

DANIEL

Lesson 19: Daniel 11:21-35
Despicable, Part I

HOW PROPHECY WORKS

- One week from Friday, we will remember what happened in the final hours before Jesus died on the cross.
- Here is one moment from that “day.” (A Jewish day begins with darkness that turns to daylight, i.e., 6PM to 6 AM)

Matthew 26:30-35 – *After singing a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. Then Jesus said to them, “You will all fall away because of Me this night, for it is written, ‘I will strike down the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered.’ But after I have been raised, I will go ahead of you to Galilee.” But Peter said to Him, “Even though all may fall away because of You, I will never fall away.”*

Jesus said to him, “Truly I say to you that this very night, before a rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.” Peter said to Him, “Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You.” All the disciples said the same thing too.

- Here on the Mount of Olives before a time of intense prayer, Jesus makes four clear predictions:

FOUR PREDICTIONS

1. You will all fall away before daylight!
2. Zechariah 13:7 will be fulfilled, i.e., the shepherd will be struck and the sheep scattered.
3. I will be resurrected.
4. I will go to Galilee in order to meet you.

FOUR PREDICTIONS

- Peter felt that Jesus had **mis**-predicted something and raised an objection to prediction #1.
- He declared, “I will never fall away.”
- So Jesus issued a fifth prophecy that includes an audio “time-stamp.” Before a rooster crows, Peter will deny Jesus three times.

FOUR PREDICTIONS

- The Lord’s ability to see the future with perfect 20-20 foresight includes the ability to see what effect these future events will have.
- Jesus looked into Peter’s heart and accurately discerned his vulnerability to a coming test.
- Here is what happened 6-8 hours later:

Matthew 26:74-75 – Then he began to curse and swear, “I do not know the man!” And immediately a rooster crowed. And Peter remembered the word which Jesus had said, “Before a rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.” And he went out and wept bitterly.

- Here is a passage that adds one detail:
Luke 22:61 – ***The Lord turned and looked at Peter.*** *And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had told him, “Before a rooster crows today, you will deny Me three times.”*
- Exactly as predicted, Peter discovered in himself what only Jesus previously saw.

- In that moment of sad self-revelation, Jesus locked eyes with him.
- I cannot imagine what that was like. But I fully understand what happened next – Peter left and wept bitterly.
- Jesus gave Peter a clear glimpse of the near future **and** predicted how Peter would respond to that future.

- In doing so, Jesus demonstrated that He knows Peter better than Peter knows Peter.
- (Jesus knows you better than you know you.) He knows what is coming AND He knows how we will react to what’s coming.
- But there is one more insight about Jesus and prophecy that we need to grasp from this incident – Here is Luke’s account.

Luke 22:31-34 – *“Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded permission to sift you like wheat; but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.” But he said to Him, “Lord, with You I am ready to go both to prison and to death!” And He said, “I say to you, Peter, the rooster will not crow today until you have denied three times that you know Me.”*

- Here are two mind-boggling revelations.
- **(1)** While it is true that Jesus sees what Peter does not see about himself, **Jesus also sees the hand of the enemy, Satan.**
- Satan has a plan that he is working. He intends to move the pieces in such a way that Peter (and the other disciples) are “sifted like wheat.”

- This is a figure of speech for being shaken up.
- Bottom line: There is more going on here. Your true adversary is attempting lay a trap and rattle your faith.
- What you will face is not a random sequence of events, but a well-conceived plan hatched by your true adversary.

- **But here is hope!**
- **(2)** Jesus is praying for Peter.
- He sees what is coming, He sees how Peter will respond, and He sees how Satan is seeking to work Peter’s and the apostles’ harm.
- **But He is also praying accordingly!**

- His prayer objectives for Peter (switch to singular):
- (1) Faith may not fail;
- (2) Turn again;
- (3) Strengthen your brothers.
- In other words, I am praying so that (*hina*) Satan’s scheme will not be effective.

- Yes, you will fall, but your faith won't fail.
- Yes, you will run, but you will turn again.
- Yes, you will abandon your brothers, but you will become a source of strength for them.
- This will all happen, despite Satan's plan because **I am praying for you.**
- **Wow!** Wouldn't it be great to have Jesus praying for you like that!

- **Incredibly good news! He is!**
- Jesus knows **your** future and knows how **you** will be tested in what is coming tomorrow, and the day after that, and the day after that!
- And He is even now interceding for you at the right hand of God in the knowledge of what is yet in your future!

- Romans 8:34 – *Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, **who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.***
- Hebrews 7:25 – *Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since **He always lives to make intercession for them.***
- Jesus is praying for you right now in light of what He sees coming!

WHAT JESUS' PROPHECY DID

- The Lord perfectly predicted 5 future events. But His prophecy revealed more than that:
 1. Reveals **trials** that are coming.
 2. Reveals trials that may **reveal things about ourselves** that we didn't know about ourselves.

