

CHAPTER 11

Daniel 11:1

1. Also I in the first year of Darius the Mede, 1. Et ego anno primo Darii medi steti in even I, stood to confirm and to strengthen him. roboratorem, et auxilium illi. ¹⁴⁹

Interpreters explain this verse in various ways. Some think the angel fought for the Persian king, and follow up their opinion, because he did not for the first time begin now to defend that monarchy in favor of the chosen people, but had done so from the very beginning. Others refer this to Michael, as the angel declares that he introduced the assistance of Michael. But that is forced and cold. I do not hesitate to state the argument to be from the greater to the less, and we have an instance of this in a tragedy of Ovid's. I have been able to preserve you; do you ask whether I can destroy you? Thus the angel says, I have erected the Persian monarchy; I have not the slightest doubt of my present power to restrain these kings, lest they should pour forth their fury upon the people. The full meaning is this, the king of the Persians is nothing, and can do nothing except through me. I was God's servant in transferring the monarchy of the Medes and Chaldeans to the Persians, as well as that of the Babylonians to the Medes. God, says he, entrusted me with that office, and so I placed Darius upon the throne. You now see how completely I have him in my power, and how I can prevent him from injuring my people should he be so inclined. When the angel boasts of *his standing forward to help Darius*, he claims nothing to himself, but speaks as it were in the person of God. For angels have no power distinct from God's when he uses their agency and assistance. There is no reason for any inquiry whether the angel ought to use this boastful language and claim anything for himself. For he does not claim anything as really his own, but he skews himself to have been an agent in the change of dynasty when Babylon was subdued by the Medes, and the empire transferred to Darius. For although, as we have previously shewn, Cyrus obtained the victory, yet he transferred the honors of government to his uncle Cyaxares. The Hebrews are accustomed to consider him as king for the first two years; Cyrus began to reign after this period; and now, when the angel appears to Daniel, the third year had arrived, as we saw at the beginning of the chapter.

PRAYER.

Grant, Almighty God, as thou daily and familiarly deignest to grant us the light of heavenly doctrine, that we may come to thy school with true humility and modesty. May our docility be really apparent; may we receive with reverence whatever proceeds from thy lips, and may thy majesty be conspicuous among us. May we taste of that goodness which thou dost manifest to us in thy word, and be enabled to rejoice in thee as our Father; may we never dread thy presence, but may we enjoy the sweet testimony of thy paternal grace and favor. May thy word be more precious

¹⁴⁹ That is, I stood by to strengthen and assist him. — Calvin.

to us than gold and worldly treasures, and, meanwhile, may we feed upon its sweetness, until we arrive all that full satiety which is laid up for us in heaven through Christ our Lord. — Amen.

LECTURE FIFY-SIXTH

Daniel 11:2

2. And now will I shew thee the truth. 2. Et nunc veritatem annuntio tibi: ecce adhuc Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in tres reges stabunt in Perside, et quartus ditabitur Persia; and the fourth shall be far richer than *they* opibus mignis, ¹⁵⁰ prae omnibus et secundum all: and by his strength through his riches he shall fortitudinem suam, in, *inquam*, opibus suis, ¹⁵¹ stir up all against the realm of Grecia. excitabit omnes contra regnum Graecorum.

We must now understand God's intention in thus informing his servant Daniel of future events. He was clearly unwilling to gratify a vain curiosity, and he enlarged upon events necessary to be known, thus enabling the Prophet not only privately to rely on God's grace, through this manifestation of his care for his Church, but also to exhort others to persevere in the faith. This chapter seems like a historical narrative under the form of an enigmatic description of events then future. The angel relates and places before his eyes occurrences yet to come to pass. We gather from this very clearly how God spoke through his prophets; and thus Daniel, in his prophetic character alone, is a clear proof to us of God's peculiar favor towards the Israelites. Here the angel discusses, not the general state of the world, but first the Persian kingdom, then the monarchy of Alexander, and afterwards the two kingdoms of Syria and Egypt. From this we cleverly perceive how the whole discourse was directed to the faithful. God did not regard the welfare of other nations, but wished to benefit his Church, and principally to sustain the faithful under their approaching troubles. It was to assure them of God's never becoming forgetful of his covenant, and of his so moderating the convulsions then taking place throughout the world, as to be ever protecting his people by his assistance. But we shall have to repeat this again, and even more than once, as we proceed.

First of all, the angel states, *Three kings shall yet stand up in Persia* With respect to the clause, *Behold! I announce to you the truth*, I explained in yesterday's Lecture how frequently he confirmed his prophecy whenever he treated events of the greatest importance, which seemed almost incredible. *I shall tell you the real truth; three kings shall stand up*. The Jews are not only very ignorant of everything, but very stupid also- then they have no sense of shame, and are endued with a perverse audacity; for they think there were only three kings of Persia, and they neglect all history, and mingle and confound things perfectly clear and completely distinct. There were eight kings of Persia of whom no mention is made here. Why, then, does the angel say, *three kings should stand*

¹⁵⁰ Or, he shall be rich with great opulence. — Calvin

¹⁵¹ Or, with his riches, that is, when he shall prevail. — Calvin

up? This was the first year of Darius, as we saw before. Hence, in their number of kings, Cyrus, the first monarch, is included, together with his son Cambyses. When these two kings have been decided on, a new question will arise again; for some add Smerdis to Cambyses, though he was only an impostor; for the Magi falsely thrust him in as the son of Darius, for the purpose of acquiring the sovereignty to themselves. Thus he was acknowledged as king for seven months; but when the cheat was discovered he was slain by seven of the nobles, among whom was Darius the son of Hystaspes, and he, according to the common narrative, was created king by the consent of the others on the neighing of his horse. The variations of interpreters might hinder us from reading them, and so we must gather the truth from the event. For Smerdis, as I have stated, cannot be reckoned among the kings of Persia, as he was but an impostor. I therefore exclude him, following the prudence of others who have considered the point with attention.

We must now observe why Daniel mentions four kings, *the fourth of whom*, he states, *should be very rich* Cambyses succeeded Cyrus, who was reigning when the prophecy was uttered. He was always moving about to distant places; he scarcely allowed himself rest for a single year; he was exceedingly desirous of glory, insatiable in his ambition, and ever stirring up new wars. Cambyses, his son, who had slain his brother, died in Egypt, and yet added this country to the Persian Empire. Darius, the son of Hystaspes, succeeded, and Xerxes followed him. They are deceived who think Darius, the son of Hystaspes, is the fourth king; without doubt the Prophet meant Xerxes, who crossed the sea with a mighty army. he led with him 900,000 men; and, however incredible this may appear, all historians constantly affirm it. He was so puffed up with pride that he said he came to put fetters upon the Hellespont, while his army covered all the neighboring country. This is one point; the four kings were Cyrus, Cambyses, Darius the son of Hystaspes, and Xerxes, omitting Smerdis. We may now inquire why the angel limits the number to four, as the successor of Xerxes was Artaxerxes, or Darius Longimanus, the long-handed, and some others after him. This difficulty is solved by the following probable method, — Xerxes destroyed the power of the Persian Empire by his rashness; he escaped with the greatest disgrace, and was scarcely saved by the baseness of his flight. He brought away but few companions with him hastily in a small boat, and could not obtain a single transport, although the Hellespont had been previously covered with his ships. His whole army was almost cut to pieces, first at Thermopylee, then at Leuctra, and afterwards at other places. From that period the Persian Empire declined, for when its warlike glory was annihilated, the people gave themselves up to sloth and idleness, according to the testimony of Xenophon. Some interpreters expound the phrase, *three kings stood up*, of the flourishing period of the Persian monarchy: they take the words “stood up” emphatically, since from that period the nation’s power began to wane. For Xerxes on his return was hated by the whole people, first for his folly, then for his putting his brother to death, for his disgraceful conduct towards his sister, and for his other crimes; and as he was so loaded with infamy before his own people, he was slain by Artabanus, who reigned seven months. As the power of Persia was then almost entirely destroyed, or at least was beginning to decline, some interpreters state these three kings to stand up, and then add Xerxes as the fourth and the most opulent. But suppose we take the word “stood up” relatively, with respect to the Church? For the angel states that the Persian prince, Cambyses, stood before him, in an attitude of hostility and conflict. The angel seems rather to hint *at the standing up of four kings of Persia*, for the purpose of reminding the Jews of the serious evils and the grievous troubles which they must suffer under their sway. In this sense I interpret the verb “to stand,” referring it to the contests by which God harassed the Church until the death of Xerxes. For

at that period, when the power of the Persians declined, a longer period of rest and relaxation was afforded to the people of God. This is the reason why the angel omits and passes over in silence all the kings from Artabanus to Darius the son of Arsaces; for Arsaces was the last king but one, and although Ochus reigned before him, we know from profane historians how his posterity were reduced to the lowest rank under the last Darius, whom Alexander conquered, as we shall see by and bye. For this reason I think this to be the genuine sense of the passage, — from Cyrus to Xerxes kings of Persia should stand up against the Israelites, and during the whole of that period the contests should be renewed, and the Jews would almost perish through despair under that continued series of evils. Some say, four kings should stand forth until all the Jews were led out; and we know this never to have been completed, for a small portion only returned. As to my own opinion, I am unwilling to contend with others, yet I hesitate not to enforce the angel's wish to exhort all the pious to endurance, for he announced *the standing up of these four kings*, who should bring upon them various tribulations. As to the fourth king, the statement of this passage suits Xerxes exactly. *The fourth*, he says, *shall be enriched with wealth*; for the noun is of similar meaning with the verb, as they both spring from the same root. Truly enough Darius the son of Hystaspes determined to carry on war with Greece; he made the attempt but without success, especially at the battle of Marathon. He was cut off by sudden death when his treasures were prepared and many forces were collected. He thus left the material of war for his son. Xerxes, in the flower of his age, saw every preparation for war made ready to his hands; he eagerly embraced the occasion, and gave no heed to sound advice. For, as we have already stated, he destroyed himself and the whole monarchy, not by a single slaughter only, but by four. And this power of raising an army of 900,000 men was no ordinary occurrence. If he had only carried with him across the sea 100,000 men, this would have been a large force. But his power of feeding such large forces while he passed through so many provinces, and then of passing them across the sea, exceeds the ordinary bounds of our belief. We are not surprised, then, at the angel's predicting the extreme wealth of this king.

He adds, *In his fortitude and in his riches he shall stir them all up against the realm of the Greeks*. This was not accomplished by Darius the son of Hystaspes. According to my former statement, he attacked certain Grecian cities, but without producing confusion throughout the whole East, as Xerxes his successor did. As to the phrase, the kingdom of Javan, I willingly subscribe to their opinion who think the word equivalent to the Greek word Ionia. For Javan went forth in that direction, and dwelt there with his posterity in the Grecian territory, whence almost the whole of Greece obtained its present name. The whole Grecian nation is often called "Chittim," and some see good reason for their being termed "Machetae," from Chittim the son of Javan, and thus by the addition of a letter we arrive at the Macedonians. For the conjecture is probable that this people were first called Maketae, and afterwards Macedonians. Without doubt, in this passage and in many others, Javan. is put for the whole of Greece, since Ionia was the portion of the country most celebrated in Judea and throughout the East generally. Xerxes then stirred up against the realm of Javan — meaning Greece — all the people of the East; for it is very well known how his empire spread far and wide in every direction. It follows: —

Daniel 11:3

<p>3. And a mighty king shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will.</p>	<p>3. Et stabit rex fortis, et dominabitur dominatione magna, et faciet secundum voluntatem suam.¹⁵²</p>
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This refers to Alexander of Macedon. I have already shortly stated the reason why the angel passed over all the Persian kings from Artabanus to the last Darius, they did not engage in any contests with the Jews up to *Xerxes*. But when Alexander invaded Asia, he struck the Jews with terror, as well as all other nations. He came like lightning, and it is by no means surprising that the *Jews* should be frightened at his arrival, because, as we formerly expressed it, he flew with amazing swiftness. Alexander then rose up, not only by the riches and might of his warlike preparations, but he necessarily inspired the Jews with trepidation when they perceived their inability to resist him, and thus he was deservedly hostile to them, because, from the very beginning, they had despised his empire. Josephus also informs us how he was moved at the sight of the high priest, and how he determined to mitigate his rage against the Jews. For when he was at home, before passing over into Asia, the vision of the high priest was offered to him, for God had sent his angel under that disguise.¹⁵³ Alexander supposed it to be some deity; but when the high priest met him in procession, the vision returned to his *recollection*, and he was struck as if he had seen God appearing to him from heaven. Whatever was the object of this *occurrence*, Alexander clearly came into Judea with the intention of utterly destroying the whole nation. This is the reason why the angel carefully predicts this change. *A brave king, therefore, shall stand up, and rule with extensive dominion, and do according to his pleasure; that is, he shall succeed as if he had all the events of the war under his own hand and according to his own pleasure, as the event itself most fully proved.* It follows:

Daniel 11:4

<p>4. And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and divided shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven; and not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion which he ruled: for his kingdom shall be plucked up even for others besides those.</p>	<p>4. Et ubi constiterit, frangetur, <i>vel, conteretur</i>, regnum ejus, et dividetur in quatuor ventos coelorum, <i>hoc est, in quatuor plagas mundi</i>, et non posteritati ejus, et non secundum dominationem ejus, qua dominatus fuerit: quia extirpabitur, <i>radicitus evelletur</i>, regnum ejus, et aliis absque illis.</p>
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This language is concise, but there is no ambiguity in the sense. First of all the angel says, After that brave king had stood up, his empire should be broken in pieces: for when Alexander had arrived at his height, he suddenly fell sick, and shortly afterwards died at Babylon. Ambassadors had assembled round him from every quarter. He was quite intoxicated by prosperity, and very probably

¹⁵² That is, as he wishes, or according to his lust. — *Calvin*

¹⁵³ There are various minor errors in the edition 1617, which are correct in the edition of 1571. For *example*, on folio 94, verse 3, *violavit* occurs for *volavit*; and on folio 95, verse 3, *non* begins the sentence instead of *nam* — *Ed.*

poisoned himself. Historians, however, have viewed him as a remarkable example of singular valor, and so they have pretended and have related, because at least they thought so, that he was deceitfully poisoned by Cassander. But we all know how intemperately and immoderately he indulged in drinking; he almost buried himself in wine, and was seized with disease amidst his cups, and sank under it, because no remedy was found for him. This, then, was Alexander's poison. Whichever way we understand it, he fell suddenly, almost as soon as he began to stand. After conquering nearly the whole East, he came to Babylon, and was uncertain in his plans as to the employment of his forces, after he had procured peace for the whole East. He was then anxious to transfer his armies to either Europe or Africa. The angel says, *After he had stood up*, meaning, after he had acquired the monarchy of the whole East, *his kingdom should be broken up*. He uses this simile, because the whole power of Alexander was not so much extinguished as broken into separate parts. We know how the twelve chiefs who were his generals drew the spoils to themselves; every one took a portion of his kingdom, and divided it among themselves, as we have previously stated, just as if it were torn from their master's body. All consented in raising his brother Aridaeus to the dignity of king, and they called him Philip, that, while his sons were young, the memory of his father might commend them to the world. But four kingdoms at length issued from Alexander's monarchy. It is unnecessary here to refer to what we may read at our leisure in the writings of historians.

The Prophet only touches shortly on those points which relate to the instruction of the Church; he does not relate in order or in detail the events narrated in history; he only says, *His empire shall be broken, and shall be divided*, says he, *towards the four winds of heaven*. The angel omits that partition which assigned the treasure to one, and gave the office of counselor to Philip: Perdicas was the guardian of his son, and he with others obtained a portion of his dominions. Seleucus obtained Syria, to whom his son Antiochus succeeded; Antigonus became prefect of Asia Minor; Cassander, the father of Antipater, seized the kingdom of Macedon for himself; Ptolemy, the son of Lagus, who had been a common soldier, possessed Egypt. These are the four kingdoms of which the angel now treats. For Egypt was situated to the south of Judea, and Syria to the north, as we shall afterwards have occasion to observe. Macedonia came afterwards, and then Asia Minor, both east and west. But the angel does not enter into any complicated details, but shortly enumerates whatever was necessary for the common instruction of the elect people. The common consent of all writers has handed down these facts, — four kingdoms were constituted at length out of many portions, after the chiefs had been so mutually slain by one another that four only survived, namely, Ptolemy, Seleucus, Antigonus, and Cassander. Afterwards the kingdom of Antiochus was extended when Antigonus was conquered; for Antiochus added Asia Minor to the kingdom of Syria. But Antiochus stood only for a time, and hence the angel truly and properly states this empire to have been divided into four parts.

He next adds, *And not to his posterity*. No one could have guessed what the angel predicted so many years before Alexander's birth; for he was not born till a hundred years after this period. Those who know the boldness of his warlike schemes, the rapidity of his movements, and the success of his measures, would never be persuaded of this result, — the complete destruction of all his posterity, and the utter extinction of his race.

