

Daniel 11:33

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they that understand among the people shall instruct many: yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days.

Analysis

The 'wise' (מַסְכִּילִים/maskilim)—faithful Jewish teachers—instructed many during persecution, though some fell by sword, flame, captivity, and spoil. First and Second Maccabees record these martyrdoms. Their faithful teaching preserved Judaism through crisis. This pattern repeats: faithful teachers sustain God's people through persecution.

Historical Context

Daniel chapter 11 contains some of Scripture's most detailed predictive prophecy, written c. 536 BC and fulfilled with remarkable precision 200-160 BC during Ptolemaic-Seleucid conflicts. The prophecies served multiple purposes: encouraging Jewish exiles that God controls history, providing roadmap for future generations facing Hellenistic pressures, and typologically pointing to end-times Antichrist. Reformed theology sees dual fulfillment: near historical events (Antiochus Epiphanes) typifying far eschatological realities (final Antichrist). This pattern validates divine inspiration—only God knows future details with such precision. For believers under persecution, these prophecies demonstrated that tyrannical opposition is temporary, God's sovereignty absolute, and ultimate victory certain. The historical fulfillment encourages trust that eschatological promises will similarly fulfill exactly as prophesied.

Related Passages

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does the remarkable precision of fulfilled prophecy strengthen faith in Scripture's divine origin?
2. What does the dual fulfillment pattern (historical Antiochus typifying eschatological Antichrist) teach about biblical prophecy's layered meaning?
3. How should these prophecies encourage believers facing persecution or opposition today?

Interlinear Text

וַיִּמְשְׁכוּ יְלֵי	עַם	יָבִי יִנּוּ	לְרַבִּי יִם		
And they that understand	among the people	shall instruct	many		
H7919	H5971	H995	H7227		
וְיִנְכָּשׁוּ וְ	בְּחֶרֶב	וּבְלֶהָבָה	בְּשִׁבְיָה	וּבְבִזָּה	יָמִים:
yet they shall fall	by the sword	and by flame	by captivity	and by spoil	many days
H3782	H2719	H3852	H7628	H961	H3117

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 24:9 (Parallel theme): Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.

John 16:2 (Parallel theme): They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.

Malachi 2:7 (Word): For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts.

Revelation 17:6 (Parallel theme): And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.

Hebrews 11:34 (Word): Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

Daniel 12:10 (Parallel theme): Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand.