the Romans say, hey, go back home, boy, go back home. You are not going to take the

crown of Egypt, because if you do you're going to have to fight us. So what do you have? You have this rising Roman power. Okay, now let's look at it. It's so awesome. It says in verse 29 of Daniel 11: At the appointed time he will return to the South, but this last time it will not turn out the way it did before. He's not going to come home a victor. For ships of Kittim... Now we believe Kittim is, is Cypress and this is where the Roman ships were. For the ships of Kittim will come against him; therefore he will be disheartened and return. So he's going to go back home. Now tradition says that they drew a circle in the sand as Antiochus stood there. And they said, before they drew the circle, they said, if you come down here to take this crown you're going to fight us. So what are you going to do? And he says I'll let you know. They reach down; they put a circle in the dirt or the sand around him and said when you step out of that circle you're going to tell us what you're going to do. And so then he said okay, I'm going home. So he stepped out of the circle and he went home. Well now listen; he is mad. I mean have you ever seen a husband and he is furious about what happened in the office? He comes in; he's slamming the door. I mean he's banging things. He's barking at his wife. He's barking at his kids. It's that kind of a reaction. Okay, so it says he will be disheartened. He will return and become enraged at the holy covenant and take action. So he will come back and show regard for those who forsake the holy covenant and forces from him will arise. Now listen carefully. And desecrate the sanctuary fortress and do away with the regular sacrifice. That is from Daniel, chapter 8. In Daniel, chapter 8, in verse 23 it says in the latter period of their rule, of those four horns; it says when the transgressors have run their course; a king will arise insolent and skilled with intrigue. His power will be mighty, but not by his own power; he's energized by Satan. He will prosper and perform his will. He will destroy to an extraordinary degree. He will destroy mighty men and the holy people. And through his shrewdness he will cause deceit to succeed by his influence and he will magnify himself in his heart and he will destroy

many while they are at ease. And he will even oppose the Prince of princes and he will be broken without human agency. Here is a description of Antiochus Epiphanes. Now when you went back and if you would read it you would read verses 10 through 14 and you would see exactly what Daniel is saying of the desecration of the sanctuary and the sanctuary fortress. Well what did he do? He goes home and he is so angry that he goes into the temple and he desecrates the holy place and he sets up an abomination of desolation. He sets up a statue of Zeus in that holy place. He offers a pig on the altar. And he sends his men throughout the realm and when he sends his men throughout the realm he's saying you go in and you gather those Jews, you offer sacrifices to our gods on altars there and you make them participate in that. And if they don't you put them to death. Do you know what? The Greek rule of Israel was about to come to an end. And it was about to come to an end because there were people who knew their God, who were going to be strong, who were going to do great exploits. And those men stood against Antiochus Epiphanes. They stood against his armies because he then went home and didn't come back until the uprising became so great. But listen, three years after, three years after the pig was offered the statue of Zeus was set up, the Maccabian period, or the uprising, the independence of Israel came to the four and they reinstituted the sacrifices in the temple and they cleaned that desecrated temple and they burned the oil in the lamp stand and miraculously enough oil for only one day lasted eight days until the other could be sanctified. It is called the Feast of Hanukah. And it would be celebrated from that day on in remembrance of the people who knew their God and took action.