Had Alexander lived quietly at home, he might have married, and have become the father of children who would have been his undisputed successors. He died young, soon after reaching the age of thirty; still he might have married, and have had heirs to his throne. He had a brother, Aridaeus, and other relations, among whom was his uncle Pyrrhus, king of Epirus, and a royal

offspring might thus have been preserved, and a successor prepared for him. After he had subdued both upper and lower Asia, he became master of Syria, Egypt, and Judea, and extended his power to the Persians, while his fame extended over Africa and Europe. Since no one dared to raise a finger against him, as he possessed a most magnificent army, and all his generals were bound to him by most important benefits, and so many of his prefects were enriched by his extreme liberality, who would have thought that all his posterity and relations would be thus blotted out? He left; two sons, but they were slain as well as his brother Aridaeus, while his wives and his mother, aged eighty years, shared the same fate. Nor did Cassander spare her, for she intrigued against him. At length, as if God would punish so many slaughters committed by Alexander, he wished his whole posterity to be extinguished. And yet, as I have stated, no foreign enemy was the agent in inflicting such heavy punishments. He had subjugated the whole East, and his bearing was such, as if the whole monarchy of that portion of the world had descended to him from his ancestors by hereditary right. As the world contained no enemy for him, his foes sprang from his own home; they slew his mother, his wives, his children, and all his relatives, and utterly rooted out all his race. We observe, then, with what clearness and certainty the angel predicts events entirely concealed from that age, and for hundred years afterwards, and such as would never be, credited by mankind. There seems a great contrast in the language; *his kingdom shall be broken, it shall be divided towards the four winds of heaven, and not to his posterity*; that is, although the four kingdoms should spring up in the four quarters of the world, yet, none of Alexander's posterity should remain in a single place, or obtain even the least portion of his dominions. This was a remarkable proof of God's wrath against the cruelty of Alexander; not that he was savage by nature, but ambition seized upon him, and made him bloodthirsty, and indisposed him to desire any end to his warfare. God, therefore, avenged that grasping disposition of Alexander's, by allowing the whole of his race thus to perish with disgrace and horrible cruelty. On this account that pride of his which wished to be thought a son of Jupiter, and which condemned to death all his friends and followers who would not prostrate themselves before him as a god; — that pride, I say, never could secure a single descendant to reign in his place, or even to hold a single satrapy. *Not to his posterity*, says the angel, *and not according to his dominion*.

He passes to the four kings of which he had spoken: *It shall not break forth*, he says, namely, *from the four kings*. He had already stated their foreign extraction, not in any way derived from the family of that king; for none of the four should equal his power, because his kingdom should be expired. Here the angel seems to omit intervening events, and speaks of an ultimate destruction. We know how the past king Perseus was conquered by the Romans, and how the kingdom of Antiochus was partly destroyed by war, and partly oppressed by fraud. And the angel seems to mark this. We may interpret it more to the point, by considering the cessation of Alexander's empire, with reference to his own race, as if the angel had stated that none of his successors should acquire equal power with himself. And why so? Not one of them could accomplish it. Alexander acquired so mighty a name that all people willingly submitted to his sway, and no single successor could sustain the burden of the whole. Hence his kingdom, as far as it related to himself and His posterity, was divided, and no one succeeded to his power and his opulence. *And it shall be given to others*. The angel here explains his meaning. The destruction of the kingdom ought not to be explained particularly of single parts, for each seized his own portion for himself, and his successors were all strangers. And *to others besides those*; meaning, his kingdom shall be seized upon by officers who

are not of his posterity; that is, strangers shall rush into Alexander's place, and no *successor* shall arise from his own kindred. It afterwards follows, —

Daniel 11:5

5. And the king of the south shall be strong, **5.** Et roborabitur rex austri, et ex principibus and *one* of his princes; and he shall be strong ejus, et roborabitur adversus eum, et dominabitur: above him, and have dominion; his dominion dominatio magna, dominatio ejus. *shall be* a great dominion.

Here the angel begins to treat of the kings of Egypt and of Syria. He does not mention the king of Syria yet, but will do so in the next verse; but he begins with the king of Egypt, the neighboring monarchy to that of Israel. He says, the king of the south, meaning, the king of Egypt, would be brave. He next adds, *and one of his princes*. Many take this in one context; but I think the angel transfers his discourse to Antiochus the son of Seleucus. *And one of his princes*, he says, meaning, one of Alexander's princes, shall strengthen himself against him. For the letter , *vau*, is taken in the sense of opposing, and implies an opposition between Ptolemy the son of Lagus, and Antiochus king of Syria. *Hence the king of the south shall grow strong* — another of Alexander's chiefs shall grow strong against him, and shall have dominion. We know how much larger and more wealthy the kingdom of Syria was than that of Egypt, especially when Asia Minor was added to it. Without doubt, the angel was acquainted with the future superiority of Antiochus to Ptolemy, when these two kings are mutually compared. But the rest to-morrow.

PRAYER.

Grant, Almighty God, since thou not only deignedst to unfold future events to thy servant Daniel, and to the pious who waited for the advent of thine only-begotten Son, that they might be prepared for all sufferings, and might perceive the Church to repose under thy care and protection, but also wishedst these prophecies to profit us at this day, and to confirm us in the same doctrine: Grant us to learn how to cast all our cares and anxieties on thy paternal providence. May we never doubt thy oversight of the cares of thy Church in these days, and thy protection against the fury of the ungodly who try all means of destroying it. May we repose in peace under that guardianship which thou hast promised us, and struggle on under the standard of the cross; and possess our souls in patience, until at length thou shalt appear as our Redeemer with outstretched hand, at the manifestation of thy Son, when he returns to judge the world. — Amen.

LECTURE FIFTY-SEVENTH

Daniel 11:6

6. And in the end of years they shall join **6.** Et in fine annorum sociabuntur, *convenient* themselves together; for the king's daughter of *inter se*, et filia regis austri veniet ad regem the south shall come to the king of the north to aquilonis ut faciat recta: et non retinebit vires make all agreement: but she shall not retain the brachii, et non stabit ipse, neque semen ejus, et power of the arm; neither shall he stand, nor his dabitur ipsa, et qui adduxerit eam, et qui genuerit arm: but she shall be given up, and they that ipsam, et roborabit eam temporibus illis, *vel*, brought her, and he that beget her, and he that *roboraverit*. strengthened her in *these* times.

As to the explanation of the words, the king of the south, we have stated to be the king of Egypt, and that of the north, of Syria. To do right things, means to make mutual peace; he shall not retain the strength of his arm, is, his arm shall not retain its strength; he shall not stand refers to his father Ptolemy, or Antiochus Theos, as we shall afterwards see. And then we must take the *vau*, negatively, and read, nor his seed, which some translate his arm. She shall be delivered up, implies being given up to death, while some understand her parent, to be her mother or her nurse. Here, then, the angel prophesies the state of the kingdoms of Egypt and Syria; and still he has respect to the Church of God, as we stated yesterday, which was placed in the midst of these two nations. We must always strive to ascertain the intention of the Holy Spirit. He wished to support the pious under those convulsions by which they would be agitated and afflicted. Their confidence might have been utterly subverted unless they had been persuaded that nothing happens at random, since all these events were proclaimed beforehand. Again, God had sent his angel to Daniel, which proved both his power and his determination to defend his Church, and he would accomplish this, because he wished the faithful admonished beforehand neither rashly nor yet without profit. But we must first relate the history — the angel says, *At the end of the times two kings should enter into covenant and friendship* He had announced the superiority of the king of Syria; for when Antigonus was conquered, and his son was dead, Seleucus the first king of Syria far surpassed Ptolemy in his power and the magnitude of his dominion. But a mutual rivalry arose between them, and there were some slight skirmishes on both sides, till the condition of Ptolemy became weakened, and then Seleucus rushed tumultuously, with the ferocity of a robber rather than the magnanimity of a king. After they had continued the contest for some time, Berenice the daughter of the second Ptolemy, named Philadelphus, was given in marriage to Antiochus Theos. She is also called Beronice and Bernice. He was so blinded with pride, as to take the name of Theos, which means God; he was the third of that name, the former king being called Soter, meaning preserver For, as Seleueus had acquired so many and such mighty possessions, his sons did not consider their authority fully established, and so they assumed these magnificent titles for the sake of inspiring all nations with the terror of their frame. Hence the first Antiochus was called Sorer, and the second Theos. Now the second Ptolemy, named Philadelphus, gave his daughter in marriage to Antiochus Theos. By this bond peace and friendship were established between them, just as at Rome, Pompey married Julia the daughter of Caesar. And we daily observe similar occurrences, for when one king has in his power a daughter, or niece, or other relatives, another king finds himself possessed of male and female relations, by whose intermarriage they confirm a treaty of peace. It was so in this case, although historians attribute some degree of craft to Philadelphus in bestowing his daughter on Antiochus Theos. He

supposed this to be a means by which he might ultimately acquire the dominion over all Syria, and over the other provinces under the sway of Antiochus. Whether this really was so or not, profane historians prove the fulfillment of the angel's prediction. Without the slightest doubt, God, in his wonderful counsels, dictated to these historians what we read at the present time, and made them witnesses of his own truth. This thought, indeed, never entered their minds, but when God governs the minds and tongues of men, he wishes to establish clear and convincing testimony to this prophecy, for the purpose of shewing the real prediction of every occurrence. *At the end of the years, says he, they shall become united.*

