

Daniel 8:24

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practise, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people.

Analysis

The description "his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power" reveals Antiochus's authority derived from external sources—politically from Seleucid Empire resources, spiritually from satanic enablement. This parallels descriptions of the Antichrist (2 Thessalonians 2:9) whose power comes from Satan. Human tyrants serve as instruments of spiritual evil, consciously or unknowingly advancing demonic agenda when persecuting God's people.

"He shall destroy wonderfully" (Hebrew: *veniphla'ot yashchit*, וְנִפְלָאוֹת יִשְׁחִית) means "destroy remarkably" or "extraordinarily"—his destructive capacity will be astonishing. "Shall prosper, and practise" indicates apparent success; his policies seem effective, wickedness appears vindicated. "Shall destroy the mighty and the holy people" identifies his primary targets: political leaders ("mighty") and covenant faithful ("holy people"). Persecution particularly targets those most committed to God.

This warns that Satan's servants will sometimes prosper temporarily. Divine permission allows apparent success to test faith—will believers trust God when wickedness triumphs? Yet prosperity is always temporary; Antiochus died insane and in agony (2 Maccabees 9). God permits evil's apparent victory to refine His people, but He guarantees ultimate vindication. This points to Christ, who through apparent defeat (crucifixion) accomplished ultimate victory, reversing Satan's temporary triumph.

Historical Context

Antiochus initially prospered—conquered Egypt, expanded territory, accumulated wealth. Yet his success came from political maneuvering and Roman alliance, not personal power. His persecution killed thousands: elderly scribe Eleazar, mother with seven sons, and countless faithful Jews who refused apostasy. Yet his apparent triumph ended suddenly—divine judgment struck him with intestinal disease, causing excruciating death. His "prosperity" lasted barely three years of intense persecution (167-164 BC) before Maccabean victory and his demise.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How should knowing that persecutors' power comes externally (not intrinsically) encourage believers facing opposition?
2. What does wickedness's temporary prosperity teach us about requiring faith to trust God's ultimate justice?
3. In what ways does Antiochus's pattern—apparent success followed by divine judgment—prefigure Antichrist's future defeat?

Interlinear Text

וְנִפְלָא וֹתְךָ וְבָכָה וְלֹא בָכָה וְעַצְמָךְ	shall be mighty	And his power	H3808	And his power	wonderfully	H6381
H6105	H3581		H3581		H6381	
וְהַשְׁחִת יְתָהָרְךָ וְהַצְלִימָךְ	and he shall destroy	and shall prosper	H6743	and practise	and he shall destroy	the mighty
H7843			H6213		H7843	H6099
עַצְוּם יְמָם וְעַם קָדְשִׁים:	people	and the holy	H6918			
H5971						

Additional Cross-References

Daniel 8:12 (Parallel theme): 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.

Revelation 17:17 (Parallel theme): For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled.

Daniel 7:25 (Holy): And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.

Daniel 12:7 (Holy): And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished.