

Daniel 8:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And an host was given him against the daily sacrifice by reason of transgression, and it cast down the truth to the ground; and it practised, and prospered.

Analysis

The phrase "an host was given him against the daily sacrifice by reason of transgression" reveals theological complexity. The Hebrew suggests God sovereignly permitted this assault due to Israel's sin. "Transgression" (Hebrew: pesha, פֵשָׁת) means rebellion or covenant violation. Antiochus's persecution wasn't merely political accident but divine judgment on Jewish apostasy—many had embraced Hellenization, compromised covenant faith, and welcomed Greek culture.

"He cast down the truth to the ground, and it practised, and prospered" describes the apparent success of Antiochus's war on revealed truth. "Truth" (Hebrew: emet, אֶמֶת) encompasses God's Torah, covenant stipulations, and worship requirements. Antiochus seemed to succeed in eradicating biblical faith—Torah scrolls were burned, circumcision forbidden, Sabbath outlawed. "It practised, and prospered" suggests apparent vindication of his policy; resistance was crushed and many apostatized.

Yet this apparent triumph was temporary. God permitted this testing to purify His people, distinguish faithful remnant from compromisers, and demonstrate that His truth endures despite violent opposition. The Maccabean revolt proved that God's truth, though cast down, rises again. This points to Christ, whose truth was attacked at the cross but vindicated in resurrection, proving that God's word stands forever despite all opposition.

Historical Context

Many Jews had already Hellenized before Antiochus's persecution. Jason the high priest built a gymnasium in Jerusalem (2 Maccabees 4:12-15) where Jewish youth adopted Greek customs, some even reversing circumcision. This compromise invited divine judgment through Antiochus. Yet faithful remnant—the Hasidim (pious ones)—refused compromise, leading to Maccabean revolt. Their faithfulness preserved Judaism, enabling God's future covenant fulfillment in Christ. God uses persecution to distinguish genuine from false faith.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. What does Israel's prior apostasy inviting judgment teach us about how compromise weakens resistance to open persecution?
2. How does truth's temporary casting down but ultimate vindication encourage faithfulness when biblical values seem defeated culturally?
3. In what ways does Christ's resurrection prove that God's truth ultimately triumphs despite apparent defeat at the cross?

Interlinear Text

א	תָּבִת		וְאָכַב	א	עַל	הַפְּתָמָה	יָד						
And	an	host	was	given	H5921	him	against	the	daily				
H6635		H5414			H8548								
בַּפְּשָׁע			וַתַּשְׁלַח	הָ	אֶתְמָת	אֶתְרָאָה							
sacrifice	by	reason	of	transgression	and	it	cast	down	the	truth	to	the	ground
H6588					H7993		H571		H776				
וְהַאֲלִיקָה:													
and	it	practised	and	prospered									
H6213		H6743											

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 59:14 (Truth): And judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off: for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter.

Jeremiah 12:1 (Parallel theme): Righteous art thou, O LORD, when I plead with thee: yet let me talk with thee of thy judgments: Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? wherefore are all they happy that deal very treacherously?

Revelation 13:7 (Parallel theme): And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.

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.