He next states, *And the daughter of the king of the south, meaning Bernice, whom we have mentioned, shall come to the king of the north, meaning the king of Syria, Antiochus Theos.* This alliance was contracted in defiance of justice. For Antiochus repudiated his wife Laodice, who was the mother of two sons whom she had born to Antiochus; namely, Seleucus Callinicus, and Antiochus the younger, named Hierax, a hawk, on account of his rapacity. We perceive, then, how he contracted a second marriage, after an unjust and illegal divorce of his first wife. Hence it is not surprising if this alliance was cursed by the Almighty. It turned out unhappily for both the kings of Egypt and Syria. Ptolemy ought not to have thrust his daughter upon Antiochus, who was already married, nor yet to have allowed her to become a second wife, while the king's real wife was divorced. We perceive, then, how God became the avenger of these crimes, while the plans of Antiochus and Philadelphus turned out in. Some think that Antiochus was fraudulently poisoned by his first wife, but as the point is doubtful, I pronounce no opinion. Whether it was so or not, Antiochus had a son by Bernice, and died immediately after being reconciled to his former wife. Some historians state, that after she had recovered her dignity and rank as queen, having once experienced her husband's fickleness and perfidy, she took sure means of preventing another repudiation. When Antiochus was dead, this woman was enflamed with vengeance, and in the perverseness of her disposition, she impelled her son to murder her rival, especially stimulating Seleucus Callinicus who succeeded to his father's throne. Hierax was then prefect of Asia Minor; hence she stimulated her son with fury to murder her rival. For, although Antiochus Theos had been reconciled to her, yet some degree of rank and honor still attached to Bernice the daughter of Ptolemy. And her son perpetrated this murder with the greatest willingness, and with the basest cruelty and perfidy; for he persuaded her to entrust herself to his care, and then he murdered both her and her son.

The angel now says, *When the daughter of the king of the south shall come to the king of the north, his arm shall not retain his strength* The language is metaphorical, as that marriage was line a common arm to both sides; for the king of Egypt stretched forth his hand to the king of Syria for mutual protection. *That arm, then, did not retain its strength;* for Bernice was most wickedly slain by her stepson, Seleucus Callinicus, as we have stated. He says, also, *she should come to make alliances* Here, by way of concession, the angel calls that conjugal bond *misrim, "rectitudines,"* "conditions of agreement," because at first all parties thought, it would tend to that result. But Antiochus had already violated his marriage vow, and departed from his lawful alliance. Nothing, therefore, was right on his side. Without the slightest doubt he derived some advantage from the plan, as kings are always in the habit of doing. And with respect to Ptolemy, many historians, as we have already mentioned, suppose him to have longed for the kingdom of Syria. Whether or not this was so, their mutual transactions were not sincere, and so the word signifying "rectitude" is used, as we have said, only by concession. The angel does not speak in their praise, or excuse the, perfidy of either, but he rather enlarges upon their crime, and from this we gather how they abused

the sanctity both of marriage and of treaties, which God wished to be held sacred by all mankind. Hence, though the word is honor-able in itself, yet it is used in a disgraceful sense, to shew us how the angel condemned King Ptolemy for this base prostitution of his daughter, and Antiochus for rejecting his wife, and marrying another who was not a real wife, but only a concubine. And, perhaps, God wished to use the lips of his angel to point out the tendency of all royal treaties. They always have the most specious appearances — national, quiet public peace, and similar objects which can be dexterously made prominent. For kings always court favor and praise for themselves from the foolish vulgar, whenever they make treaties of peace. Thus all these alliances have no other tendency than to produce social deception, and at length they degenerate into mutual perfidy, when one party plots insidiously and wickedly against another.

The angel adds next, *He shall not stand*; using the masculine gender, and most probably referring to Antiochus, as well as to Ptolemy his father-in-law. *Neither he nor his seed shall stand*, meaning his son by Bernice the daughter of Ptolemy. I dare not translate it “arm,” because in my opinion the letter , *vau*, is needed in the word for “arm;” so I take it to denote “seed.” He afterwards adds, *And she shall be delivered up* — thus returning to Berenice — either by treachery or to death; and *those who led her forth* — meaning her companions. Whenever any incestuous marriage is contracted, some persons of disgraceful character are sure to be concerned in bringing his new wife to the king. And very probably there were factions in the palace of Antiochus; one party being more attached to Seleucus and his brother, and his mother Laodice; while others desired a change of government, according to the usual state of affairs. The advisers of the marriage between Antiochus and Bernice were sent as a guard of honor to attend them to Syria, and the angel states all these to have been delivered up together with the queen. He afterwards adds, *And those who were her parents* From the absence of a grammatical point under the letter , *he*, many think the noun to be of the feminine gender. And as it may mean mother, they treat it as if her nurse was intended, but I leave the question in doubt. He now adds, *and those who strengthened her at those times* He, doubtless, intends to designate all those who wished to curry favor with the king, and thus took part in this marriage between him and the daughter of the king of Egypt. The whole of that faction perished, when Berenice was slain by Seleucus Callinicus. If, then, he did not spare his stepmother, much less would he spare the faction by which he was deprived of his hope of the kingdom, and through whom his mother Laodice had suffered the disgrace of a divorce. It now follows, —

Daniel 11:7

7. But out of a branch of her roots shall *one* stand up in his estate, which shall come with an army, and shall enter into the fortress of the king of the north, and shall deal against them, and shall prevail: 7. Et stabit ex germine, *vel, surculo*, radicum ejus, *nempe Berenice*,¹⁵⁴ in gradu suo,¹⁵⁵ et veniet cum exercitu,¹⁵⁶ et veniet in munitionem regis Aquilonis, et faciet in illis,¹⁵⁷ et praevalerebit.

The angel treats here of Ptolemy Euergetes, the third king of Egypt, who succeeded his father Philadelphus. He collected large forces to revenge the insult offered to his sister, and thus carried on the war with Seleucus Callinicus, who had become king after his father's death. The angel, therefore, now touches shortly on this war, by saying, *There shall stand up a shoot from the root of that queen*. Very possibly he was younger than his sister Berenice. He says, *He shall stand in his own degree*, meaning, in the royal rank. The interpretation of those who translate, *He shall stand in his father's rank*, is forced. What is it then? *He shall stand in his own rank*; that is, he shall arrive at his own rank by hereditary right. Although, therefore, at first all thought the death of Berenice would be unrevengeed through her father being dead, here the angel announces that her brother should be like a branch, and become the avenger of this great wickedness. *He shall stand*, then, *in his rank*, meaning, he shall arrive at the royal throne, *from the branch or germ of her root*, namely, Berenice. *He shall come with an army against Callinicus*. Profane writers bear witness to this. *And he shall come even to the fortification of the king of the north* He entered Syria, and caused so great a terror that many fortified cities surrendered themselves to him. During this war he drew to himself many cities which seemed impregnable; whence it is not surprising to find the angel stating his arrival at the fortifications. Some translate it "*dwelling-place*," but without reason, and thus injure the Prophet's meaning. *He shall come unto the very fortification*, meaning, he shall arrive in Syria, and shall possess many fortified cities.

He next adds, *And he shall work on them*, meaning, he shall prosper; for this word when used without any addition, implies in Hebrew performing great exploits. *He shall proceed* and acquire power over the greater part of Syria, *and shall prevail*. By this last word he explains how superior he should be to Callinicus. For this king sent for his younger brother whose fidelity he suspected, and thought it the safest course to treat with his enemy. But young Hierax, the hawk, determined to use that expedition to his own advantage. He was not content with his own province of Asia Minor, but he anticipated being his father's sole heir, especially as he had hired some troops from Gaul, who had invaded Asia Minor, Bithynia, and other provinces. He was greatly puffed up, and betrayed his own covetousness. Seleucus Callinicus preferred making peace with his enemy to fostering his brother's resources. At length Hierax more and more developed the perversity of his mind. For he openly declared war against his brother, to whose assistance he pretended to have come, after having been sent for according to agreement. His brother Seleucus had promised him a portion of Asia as far as Mount Taurus; and when he saw himself the victim of his impious and

¹⁵⁴ The relative article is in the feminine gender. — Calvin.

¹⁵⁵ Some translate, "in its degree;" but I see no reason for it. — Calvin.

¹⁵⁶ *al*, is here used in the sense of "with;" yet some translate it literally, to his army; but the former exposition is preferable. — Calvin.