WHAT JESUS' PROPHECY DID

3. Reveals trials that may be Satan's attempt to shake us up.
4. Reveals trials that threaten our faith.*
5. Reveals trials that might keep us from moving in the right direction.*
6. Reveals trials that could push us into isolation from those who need us.*

CONNECTION TO DANIEL 11:21-35

- So how does this relate to Daniel 11:21-35?
- Last week, we looked at "Section I" (vss. 1-21).
- This is the section that shouts "trust the coach."
- This week (and next), we will look at 11:21-35 which is about a profound faith test that Israel will (did) face – another shake up.

- Amos 9:9 – *"For behold, I am commanding, and I will shake the house of Israel among all nations as grain is shaken in a sieve, but not a kernel will fall to the ground."*
- Amos describes what happened to Israel at the hands of Assyria, Judah at the hands of Babylon, and all Israel among the nations since then. They will face a shake-up.

- Last week, it was all about history. We read Scripture and compared it to historical events.
- And we found 60 intersections where the verses predicted exactly what happened.
- But there were no corresponding application points. Nowhere did it give us any substantive insight into how to well respond to those events.

- Section I (Dan 11:1-21) is a verification code.
- The Lord (through His angel, through Daniel) provided a very precise checklist of verifiable future events.
- The conclusion is: When God tells us what is going to happen, He knows what He is talking about. Perfectly! So trust Him! Absolutely!

- Here in Daniel 11:21-35, God provides another precise checklist of 30+ future events that pertain to the eleven year rule of a single leader named Antiochus Epiphanes.
- But in addition to providing the checklist of future events, this passage adds a second layer of content.
- It tells us **how** Antiochus does what is predicted.

- What strategies will he use? How will some people do well? How will some people do poorly?
- Think of this like you are watching a series of football replay highlights. The commentator circles a player for us to watch, tells us, "Here is where he did right or wrong." And then rolls the tape and we watch what happens as a result.

- So if you are a player, you can watch the replay and learn how to do better.
- This is precisely the Lord's intent with Daniel 11:21-35.
- Watch and learn. A despicable leader is going to employ certain strategies to trip up God's people. Here is how some will blow it. Here is how some will get it right!

From Daniel 11:21-35, Israel could take maximum advantage of what the Lord wants to tell us about the future:

1. Anticipate trials that He says are coming.
2. Expect these trials to reveal things about us that we didn't know.
3. Discern how our adversary wants to employ trials to shake-up our faith.

4. With God's help, develop a faith that doesn't fail.
5. With God's help, keep moving in the right direction.
6. With God's help, energize those around us to do likewise.
 - This is what prophecy does, this is what Daniel 11:21-35 does.

ANTIOCHUS EPIPHANES' 11 YEARS

- The Rise of Antiochus Epiphanes (21-24) – a despicable schemer from the start.
- Antiochus's First Campaign (25-28) – against Egypt, secures Palestine. (Land of Israel)
- Antiochus's Second Campaign (29-30) – no joy
- Antiochus's Rage Against Israel (31-35) – introducing a new religion / death to the old

APPLICATION

- In this account are numerous references to “best practices” and “bad decisions” in dealing with an Antiochus. (in 3 weeks)
- Someone could read this account and say, “Yes, I want to understand how God's people got it right and how they blew it, just in case I ever have to deal with something like that. . .”

APPLICATION

- Sure, let's watch the highlights reel and see where they could have done better.
- According to Jesus, the Antiochus Epiphanes challenge **was not a one-off**.
- In Daniel 11:31, we read: *And they will set up the abomination of desolation.*

APPLICATION

- Matthew 24:15–16 – *“Therefore when you see the abomination of desolation which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains.”*
- **Jesus, the perfect prophet, is predicting that another round is coming!**

APPLICATION

- So let's glean all we can from the highlight reel because Antiochus Epiphanes is a fore-runner of someone else yet future.
- Let's examine every detail of how some in Israel got it right and how others blew it, knowing that we need to be ready should it be our turn.

APPLICATION

- In Peter's case, Jesus provided advance information that included three core objectives.
 1. Don't stop believing in me.
 2. Run toward me, not away.
 3. Help your faith-partners grow in Him.
- Peter did these 3 and prevailed in Round II

John 21:18–19 – *“Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were younger, you used to gird yourself and walk wherever you wished; but when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands and someone else will gird you, and bring you where you do not wish to go.”* Now this He said, signifying by what kind of death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, *“Follow Me!”*

APPLICATION

- Jesus, along with Daniel, has revealed everything you need to know, in advance.
- He is praying for you even now in light of what He knows you will face tomorrow.
- Trust Him, depend on Him, and master what His Word says we need to know about what is coming and how to prevail. (3 weeks!)