

## **Daniel 11:32-45 – Hold Your Ground**

Brothers and Sisters the Lord: Some American university professors – so-called Christians- who ignored the evidence and said good things about Islam and the Koran were consequently taken on lavish 丰盛 tours of Muslim countries and treated as royalty. Sadly, some people were deceived by these so-called Christians and followed Islam. There is another way Islam deals with Christians when compromising 妥协 doesn't work: Destruction. Christians face mass hangings in places like Iran...or beheadings 斩首 in Saudi Arabia...or imprisonment with trumped up charges in Pakistan. But the Bible teaches that though deceivers and destroyers might get what they want for a time – they will get what they deserve from God at his time.

Antiochus Epiphanes too was a deceiver, and when that didn't work, became a destroyer of the Jews. You will hear from God what the Jews should have persevered in righteousness during persecution and wait for Messiah for deliverance.

Our headings are: Hold your Ground Against Deceitful Arguments, and Hold your Ground against Destructive Acts.

Our goals are: That you will be warned not to compromise with the wicked inside and outside the church, but remain faithful to your Savior and be patient in dark times.

### **Hold your Ground Against Deceitful Arguments**

32 "Those who do wickedly against the covenant he shall corrupt with flattery 奉承的话 but the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits. 33 "And those of the people who understand shall instruct many; yet for many days they shall fall by sword and flame, by captivity and plundering.

#### **1. Many of the Jews fell for Antiochus' flattery and deception and they then attempted to deceive their fellow Jews.**

Antiochus promised compromising Jews great positions to betray their own people. Those who were deceived were only Abraham's biological children. They lacked faith in God and in his promises and they put their faith in Antiochus instead.

**2. But the godly did not fall for the lies. They fought against Antiochus and faithfully taught the truth.** They knew that Jehovah was strong and refused to trust in Antiochus' horses. So God kept them. (Isn't it amazing how God maintains a witness always even in darkest times?) It is a reason you should never feel helpless though the North America church is in decline. These godly witnesses – who did not bow the knee to Antiochus- remembered God's law and promises. They called the straying Jews to return and be faithful to God. They did this even as they were being killed by Antiochus. Josephus wrote: "...that many of the Jews indeed, some willingly, and others through fear of punishment, obeyed the king's commands; but the more approved, and those of generous minds, had a greater regard to the customs of their country than to the punishment threatened to the disobedient; and for this being continually harassed 骚扰 and enduring grievous punishments, died; some were scourged 鞭打, and their bodies mutilated 肢解 and being yet alive and breathing, were crucified; women and their children, whom they crucified, were by the king's orders strangled, and hanged about the necks of their parents that were crucified;" The godly knew that there is always a cosmic war for theirs and their children's minds. Brothers and Sisters: Don't stand by and watch the weak become prey to false doctrine and don't let the church become overrun by lies. Learn God's promises and law and speak up. Speak to the deceived Christians as well. Speak to those who have abandoned the covenant and made their relationship with God mostly an individualistic 个别性的 one.

34 "Now when they fall, they shall be aided with a little help; but many shall join with them by intrigue 诡计

**3. The godly Jews did get a little help – as God said.** Mattathias, a priest of Modin, and his five sons, commonly called the Maccabees, helped– often by organizing attacks on Antiochus Epiphanes. On the other hand, some joined the Maccabees just to see what was they were doing and report back to Antiochus. (They joined by intrigue.) We have an account of one such person in 2Ma 13:21: "But Rhodocus, who was in the Jews' host, disclosed the secrets to the enemies; therefore he was sought out, and when they had gotten him, they put him in prison."

35 "And some of those of understanding shall fall, to refine 锻炼 them, purify them, and make them white, until the time of the end; because it is still for the appointed time.

**4. So the godly Jews fell into severe tribulations.** But as God often does, he did this to purify their souls. He wanted to prove the godly were not chaff 糠 and that they were strong in their faith – like Job was tested and tried. But Antiochus' time was coming. God sets times even for the wicked's destruction. The godly know that God misses nothing!