¹⁵⁷ That is, among the fortifications, or among the people. The number is changed, and it can only be referred to the people — Calvin.

disgraceful snares, he openly waged war with his brother. But he was conquered at length, and thus received the reward of his impiety. Thus Ptolemy Euergetes prevailed, while he departed from Syria after spoiling his enemy, according to what follows —

Daniel 11:8

8. And shall also carry captives into Egypt **8.** Atque etiam deos ipsorum cum conflatibus their gods, with their princes, *and* with their ipsorum, et cum vasis pretiosis ipsorum, ¹⁵⁸ auri precious vessels of silver and of gold; and he et argenti in captivatem ducent in AEgyptum, ¹⁵⁹ shall continue *more* years than the king of the et ipse *pluribus* annis stabit quam rex aquilonis. north.

The angel explains more fully what he had already stated briefly, namely, Ptolemy should be the conqueror, and spoil the whole of Syria almost according to his pleasure. Profane writers also shew us the great number of images which were taken away, and how Egypt recovered its gods of silver and gold which it had lost a long time ago. Thus the event proved the truth of the angel's prophecy. The particle *gem*, is interposed for the sake of amplifying the subject, to inform us of the unequal condition of the peace, and how Ptolemy exercised the rights of a conqueror in spoiling the whole of Syria according to his lust. It is added, *He shall stand for more years than the king of the north*. Some restrict this to the duration of the life of *each* king, and others extend it farther. Probably the angel speaks of Ptolemy Euergetes, who reigned forty-six years. As God extended his life so long, we are not surprised at the angel's saying it should last longer than the king of Syria's. This explanation is applicable to the present case, for if he had died before, Callinicus might have recovered the effects of the war; but as Ptolemy survived, he dared not attempt any-thing, being assured of the utter fruitlessness of any effort against the king who had vanquished him. It follows: —

Daniel 11:9

9. So the king of the south shall come into **9.** Et veniet in rename rex austri, et redibit in *his* kingdom, and shall return into his own land. terram suam.

This clause belongs to the former verse; as if he had said, Ptolemy shall return by a peaceful march after this hostile invasion of Syria. For he might have some fears lest his enemy should not be completely prostrated. But as he departed as conqueror, the angel announces his safe arrival in his own land. The words “come” and “return” are used emphatically, implying the absence of all

¹⁵⁸ That is, with desirable vessels, as I formerly stated on this word.-*Calvin*,

¹⁵⁹ Or, they shall lead captive into Egypt their gods, together with their images and their desirable vessels of silver and *gold*.
— *Calvin*.

harass, fear, and danger. ¹⁶⁰ He returned to his kingdom and his own land, since he could not trust to the quietness of the enemies whom he had laid prostrate. It follows: —

Daniel 11:10-11

10. But his sons shall be stirred up, and shall assemble a multitude of great forces: and *one* shall certainly come, and overflow, and pass through: then shall he return, and be stirred up, *even* to his fortress.

10. Et filii ejus provocabuntur, et congregabunt multitudinem copiarum magnarum: et veniendo veniet, inundabit et transibit: revertetur et incitabitur usque ad munitionem ejus.

11. And the king of the south shall be moved with choler, and shall come forth and fight with him, *even* with the king of the north: and he shall set forth a great multitude; but the multitude shall be given into his hand.

11. Tum exacerbabitur rex austri, et egressus pugnabit adversus eum, adversus regem aquilonis, et stare faciet, *statuet*, multitudinem magnam, tradeturque multitudo illa in manum ejus.

Here the angel passes to the third war, namely, that which the son of Callinicus stirred up against Ptolemy Philopator. After the death of Euergetes, the two sons of Callinicus united their forces, and endeavored to recover Syria, and especially that part of it of which they had been deprived. When they were already on their expedition, and their forces were on their march, the elder Seleucus died, and his surviving brother was Antiochus, called the Great. Ptolemy, called Philopator, which means a lover of his father, was then alive. He was so called in consequence of the parricide of which he was guilty, having put to death both parents, together with his brother. The word is used by way of ridicule, and a sense the opposite to that expressed is implied by this epithet, which is honorable in itself, and expresses the virtue of filial piety. But he slew his father, mother, and brother, and on account of all these impious murders, the name of Philopator was applied to him as a mark of disgrace. As, therefore, he was so thoroughly hated by his own people, the sons of Callinicus, namely, Seleucus Ceraunus the elder, and Antiochus the Great, thought the time had arrived for the recovery of the lost cities of Syria. For he was detested and despised in consequence of his numerous crimes. They therefore anticipated little trouble in recovering their possessions, when their enemy was thus branded with infamy, and had many domestic foes. This is the reason why the angel says of the sons of Callinicus, *They shall be provoked, and shall lead a multitude of great armies*; it may mean “great forces,” as some historians relate the collection of two very strong armies. Unless I am mistaken, Antiochus the Great had 70,000 foot and 5000 horse. Ptolemy excelled in cavalry as he had 6000 horse but only 62,000 foot, as Polybius informs us in his fifth book. ¹⁶¹ They were nearly equal in forces, but the confidence of the two sons of Callinicus, of whom alone the angel now speaks, was increased when they beheld their wicked enemy so greatly

¹⁶⁰ The edition of 1617 has *modestia* incorrectly for *molestia*. The error is corrected in subsequent editions. The reader of the original must be prepared for many verbal inaccuracies in this edition. — *Ed.*

¹⁶¹ Calvin quoting from memory has not stated the numbers accurately. See Polyb., lib. 5, p. 421, edit. Casaubon. Paris; also the Dissertations at the end of this volume. — *Ed.*

detested in *consequence* of his parricide. He afterwards says, *He shall come*. He changes the number, since the elder brother, being the eldest son of Callinicus, namely, Seleucus Ceraunus, died while they were preparing for the war, and they say he was slain by his attendants in passing through Asia Minor. Whether this was so or not, all historians unite in stating that Antiochus the Great alone carried on the war with Philopator. He shall *come* so as *to overflow and pass through* He recovered that part of Syria which he had lost, and when he approached Egypt, then Philopator met him. Profane historians state him to have been a coward, and never to have obtained power by open bravery, but by fear alone. He was too late in preparing his forces for resisting his enemy.

This is the reason why the angel says, *The king of Syria, or of the north, should come, even to the citadels*, or fortifications; for at length Philopator roused himself from slumber, for he never put on his arms to repel an enemy except when compelled by the direst necessity. Hence he adds, *The king of the south shall be irritated*, or exasperated. He uses the word “exasperated,” because, as I have just said, he would never have opposed himself to his enemy Antiochus except he had perceived his own kingdom placed in great jeopardy. He might have taken patiently the loss of Syria, so long as Egypt had been safe; but when his life and all his possessions were in danger, he became sufficiently exasperated to attack his foe; and yet he prevailed, as we shall afterwards see. I cannot complete this subject to-day, and so I shall draw to a close. Philopator became victorious, and yet he was so sluggish that he distrusted his friends and foes alike, and was forced by this very fear to make peace with his enemy, although he was really the conqueror. Not only could he have driven back his enemy whom he had vanquished, but he might have taken possession of his territories; but he did not dare to do this, he was conscious of being a parricide, and knew to his cost how hateful his name was among all men. Hence, although superior in strength, and actually the conqueror of his enemy in battle, he dared not proceed further. But we will explain the remainder another time.

PRAYER.

Grant, Almighty God, as thou hast deigned to set before our eyes as in a glass that peculiar providence of thine by which thou defendest thy Church: Grant, that being confirmed by these examples, we may learn to repose entirely upon thee. Amidst the numerous disturbances by which the world is at this time agitated, may we remain quiet under thy protection. May we so commit our safety to thee as never to hesitate, whatever may happen, as to our future safety and security. Whatever we may suffer, may it all issue in our salvation, while we are protected by thy hand; thus will we call upon thy name with sincerity of mind, and thou wilt in return shew thyself as our Father in thine only-begotten Son. — Amen.

LECTURE FIFTY-EIGHTH

In our last Lecture we explained why the angel mentions the exasperation of King Ptolemy. Unless he had been dragged into the war, his disposition was so sluggish that he would have suffered many cities to be wrested from him, and he would never have been moved by either the disgrace or the loss. But at length he took up arms, on seeing with what a stern and bold enemy he had to

deal. he afterwards adds, *He shall go out to battle against the king of the North*, meaning Antiochus king of Syria. *And he shall set in array a large multitude*. This may be referred to either of them, for Antiochus then brought into the field a large army; he had 5000 horse and 70,000 foot. Ptolemy was superior in his cavalry, which amounted to 6000 men. This clause will suit the case of Antiochus. *He shall bring into the field a great multitude, and the multitude shall be given into his hand*, meaning Ptolemy's. The context seems thus to flow on more easily: yet if any one prefers considering it as applicable to Ptolemy himself, I will not contend the point. It is not of much consequence, because the angel simply pronounces the superiority of Ptolemy in this battle, in which he conquered Antiochus the Great. Besides, we must notice, that he was not the conqueror by his own industry, or valor, or counsel, or military skill; but because the Lord, who regulates the events of battles, wished at that time to subdue the pride of Antiochus the Great. It now follows, —

Daniel 11:12

12. *And* when he hath taken away the multitude, his heart shall be lifted up; and he shall *attollet*, et elevabitur cor ejus, et dejiciet cast down *many* ten thousands: but he shall not myriades, *hoc est, magnas copias*, et non be strengthened *by it* roborabitur.

