**DCF 190622 Dan 11: 20-35 WAR**

The church is under huge attack and DCF will not escape it. Satan wants it demolished, divided and powerless. God wants DCF to be a light on the hill for Him.

***Matt 24:7 7For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. 8All these are the beginning of sorrows.***

***9“Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name’s sake. 10And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. 11Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. 12And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. 13But he who endures to the end shall be saved. 14And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.***

***… Immediately AFTER the tribulation of those days, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; …. Then the sign of the Son of man will appear in heaven … And He will send His angels with a great sound of trumpet, and they will gather together His elect….***

These are the lessons God has been trying to teach me that I have tried to pass on to you:

Get ready. Build your walking, talking, listening, thanking, confessing, serving relationship with Jesus every hour of the day.

Surrender your plans and your wishes to God, so you pray “Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done.” Do this in the good times, because when things get really tough, it could be very tough. But be determined. There will be times when you feel God has discarded you.

Know God and be known by Him. Jer 9:23, 24 has come up so many times. Boast in the fact that you know the God of lovingkindness, judgement and righteousness. Let it come out of your mouth. Don’t stop it. Never be the person to whom Jesus says “I never knew you”. God encourages you to boast (NEB translation of Jer 9:23,24) that you know Him.

Have the guts to stand for His values. Political correctness is gutless. Remember the example of Jesus in Matt 23. Jesus speaks out to the general public against the hypocrisy of the leaders. Matt 23:1 ***Then Jesus spoke to the multitudes and to His disciples.*** Homosexuality, porn, abortion, blasphemy, entertainment, gambling, idolatry, feminism, and violence are all barriers satan has built to stop people coming to Jesus. Paul writes to the ordinary people in the Roman and Corinthian churches, blatantly listing sins. People can have 2 responses. They can repent and acknowledge their sin and receive salvation and the cleansing that comes from Jesus, or they can get angry and spend eternity in hell. Several prophets like Malachi, confront the people with their sins. ***Malachi 1: “Who is there even among you who would shut the doors, So that you would not kindle fire on My altar in vain? I have no pleasure in you,”
Says the Lord of hosts, “Nor will I accept an offering from your hands***.

The hatred and extreme cruelty of Antiochus Epiphanes (also known as Antiochus IV) for the people of God, is detailed for us here in Dan 11, in the writings of Historians like Josephus and Usher and also in the Apocrypha, as a precursor, to prepare us for the Antichrist who is to come. The war against the people of God is inevitable. ***2 Tim 3:12 12Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.***

***Dan 11:20“There shall arise in his place one who imposes taxes (Seleucus sought to increase revenue) on the glorious kingdom; but within a few days he shall be destroyed (Seleucus lll assassinated by his brother Antiochus lV, AE), but not in anger or in battle. 21And in his place shall arise a vile person (AE), to whom they will not give the honor of royalty (AE was strongly suspected of murdering his older brother, the previous king. The other potential heir, the son of Seleucus lll was imprisoned in Rome); but he shall come in peaceably, and seize the kingdom by intrigue (AE used flattery and promises). 22With the force of a flood they shall be swept away from before him and be broken, and also the prince of the covenant. (AE tried to pretend friendship but lost) 23And after the league is made with him, he shall act deceitfully, for he shall come up and become strong with a small number of people. 24He shall enter peaceably, even into the richest places of the province; and he shall do what his fathers have not done, nor his forefathers: he shall disperse among them the plunder, spoil, and riches; and he shall devise his plans against the strongholds, but only for a time.***

Antiochus imposes taxes to burden the captives. We can expect an attack on our finances. A cashless society is predicted in Rev 13:17 … **no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.**

Seleucus lll, the eldest son of Antiochus lll, decided to increase his wealth by taxes, and then to pillage the temple in Jerusalem. But his ambassador was given a vision by an angel. Then Seleucus lll was assassinated, probably by his brother Antiochus lV (AE). Antiochus lV did not use terror but smooth promises to gain his power. We have seen that in our own politics. Promises of wealth and prosperity are made to buy votes. He used the title Epiphanes meaning illustrious, but he had the reputation of a madman.

He pretended friendship, but was defeated in battle against Egypt who was aided by Rome. When the Antichrist comes, he is the first horseman, who pretends to bring peace. Political correctness is that false peace. It squashes the believer to become inactive for Christ, lest we offend the ‘nice and sensitive’ people in the world. From the very beginning of Christ’s ministry, when He overturns tables at the temple, Jesus stands against the PC brigade.

Intrigue and deceit are built into our politics. Promises are made and broken. Most of the promises appeal to the flesh in finances, safety and maintaining the comforts of life. But no promise is ever made to return our nation to God. When Moses addresses his people, his speech tells them they have a choice. ***Deut 30:19 19I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you, life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live; 20that you may love the Lord your God, that you may obey His voice, and that you may cling to Him, for He is your life and the length of your days; …***

Strength, numbers and power do not tell us that the leaders are good. Christians may well be outnumbered. We must help each other. We are family. Our loyalty is to the Kingdom of God.

***Dan 11:25 “He shall stir up his power and his courage against the king of the South with a great army. And the king of the South shall be stirred up to battle with a very great and mighty army; but he shall not stand, for they shall devise plans against him. (AE is defeated in his second campaign against Egypt, because Rome helps Egypt) 26Yes, those who eat of the portion of his delicacies shall destroy him (A IV is betrayed by his own counsellors); his army shall be swept away, and many shall fall down slain. 27Both these kings’ hearts shall be bent on evil, and they shall speak lies at the same table; but it shall not prosper, for the end will still be at the appointed time. 28While returning to his land with great riches, his heart shall be moved against the holy covenant; so he shall do damage and return to his own land. (AE returned from Egypt, bitter from defeat. He forced the Jews to conform to Greek culture)***

The Jews are warned to expect battles and not peace. They can expect betrayal from their own friends and family. But Satan will fight against himself – just as we saw the Muslims fighting against the Hindus. ***Matt 12:25 a house divided against itself will not stand.***

Humiliated by the defeat, Antiochus vented his anger against Jerusalem, and forced the Jews to conform to Greek culture. Culture worships the gods of the land. We have bowed to the spirits of the land and our government has almost totally ignored Jesus. We have smoking ceremonies that invite the spirits of the land. When you are at these events, bind every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus Christ as the Son of God. Use your authority as a child of God. The media and the government would rather acknowledge these spirits than any message from the Bible.

The replacement of worship with idolatry is clearly seen in our culture by having Easter bunnies and Santa to replace Jesus, on the two most sacred times of the year.

Dan 11:29 ***29“At the appointed time he shall return and go toward the south; but it shall not be like the former or the latter. 30For ships from Cyprus shall come against him (naval assistance from Rome); therefore he shall be grieved, and return in rage against the holy covenant, and do damage.***

***“So he shall return and show regard for those who forsake the holy covenant. 31And forces shall be mustered by him, and they shall defile the sanctuary fortress; then they shall take away the daily sacrifices, and place there the abomination of desolation. (AE set up an image of Zeus at the temple altar. He desecrated it, sacrificing a pig at the temple)32Those who do wickedly against the covenant he shall corrupt with flattery; but the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits. 33And those of the people who understand shall instruct many; yet for many days they shall fall by sword and flame, by captivity and plundering. (80,000 Jews were killed, 40,000 were prisoners, 40,000 sold as slaves) 34Now when they fall, they shall be aided with a little help; but many shall join with them by intrigue. 35And some of those of understanding shall fall, to refine them, purify them, and make them white, until the time of the end; because it is still for the appointed time. (God has a purpose for even these terrible times).***

We may wonder why this historical account is in the Bible. It is to prepare people like us, who have become complacent in a time of blessed peace, that troubles can be very close. When Jesus was carrying the cross, He was followed by weeping women. He warns them of terrible times to come. ***Matt 23:31*** ***For if they do these things in the green wood, what will be done in the dry?*** The question that Jesus asks the people as He heads for Calvary is for us too. What will we be like when things get really tough? In AD 70 Jerusalem was desecrated.

History is recorded to warn us that wars do come. My Dad lived through 2 world wars and was a POW 3 times. I have been so blessed to live 72 years in a time of peace. But unless I learn to grow in these times, how will I cope with the extremely hard times.

While the Seleucids respected Jewish culture, Antiochus lV completely reversed this. After his defeat in Egypt, he heard that Jason had gathered 1000 soldiers and regained control of Jerusalem from Menelaus, who was the high priest appointed by him. AE was furious and attacked Jerusalem and massacred young and old, women and children. He offered sacrifices of pigs in the temple and outlawed circumcision, punishable by death of the parents and babies. According to ll Maccabees 6:4 AE introduced sacred prostitutes into the temple. He issued decrees forbidding Jewish worship demanding that the Jews forsake the holy covenant. He killed devout Jews. Antiochus Epiphanes tore down the altar in the temple, set up an image of Zeus and stripped it of gold, valued to be the equivalent of $1 billion.

There are countries today where being a Christian is punishable by death. The demand of these satanic leaders is that the Bible is destroyed, churches are defiled, abominations are introduced, and violence is excused. We are given Dan 11 to see that these antichrists are here today. [***1 John 2:18***](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20John%202%3A18&version=NKJV) ***Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour.***

He is one of several precursors to the Antichrist. The final Antichrist is referred to as the Beast in Revelation. We will look at Him in the next sermon. But what do we learn from Dan 11 and the terrible man Antiochus IV?

We are reminded that the world is a mess. We have lived long enough to have experienced spiritual warfare. We have seen the lies and smooth talk, and forgotten promises of politicians. We have voted for the political party that promises the best financial outcome. We have seen the desecration of the church, even here in Darlington.

Paul tells us in Eph 6 that we must engage in warfare. ***10Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. 11Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. 13Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.***

Understand there are 4 targets in a fight. Warfare attacks the head, the heart, the arms and the vulnerable.

The head is the leader. In a family the husband / father is the head. His role is to decide, direct, provide and protect his family. Feminism has tried to weaken this role. Eph 5:25 teaches us that this leader must be prepared to die for his wife. ***25Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,*** … This is true leadership. John teaches us that the Good Shepherd is prepared to die for his sheep. ***John 10:11 The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.*** This life is psuchos = his soul. Every night, ask what you can do for Jesus tomorrow. The 4 nightly tasks: gratitude, humility, service and dependence are also the foundation of marriage.