Daniel 4:31 While the word was still in the king's mouth, a voice fell from heaven: "King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken: the kingdom has departed from you! 32 And they shall drive

you from men, and your dwelling *shall be* with the beasts of the field. They shall make you eat grass like oxen; and seven times shall pass over you, until you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses." 33 That very hour the word was fulfilled concerning Nebuchadnezzar; he was driven from men and ate grass like oxen; his body was wet with the dew of heaven till his hair had grown like eagles' *feathers* and his nails like birds' *claws*.

36 "Then the king shall **do according to his own will**: he shall **exalt and magnify himself** above every god, shall **speak blasphemies against the God of gods**, and shall prosper till the wrath has been accomplished; for **what has been determined shall be done**. 37 "He shall regard neither the God of his fathers nor the **desire of women**, nor regard any god; for he shall exalt himself above them all.

**5. The godly had their consciences attacked by Antiochus- a proud man , insolent 粗野, profane 粗俗 and puffed up with his conquests.** He even named himself Epiphanes – the Illustrious One. He had no regard or respect for anyone but himself. He couldn't care less about women. (Or it could mean that he had no regard for Tammuz-Adonis – "the desire of women" – a Syrian goddess. **He spoke evil of God** - blasphemies 褻瀆. **But he was fooled by the fact that God did not immediately destroy him.** He saw his prosperity and thought that meant that God approved. How deceived he was. **God's time of accountability was coming like a freight train. The light of the coming Savior could never be snuffed out.**

38 "But in their place he shall **honor a god of fortresses 堡壘** and a god which his fathers did not know he shall honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and pleasant things.

**6. Antiochus followed a god of fortresses – Jupiter Olympius...** and worshipped him with much cost and effort. He set up his god in the Holy Temple of Jehovah in Jerusalem.

### **Hold Your Ground Against Destructive Acts**

39 "Thus he shall **act against the strongest fortresses with a foreign god**, which he shall acknowledge, and advance its glory; and **he shall cause them to rule over many**, and divide the land for gain.

**1. Consider some of Antiochus' dastardly 卑鄙 deeds—his inconceivable destructive deeds on God's people and their worship.**

a. **Antiochus demanded that all Jews join his religion.** One man who refused, old Eleazar, one of the main scribes had pig's meat thrust into his mouth... 2Ma 6:19 *But he, choosing rather to die gloriously, than to live stained with such an abomination, spit it forth, and came of his own accord to the torment,*

b. **Antiochus hideously murdered a lady and her 7 sons.** 2Ma 7:1 *"It came to pass also, that seven brethren with their mother were taken, and compelled by the king against the law to taste swine's flesh, and were tormented with scourges and whips. 2 But one of them that spake first said thus, What wouldest thou ask or learn of us? we are ready to die, rather than to transgress the laws of our fathers. 3 Then the king, being in a rage 愤怒, commanded pans and caldrons to be made hot: 4 Which forthwith being heated, he commanded to cut out the tongue of him that spake first, and to cut off the utmost parts of his body, the rest of his brethren and his mother looking on. 5 Now when he was thus maimed in all his members, he commanded him being yet alive to be brought to the fire, and to be fried in the pan: and as the vapour of the pan was for a good space dispersed, they exhorted one another with the mother to die manfully, saying thus."* Maybe this was what the writer of Hebrews was thinking when he wrote:

**Hebrews 11:34** quenched 消灭 the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant 大能 in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. 35 Women received their dead raised to life again. And others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. 36 Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. 37 They were stoned, they were sawn in two 被鋸死, were tempted, were slain with the sword....

c. **Antiochus introduced customs of the heathen** in the temple of God and demanded God's people follow them.

d. **Antiochus put women to death for having their children circumcised,** and he **hanged infants** by their necks.

e. **Antiochus stopped true worship in the temple.** 1Ma 1:45 *And forbid burnt offerings, and sacrifice, and drink offerings, in the temple; and that they should profane the sabbaths and festival days:*

g. **Antiochus burned people in caves** where they ran to hide...or where they ran to keep the Sabbath.

h. **Antiochus sent thousands of women and children into captivity.**

i. **Antiochus plundered 掠夺 the Jews.**

**2. Why did God permit these terrible things to happen, especially to the godly?**

a. **No godly man is pure,** so he is not free of guilt and deserves punishment.

b. **Trials purify.** The one who suffers learns to trust God more.