The angel here marks the close of the war. Had Ptolemy's valor seconded his good fortune, he might easily have seized upon the whole kingdom of Syria, as profane historians report. But he was so given up to his own lusts, that he willingly entered into treaty with his enemy. On his return to his kingdom he slew his wife Eurydice, and was guilty of other enormities; he suffered a wicked woman, the sister of Agathocles, a victim of his passions, to rule over his kingdom, and lastly, he became a very foul example of a very cruel and degraded man. Therefore, the angel says at the beginning, *his army should raise him aloft; his heart should be elevated*, in consequence of his prosperity. He not only caused terror to Antiochus, but through all the neighboring regions. Where he might have drawn to himself the whole power of the East, he then declined in his course. He subdued, indeed, a hostile army, and in this exploit he was in no slight degree assisted by his sister Arsinoe, as historians relate, but yet after great slaughters he did not retain his position. And what was the obstacle? His idleness and drunkenness, and his caring for nothing but banquets and debaucheries, and the most obscene pleasures. This caused his fall, after he had been raised even to the clouds by his victories. It afterwards follows, —

Daniel 11:13-14

13. For the king of the north shall return, and shall set forth a multitude greater than the former, great army and with much riches.

13. Et redibit rex aquilonis, *rex Syriae*, et statuet multitudinem magnam praeut antea, ¹⁶² et circiter finem ¹⁶³ temporum annorum, *ad verbum*, veniendo veniet cum exercitu magno, et cum opibus magnis. ¹⁶⁴

14. And in those times there shall many stand up against the king of the south: also the robbers of thy people shall exalt themselves to establish the vision; but they shall fall.

14. Et temporibus illis multi stabunt contra regem Aegypti, et filii dissipatores populi tui sese attollent, ad stabiliendam visionem, et corruent.

Here the angel prophesies of other wars. For he first describes the war which was carried on by Antiochus against the Egyptians, after the death of Philopater, who left as his heir, a little son named Ptolemy Epiphanes. When, therefore, he perceived the land deprived of its king, he drew up an army and invaded Egypt. As the Egyptians had no strength to resist him, an embassy was sent to Rome; and we know how eager the Romans were to become involved in all the business of the world. With the view of extending their empire still further and wider, they sent immediately to Antiochus the Great, and commanded him to desist from the war; but after many trials he failed of success, until he engaged in a very desperate battle with Scopas, and at length obtained a victory. In the meantime, the Egyptians were far from idle: although they hoped to be able to subdue the empire of Antiochus by the assistance of the Senate, yet they carefully fitted out an armament of their own under their General Scopas, who was successful in many of his plans, but was finally defeated in the borders of Judea. The angel now describes this war. *The king of Syria shall return*, he says; meaning, after the death of Ptolemy Philopator, he rested for a while, because he had been unsuccessful with his forces, and they were so entirely disorganized that he had no confidence in the success of any expedition. But he thought Egypt would give him no trouble, as it had lost its head and was like a lifeless corpse. Then he was elevated with fresh confidence, and returned to Egypt. *And he shall arrange a greater multitude than at the first* He had a large and powerful army, as we have said, and a noble armament of cavalry: he had 70,000 foot, and was still collecting greater forces. The angel signifies the future arrival of the king of Syria, after the interval of a certain time. *At the end of the times of the years he shall surely come*, that is he shall break forth. The angel seems to use this expression for the sake of increasing its certainty; for he at first despised the Romans in consequence of their great distance from him, and he had no fear of what afterwards occurred. He never supposed they had such boldness in them as to cross the sea against him.

He afterwards adds, *And in those times many shall stand against the king of the South*, or Egypt. The angel hints, that Antiochus the Great would not be his only enemy; and historians inform us of his treaty and alliance with Philip king of Macedon, for carrying on this war. Without doubt, the two kings stirred up the whole of Asia Minor, and they were so unitedly powerful, that many were excited to take part with them. It seemed to be all over with the kingdom of Egypt, and thus the angel says, *many should stand up against the king of the South* He adds, *and his sons dissipation*.

¹⁶² That is, he will collect a greater army than before — *Calvin*.

¹⁶³ That is, at the close, at a fixed time, at the end — *Calvin*.

¹⁶⁴ Or, “many,” for there are two words in the original, “great and many.” — *Calvin*.

The Hebrews call “robbers” *pheritzim*. The root of this word is *pheretz*, which signifies to break or dissipate, and sometimes to destroy. Without doubt, the angel here uses the word to imply factious men, for the people had no other chance of standing, except by remaining quiet and united. The word then applies to those who violated that unity; for when any one attached himself to foreign monarchs, Judea became exposed as a prey to either the Syrians or Egyptians. Some interpreters apply this passage to the younger Onias, who seized on Heliopolis, and drew some exiles with him, and there built a temple, as we learn from Josephus and the Book of Maccabees. For he pretended to have the prophecy in Isaiah 19, on his side, where it is said, And there shall be an altar to God in the midst of Egypt, (Isaiah 19:19.) Without doubt, the Prophet here predicts the enlargement of God’s kingdom through the propagation of his religion throughout the whole world. As Egypt was to the last degree devoted to idolatry, Isaiah here shews how the pure and perfect worship of God should prevail in Egypt. As if he had said, Even the Egyptians who have, hitherto endeavored to abolish true and sincere piety, shall be added to God’s people, and shall worship him acceptably. We know the Prophet to be here treating figuratively of the spiritual reign of Christ, and to be always bringing forward the shadows of his own time. By the word “altar” he simply means the worship of God. That impostor, Onias, when he erected his profane temple and polluted the sacred altar, boasted in his fulfillment of this prophecy of Isaiah.

This then is the meaning of the passage. *The sons — dissipaters of thy people — shall exalt themselves to establish the vision*; that is, under a fallacious pretext of fulfilling Isaiah’s prediction, *and yet they shall fall*. It may also have all indefinite meaning, as if the angel declared that; these multitudes should not come forth unless by God’s secret counsel. We know how much this thought tends to lighten the sorrow of the pious, and how much consolation it brings, when we recognize all the tumults of the world as springing from the fixed counsel of God. Nothing then appears to happen at random, but mortals are agitated because God desires to inflict his punishments upon them, and the Church is often shaken because God wishes to prove and examine the patience of his people. We may, therefore, take this prophecy absolutely; as if the angel had said. These apostates and dissipaters never proposed to fulfill this prophecy of Isaiah’s, and yet there was nothing confused, or out of order in all these events, as God was fulfilling what he had testified by his own Prophets. Wherefore we may receive this prediction simply, just as we do other similar ones scattered throughout the prophets. We have already heard how the Prophet was forewarned of the many distresses of the Church, on purpose to lead the faithful to acquiesce in the providence of God, when they saw things so disturbed throughout the world. It afterwards follows, —

Daniel 11:15

15. So the king of the north shall come, and **15.** Et veniet rex aquilonis et fundet aggerem, cast up a mound, and take the most fenced cities: ¹⁶⁵ et capiet urbem munitionum; et brachia austri, and the arms of the south shall not withstand, *hoc est, Aegypti*, non stabunt, neque populus neither his chosen people, neither *shall there be* electorum ejus, neque virtus erit ad standum. *any* strength to withstand.

¹⁶⁵ That is, he shall build up a mound by casting up stones, and wood, and earth. — Calvin.

