

Daniel 8:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And it waxed great, even to the host of heaven; and it cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground, and stamped upon them.

Analysis

The little horn's expansion "waxed great, even to the host of heaven" describes his audacious attack on spiritual realities. The "host of heaven" can refer to God's people (stars symbolizing Abraham's seed, Genesis 15:5) or celestial beings. Antiochus persecuted the priesthood ("cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground") and "stamped upon them," meaning executing and torturing faithful Jews, including priests and religious leaders.

This spiritual dimension of Antiochus's war wasn't merely political but attacked covenant faith itself. He sought to eradicate Judaism, replace Yahweh worship with Greek paganism, and destroy the distinct identity of God's people. The violence against God's "host" parallels Satan's war against the church throughout history—physical persecution serves spiritual rebellion against divine authority.

Theologically, this reveals that earthly persecution always has spiritual dimensions. Human tyrants serve satanic agenda, consciously or not, when attacking God's people. Yet God limits such attacks—Antiochus's reign ended in judgment, the temple was cleansed, and faith survived. This points to Christ, who endured Satan's ultimate attack but rose victorious, guaranteeing His people's eternal security despite temporal persecution.

Historical Context

Antiochus's persecution specifically targeted religious leaders. According to 1 Maccabees, he executed priests who refused to violate Torah, martyred faithful mothers and their children, and destroyed Scripture copies. Elderly scribe Eleazar and mother of seven sons became martyrdom examples. The high priesthood was corrupted—Antiochus sold the office to the highest bidder, Jason, then Menelaus, who weren't legitimate Aaronic descendants. This assault on spiritual leadership nearly destroyed covenant faith.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does Antiochus's attack on religious leaders warn us that Satan particularly targets spiritual shepherds and teachers?
2. What does faithful Jews' martyrdom under Antiochus teach us about remaining faithful when persecution specifically targets religious conviction?
3. In what ways does Christ's resurrection guarantee believers' ultimate victory despite severe temporal persecution?

Interlinear Text

וַתִּגְדַּל לַ	עַד	הַצֶּבֶא א	הַשָּׁמַיִם	וַתִּפֹּל לַ	
And it waxed great	H5704	even to the host	of heaven	and it cast down	
H1431		H6635	H8064	H5307	
אֶרֶץ הָאָרֶץ	מִן	הַצֶּבֶא א	וּמִן	הַכּוֹכָבִים ים	וַתְּחַמֵּסֵם:
to the ground	H4480	even to the host	H4480	and of the stars	and stamped
H776		H6635		H3556	H7429

Additional Cross-References

Revelation 12:4 (Parallel theme): And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.

Isaiah 14:13 (Parallel theme): For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north:

Daniel 8:7 (Parallel theme): And I saw him come close unto the ram, and he was moved with choler against him, and smote the ram, and brake his two horns: and there was no power in the ram to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground, and stamped upon him: and there was none that could deliver the ram out of his hand.

Daniel 7:7 (Parallel theme): After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns.

Daniel 11:28 (Parallel theme): Then shall he return into his land with great riches; and his heart shall be against the holy covenant; and he shall do exploits, and return to his own land.