**1Peter 1:7** that the genuineness of your faith, *being* much more precious than gold that perishes,

- though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,
- c. Death is the golden gateway to glory. In proper sense, therefore, death is not punishment.
  - d. God always provides a way of escape when you are tried.

1Corinthians 10:13...God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.

40 "At the time of the end the **king of the South shall attack him**; and the **king of the North shall come against him like a whirlwind**, with chariots, horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter the countries, **overwhelm them**, and pass through.

3. The king of Egypt who, was helped by Romans, tried to attack Antiochus and take some of his territory. But Antiochus attacked back with force, swiftness and fury, with chariots, horses, and many ships in this is final attacks.

41 "He shall also **enter the Glorious Land**, and many countries shall be overthrown; but these shall escape from his hand: **Edom, Moab, and the prominent people of Ammon.**

4. Antiochus Epiphanes made a big mistake – a terrible mistake. He entered into the Holy Land in 168BC – verifiably true. He messed with the true God who loved his people...and threatened God’s promise of a coming Savior. Tyrants only last as long as they serve God’s purpose. Strangely, God allowed nations like Edom, Moab, and Ammon to enjoy rest but the land of the Prince of Peace faced war. (Ammon & Moab from Lot, Edom from Esau – covenant children.) God was saving these people for the Gospel times. He did not allow them to be destroyed.

42 "He shall stretch out his hand against the countries, and the **land of Egypt shall not escape.**

43 "He shall have power over the **treasures of gold and silver**, and over all the precious things of Egypt; also the Libyans and Ethiopians shall follow at his heels.

5. Antiochus then attacked Egypt with force and totally plundered it. He attacked and conquered Libya and Ethiopia. He started speaking arrogantly like Sennacherib and Alexander. He loved wealth and seemed unstoppable...

44 "But news from the east and the north shall trouble him; therefore he shall go out with great fury to destroy and annihilate many.

6. How did God destroy him? It started with a message...a message of another work that God was doing. **Antiochus had uncountable wealth, but God had an unstoppable will.** Antiochus’ money could not protect him. He became so angry at the message that he left in a rage, hoping to wipe out one nation in particular- from the face of the earth. He heard of Judas Maccabaeus and his war against his soldiers in Judah, and he gave the order to Lysias to destroy Jerusalem. Guess who won? Judah was his downfall. Verifiably true. Or Judah’s God was this downfall. He had his foot upon the neck of Egypt, Libya, and Ethiopia, but God said: “Thus far you shall go and not more.”

45 "And he shall plant the tents of his palace between the seas and the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and no one will help him.

7. He then set up his house - planted his palace between the seas, between the Great Sea and the Dead Sea, but he died a lonely man...stinking臭...repugnant令人反感...of an intestinal type of disease. He was so proud that he thought himself above the condition of a mortal man. *2Ma 9:8 And thus he that a little afore thought he might command the waves of the sea, (so proud was he beyond the condition of man) and weigh the high mountains in a balance, was now cast on the ground, and carried in an horselitter, shewing forth unto all the manifest power of God. 2Ma 9:10 And the man, that thought a little afore he could reach to the stars of heaven, no man could endure to carry for his intolerable stink.*

## **Conclusion:**

Some Jews were deceived by Antiochus and they pressure their fellow Jews to compromise, as well. When the godly Jews would not compromise, the wicked betrayed their fellow Jews. They did this because their hearts were not circumcised-they lacked faith. Then many Jews were destroyed by Antiochus. He sold them as slaves, fried them, murdered them, and enslaved them. This was all part of God’s plan. God punished the wicked, and purified the godly, **teaching them to hold their ground.**

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

1. **You have no reason to fear deceivers or destroyers.** The Lord is always with you and he will destroy both of them all at his appointed time. So hold your ground.
2. **Fear God instead.** How? Keep your eyes on Jesus. Spend time in his Word. Pray. Worship him. Obey his law. Don’t be afraid to pour out your sins to him in prayer. This will keep you grounded.
3. **Capture the world for him** by getting the Word of God out into the hearts of true infidels – the ones outside of God’s care.

Finally, you cannot fear God unless your heart has been changed. Your heart can only be changed by receiving by faith the work of Jesus Christ...his work of living of you, his work of dying for you, and his work of rising from the dead for you.