The angel follows up the same sentiment. He says, When Antiochus the Great shall burst forth, there shall be no valor in the Egyptians to resist him, for he shall take a fortified city. There is a change of number here, for he means fortified cities. For he should recover the cities which he had formerly lost, and should arrive at the city Raphia in Egypt. The explanation follows, *The arms of Egypt shall not stand, nor the people of its levies*. This relates to Scopas, who was sent forth with large forces: at first he prospered, but he was afterwards vanquished in the conflict, and had no courage to persevere in resistance. It afterwards follows, —

Daniel 11:16

<p>16. But he that cometh against him shall do according to his own will, and none shall stand before him: and he shall stand in the glorious land, which by his hand shall be consumed.</p>	<p>16. Et faciet veniens ad eum pro beneplacito suo, <i>hoc est, pro suo libidine</i>, et nullus stabit coram facie ejus, et stabit in terra desiderabili, et consumetur, <i>alii nomen esse volunt, consumptio</i>, in manu ejus.</p>
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The angel proceeds with the same discourse. He says, Antiochus the Great should accomplish his wishes, and should spread the terror of his arms in every direction, and thus no one would dare to oppose him. *He shall do therefore according to his will, he says, and none shall stand before his face; and he shall stand in the desirable land;* meaning, he shall bring his victorious army into Judea, *and there shall be a great consumption under his hand*, or Judea shall be consumed and ruined under his hand. We originally stated, that the angel's mission did not authorize him to great these events as military exploits are usually narrated by historians. Enough is revealed to lead the faithful to acknowledge God's continual regard for their safety. Experience also assures us of every occurrence being divinely foreseen, and thus they would acknowledge how everything tended to promote their welfare. God's predictions of future events were never in vain, and the angel now declares the future coming of Antiochus *to the desirable land*. We have previously given the reason for the use of this epithet as applied to Judea, — not through any natural excellence over other lands, but because God had chosen it for himself as his seat and dwelling-place. The excellence of this land depended entirely on the gratuitous beneficence of God. It might seem inconsistent to grant such license to an impious tyrant and robber, and to allow him to overrun Judea, which God had marked out with peculiar honor, in adopting it as his dwelling-place, and calling it his residence. (Psalm 132:14.) But we know that the Church, while on its pilgrimage in this world, enjoys no freedom from many infliction's; for it is profitable for the sons of God to be humbled under the cross, lest they should grow restive in the world, and give themselves up to luxuries, and sleep upon the desires of the flesh. The angel, indeed, omits the reason why God suffered Antiochus thus cruelly to oppress the sacred land; but the faithful had been taught by the Law and the Prophets how the Church was subject to various tribulations. It is sufficient, then, to relate the event with simplicity: *and the pleasant land shall be consumed under his hand*, or there shall be a consumption. It matters but little which way we read it as far as the sense is concerned. The angel here encourages Daniel and all others to the exercise of patience, lest they should faint under this divine scourge;

for he permitted Antiochus to wander about like *a* robber, and to exercise severe tyranny and cruelty against the Jews I need not discuss these events at greater length, as they are found in the Books of the Maccabees I will only touch on one point briefly; Antiochus did not of his own accord harass the Jews by leading his army into their country, but he was stirred up by impious priests. So great was their perfidy and barbarity that they willingly betrayed God's Temple, and exposed their nation to the most distressing calamities. That was a severe trial: hence God consulted the interests of his own worshippers by predicting events which might weaken their confidence and cause them to indulge in despair. It follows, —

Daniel 11:17

17. He shall also set his face to enter with the strength of his whole kingdom, and upright ones with him; thus shall he do: and he shall give him the daughter of women, corrupting her: but she shall not stand *on his side*, neither be for him. **17.** Et ponet faciem suam ¹⁶⁶ ad veniendum cum potentia totius regni, et rectitudines cum eo: et faciet, et filiam mulierum dabit illi ad perdendum eam, sed non stabit ipsa, et non erit ipsa ei. ¹⁶⁸

He here describes the second war of Antiochus against Epiphanes, who was then growing old; and so he gave, him his daughter Cleopatra in marriage, hoping in this way, by subtle contrivances, to subdue the kingdom of Egypt. For he thought his daughter would remain faithful to his interests; but she rather preserved her conjugal fidelity to her husband, and hesitated not to espouse her husband's quarrel against her father. She faithfully adhered to her husband's interests according to her duty, and never listened to the cunning designs of Antiochus. Thus he was deprived of his expectation, and his daughter never became the means of his acquiring authority over Egypt. Before this marriage of his daughter with Ptolemy, he had tried the effect of war, but in this he failed; and when he perceived the interposition of the Romans, he desisted from future hostilities, and consoled himself with the thought which we have already expressed, of receiving immediate assistance against Egypt through his daughter. *He turns, therefore, to come with the power of his whole kingdom;* meaning, he collects all his forces to overwhelm Ptolemy Epiphanes, who was then but a young man, and had neither obtained any great authority, nor arrived at sound wisdom and discretion. When he perceived his want of success in the fortune of war, *he gave him the daughter of women*, referring to her beauty. This is the explanation of interpreters, who suppose the phrase to imply her remarkable beauty.

As to the next clause, those who translate it, *and the upright with him*, think the Jews are intended, for Antiochus had received them in surrender, and there were many who openly espoused his cause. They think the Jews so called as a mark of honor, and as upright with respect to the worship of God. But this appears to me too forced. I hesitate not to suppose the angel to signify the superior character of the agreement between Antiochus and Ptolemy, when the former found

¹⁶⁶ That is, he shall turn himself. — *Calvin.*

¹⁶⁷ Some translate, "the upright;" pl., (*recti*) "with him." The copula may be superfluous, as we often find it in the Scriptures. We must read it in one context, — he shall make alliances with him, as we saw before. — *Calvin.*

¹⁶⁸ That is, she shall not obey his will, nor stand by him. — *Calvin.*

the impossibility of obtaining his adversary's kingdom by open warfare. Although the Romans had not yet sent forth any armament, yet Antiochus began to fear them, and he preferred the use of cunning in providing for his own interests. Besides this, as we lately mentioned, he was longing for other booty, for he immediately transferred the war into Greece, as the angel will inform us. But he first announces, *his giving away his daughter to destroy her* He here reproves the artifice of Antiochus the Great, in thus basely selling his (laughter, as if she were a harlot. As far as he possibly could, he induced her to slay her husband either by poison or by other devices. Hence, *he gave up his daughter to destroy her, but she did not stand by him, and was not for him*; meaning, she did not assent to her father's impious desires, and was unwilling to favor such monstrous wickedness. We read in profane writers the fulfillment of these predictions of the angel, and thus it more clearly appears how God placed before the eyes of the pious, a mirror in which they might behold his providence in ruling and preserving his Church. It now follows, —

Daniel 11:18

18. After this shall he turn his face unto the isles, and shall take many: but a prince for his own behalf shall cause the reproach offered by him to cease; without his own reproach he shall cause *it* to turn upon him. **18.** Et vertet faciem suam ad insulas, et capiet multas, et quiescere faciet, *hoc est, retorquetur*, princeps opprobrium ejus apud ipsum. Ideo non torquebit opprobrium suum in ipsum.

There is some obscurity in these words, but the history will afterwards determine the angel's meaning. First, as to the word "islands," he doubtless means Asia Minor and the maritime coasts; also Greece, Cyprus, and all the islands of the Mediterranean Sea. It was a Jewish custom to call all places beyond the sea "islands," as they were not very well skilled in navigation. Therefore he says, *He will turn his face to the islands*; that is, he shall turn to the opposite regions of the world. The Mediterranean Sea is known to be between Syria and Asia Minor; Cilicia, too, is between them, which was also under the dominion of Antiochus, although the seed of his power was Syria. Hence he calls Asia Minor, and Greece, and the Mediterranean islands, all "isles," with respect to Syria and Judea. This occurred when the AEtolians renewed the war after the defeat of Philip. The Romans were the originators of this war in Greece, and they had the honorable pretext of liberating the whole of Greece after Philip of Macedon had seized upon many cities most skillfully fortified. But the Etolians were proud and puffed up with the desire of superiority, as the event ultimately proved. They boasted themselves to be the liberators of Greece; they used the help of the Romans, but professed to be the principal leaders in the war, and when they saw Chalcis and other cities held by the Romans, the spirit of envy took possession of them. Titus Flaminius withdrew his garrisons from their cities, but yet the AEtolians were not satisfied; for they wished for the sole pre-eminence and the entire departure of the Romans. With this view they sent their ambassadors to Nabis the tyrant of the Lacedaemonians, to king Philip, and also to Antiochus. Thoas was the principal author of this contention, for after stirring up the neighboring nations, he set out himself to Antiochus. When the AEtolians were puffed up by the large promises which he brought back, they expected to produce peace throughout Greece without the slightest trouble. Meanwhile

Antiochus only advanced as far as Asia Minor with but a small force. He led Hannibal with him, whose fame alone inspired the Romans with dread; and had he taken his advice, he would certainly have had no difficulty in expelling the Romans. But the flatterers of His court did not allow Hannibal's advice to prevail with this foolish king. Then Villius also cunningly rendered Antiochus suspicious of his advice: for he had been sent as ambassador into Asia Minor, had insinuated himself into his favor, and had acquired his friendship, and was so engaged in daily conference with him, that Antiochus suspected the fidelity of Hannibal to his interests. Hence he carried on that war entirely without method, or plan, or perseverance. When he arrived at Chalcis, he was smitten with the passion for a damsel there, and celebrated a foolish marriage with her, as if he had been completely at peace. Thus he had citizen of Chalcis for his father-in-law, while he was mighty monarch, unequalled by any throughout the world. Although he conducted himself thus he considerably, yet the celebrity of his fame rather than his personal exertions, enabled him at first to take many cities, not only in Asia Minor and on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, but also in Greece itself. He recovered Chalcis and other cities which had been seized upon by the Romans. The angel relates this as if the event had already occurred, and yet we are aware of them all being as yet future.