The heart, is attacked by satan when we are seduced into idolatry, lust, jealousy, political correctness. After Balaam failed to curse the Israelites in Numbers 22 - 24 we read they still fell. ***Num 25:1 25 Now Israel remained in Acacia Grove, and the people began to commit harlotry with the women of Moab. 2They invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods. 3So Israel was joined to Baal of Peor, and the anger of the Lord was aroused against Israel.***

The arms are of course whatever is used in battle; hence the term firearms. We must nullify whatever the enemy is using to attack the kingdom of God. Don’t support companies that push agendas that God disagrees with. Pray for the collapse of powerful people and companies that oppose the church. In Psalm 109 David asks God to take vengeance on his enemies.

The last target is the vulnerable, often children or the weak. ***Deut 25:17 17“Remember what Amalek did to you on the way as you were coming out of Egypt, 18how he met you on the way and attacked your rear ranks, all the stragglers at your rear, when you were tired and weary.***

In your warfare cover the head, the heart, the arms and the vulnerable in prayer. In your attack – look for the head, the heart, the arms and the vulnerable to open doors for the gospel to be heard.

Final Song: Cornerstone (My hope is built on nothing less)

HW: Read 1 and 2 Maccabees. Even just the chapters 1 & 2 of 1 Maccabees will give you an idea of how horrendous this persecution was, and how courageous were the Jews. Some of the passages may not be suitable for young children.

[www.bu.edu/mzank/Jerusalem/tx/1macc.htm](http://www.bu.edu/mzank/Jerusalem/tx/1macc.htm)

An account by Josephus:

Antiochus IV (Epiphanes), the king of Syria, captured Jerusalem in 167 BC and desecrated the Temple by offering the sacrifice of a pig on an altar to Zeus (the Abomination of Desolation). In seeking to prohibit Judaism and Hellenize the Jews, Antiochus forbade their religious practices and commanded that copies of the Law be burned, all of which is related by Josephus in the *Antiquities of the Jews* (XII.5.4).

"…he [Antiochus] got possession of the city by treachery; at which time he spared not so much as those that admitted him into it, on account of the riches that lay in the temple; but, led by his covetous inclination, (for he saw there was in it a great deal of gold, and many ornaments that had been dedicated to it of very great value,) and in order to plunder its wealth, he ventured to break the league he had made. So, he left the temple bare, and took away the golden candlesticks, and the golden altar, and table, and the altar; and did not abstain from even the veils, which were made of fine linen and scarlet. He also emptied it of its secret treasures, and left nothing at all remaining; and by this means cast the Jews into great lamentation, for he forbade them to offer those daily sacrifices which they used to offer to God, according to the law. And when he had pillaged the whole city, some of the inhabitants he slew, and some he carried captive, together with their wives and children, so that the multitude of those captives that were taken alive amounted to about ten thousand. He also burnt down the finest buildings; and when he had overthrown the city walls, he built a citadel in the lower part of the city, for the place was high, and overlooked the temple; on which account he fortified it with high walls and towers, and put into it a garrison of Macedonians. However, in that citadel dwelt the impious and wicked part of the multitude, from whom it proved that the citizens suffered many and sore calamities. And when the king had built an idol altar upon God's altar, he slew swine upon it, and so offered a sacrifice neither according to the law, nor the Jewish religious worship in that country. He also compelled them to forsake the worship which they paid their own God, and to adore those whom he took to be gods; and made them build temples, and raise idol altars in every city and village, and offer swine upon them every day. He also commanded them not to circumcise their sons, and threatened to punish any that should be found to have transgressed his injunction. He also appointed overseers, who should compel them to do what he commanded. And indeed, many Jews there were who complied with the king's commands, either voluntarily, or out of fear of the penalty that was denounced. But the best men, and those of the noblest souls, did not regard him, but did pay a greater respect to the customs of their country than concern as to the punishment which he threatened to the disobedient; on which account they every day underwent great miseries and bitter torments; for they were whipped with rods, and their bodies were torn to pieces, and were crucified, while they were still alive, and breathed. They also strangled those women and their sons whom they had circumcised, as the king had appointed, hanging their sons about their necks as they were upon the crosses. And if there were any sacred book of the law found, it was destroyed, and those with whom they were found miserably perished also."

Such desecration and persecution prompted the identification of Antiochus as a prototype of the Antichrist. And what is the physical description of this figure?

"Woe to the idol shepherd that leaveth the flock! the sword shall be upon his arm, and upon his right eye: his arm shall be clean dried up, and his right eye shall be utterly darkened."

Zechariah 11:17

For those reading Ezekiel 38 these are modern names for countries.

**Cush** = North Sudan and Egypt

**Gomer** = Ukraine

**Magog** = Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Armenia, and Azerbaijan

**Persia** = Iran

**Put** = Libya

**Rosh** = Russia

**Togarmah and Tubal** = Turkey and Syria