He will turn his face to the islands, and will take many, and a general shall cause him to cease, and shall turn his reproach against himself Antiochus often fought against the Romans, and always without success, although he sometimes thought himself superior; but from the time when Attilius the prefect of the fleet intercepted his supplies, and thus stopped his progress, M. Acilius the consul began to gain the mastery by land, and his power became gradually more and more enfeebled. When conquered in a naval engagement by Livius the praetor, he suffered a severe loss, and then when too late he acknowledged his error in not obeying the counsels of Hannibal; but he had lost the opportunity of renewing the war. Hence the angel here says, *A leader should make his reproach return upon himself* This signifies how Antiochus should be puffed up with foolish pride, and how his insane boastings should rebound upon his own head, as he had vomited them forth with open mouth against the Romans. When he speaks here of *his disgrace*, I interpret it actively, as making his reproach remain; for the word *cherepheth*, means reproach, but there are two ways of interpreting it, actively and passively. But as I have already said, the angel more probably speaks of his foolish boasting, for he had despised the Romans with contempt and insult. We know how foolishly he insulted them by his ambassadors among all the assemblies of Greece. *A leader*, then, either Acilius or Lucius Scipio, who drove him beyond Mount Taurus, *made his disgrace rest upon himself, and he shall not turn away his own disgrace*; that is, Antiochus vomited forth his reproaches against the Romans with swollen cheeks, but with utter futility. All these disgraceful speeches came to nothing, and never injured the Romans in the least; but *that leader*, either Lucius Scipio or Acilius, according to my statement, returned these reproaches upon himself by which he hoped to lay the Romans prostrate, but they turned out nothing but wind. The angel therefore derides the pride of Antiochus by saying, *A leader should come who should throw back these reproaches upon himself*, and prevent them from returning upon either this leader or the Romans. He takes the head as representing. the whole body.

PRAYER.

Grant, Almighty God, since it pleases thee to exercise our confidence by not allowing us any fixed or stable rest upon earth, that we may learn to rest in thee while the world rolls over and over even a hundred times. May we never doubt either our protection under thy hand, or the perpetual issue of all things in our good. Although we are not beyond the reach of darts, yet may we know the impossibility of our suffering under any deadly wound, when thou puttest forth thy hand to shield us. May we have full confidence in thee, and never cease to march under thy standard with constant and invincible courage, until at length thou shalt gather us into that happy rest which is laid up for us in heaven, by Christ our Lord. — Amen.

LECTURE FIFTY-NINTH

Daniel 11:19

19. Then he shall turn his face toward the fort of his own land: but he shall stumble and fall, and not be found. **19.** Et vertet faciem suam ad munitiones terrae suae, et impinget, et cadet, neque inveniatur.

Here either the base end of Antiochus is denoted, who was slain in a popular tumult while spoiling the temple of Belus, or else the event of the war between him and the Romans is described. This war was conducted under the auspices of Lucius Scipio, because Cneius Scipio, the conqueror of Africa, had offered himself as his brother's lieutenant-general, and after his death that province was committed to him. But, as we have said, the resources of Antiochus had been cut off before this. He had lost, the cities of Asia, and if he had ceded them at first, he might have quietly retained the greater part of Asia Minor. But as he extended his wings over Greece, and hoped by this means to become completely master of the whole of Greece and Macedonia, he could not be induced to withdraw his garrisons from those cities, but at length was compelled to give up Asia Minor. In this way, then, the angel describes the progress of the war by saying, *He will turn his face towards the fortifications of his own land*; that is, when compelled to relinquish Greece, he will betake himself to fortified places. He was very safe there, and in a region sufficiently at peace; he had almost impregnable towns on all sides, and appeared to be free from warfare. Historians relate this to have been done by the skill of Cneius Scipio. For his son was then a captive under Antiochus, and he knew him to have greater authority than his brother, although he only possessed the title of lieutenant-general. They record his persuading Antiochus not to try his fortune by any decisive engagement. However it was, it is quite evident that he delayed fighting till he was compelled by a sense of shame, as all men accused him of cowardice in not daring to try the issue of an engagement, when he possessed so large an army. The Romans had scarcely ever taken the field against so strong a force, and yet, according to the narrative of Titus Livius, they never displayed less terror or concern. The extent of the forces of Antiochus is readily apparent from the slaughter which occurred; in one day 50,000 men perished; and this would be almost incredible, unless it were borne out by numerous and trustworthy testimonies. In this way the angel said, *Antiochus*

should return, as he did not go forth to meet Lucius Scipio, but suffered him to pass on. Had he given the least sign of resistance, without doubt Philip had in his hand and power the whole force of the Romans. Many indeed pronounced the conduct of L. Scipio to be rash, in daring to allow Philip such license, as he had been lately conquered, and was still exasperated in consequence of the loss and disgrace which he had suffered. For if Antiochus had been on the alert to restrain the enemy, it would have been all over with the Roman army in those narrow and rugged defiles; but, as we have stated, he kept his army in idleness and luxury among fortified towns. If another and a probable sense is preferred, the sentence applies to his *base* retreat to further Asia, where he fell, slain by the rustic population. *He shall fall, and shall not be found* Antiochus in truth continued to reign from the period of the destruction of his army and of his acceptance of the conditions which the Romans imposed. He obtained peace, but not without the payment of a heavy fine while he retained the name of king. Although he united with the Romans in an honorable treaty, yet he was forced to retire beyond Mount Taurus, to pay a large sum of money on account of the expenses of the war, to give hostages, and to divide the ships equally with the Romans. In this latter case he was grossly and fraudulently deluded, for L. Scipio commanded all the ships to be cut to pieces, and delivered the materials to Antiochus, to whom they were utterly worthless. He knew the man to be deceptive and restless, and so he treated him with barbarity, according to his deserts. As far as the hostages are concerned, we find Antiochus and Demetrius his sons as hostages at Rome even after his death. He was left in peace indeed, but was deprived of the cities of Asia Minor, and was ordered to betake himself beyond Mount Taurus. Those ravines were the boundary of his empire; a part of Asia was assigned to Eumenes, and many cities became independent. Antiochus, by way of concealing his disgrace, made a joke of it, saying he had managed cleverly, for the government of Asia Minor was a great trouble to him. He had another ample and opulent kingdom with which he might well be content: I have hitherto been but a steward in Asia, he used to say, and the Romans have relieved me of that encumbrance.

When, therefore, the angel says, *After his fall, he should be no longer king*; this may be understood of his ignominious death which followed shortly afterwards. His avarice was insatiable, and when compelled to pay a large tribute to the Romans, he pretended to be reduced to extreme poverty; then he wished to spoil the temple of Jupiter Dodoneus, and was slain there during a tumult. This last word ought properly to be referred to this event, for King Antiochus was not found, because these rustics slew him in the tumult which arose. Thus far concerning Antiochus the Great; Seleucus now follows, who was his first successor. He had three sons, Seleucus whom many call Ceraunus, then Antiochus Epiphanes, and Demetrius. Concerning Seleucus the angel speaks as follows, —

Daniel 11:20

20. Then shall stand up in his estate a raiser of taxes *in the glory of the kingdom*: but within few days he shall be destroyed, neither in anger, nor in battle. **20.** Et stabit super locum ejus transire faciens exactorem *in honore regni*,¹⁶⁹ et diebus paucis conteretur, idque non ira, neque in praelio.

¹⁶⁹ Some translate this word as if in opposition with the last, — “the honor or glory of the realm.” — *Calvin*.

Seleucus, it is well known, did not long survive his father, for he was put to death either by poison, or by his domestics. Suspicion fell upon his brother Antiochus, who was sent back to his country after his father's death was known. Demetrius alone was retained, who afterwards escaped by flight, for he left the city under the pretense of hunting, and followed the bank of the Tiber as far as Ostia, where he embarked on a small vessel, preferring to run all risks to remaining in perpetual banishment. Concerning Seleucus, the angel says, *he shall stand in his place*, meaning, he shall succeed by hereditary right to the office of Antiochus the Great. Thus *he shall cause the exactor to pass over*. Some translate, He shall take away the exactor; for the verb *gheber*, in Hiphil, signifies to take away. The Hebrews use the verb of this clause in the sense of excluding. Some interpreters think this language implies the praise of Seleucus for lessening the tributes imposed by his father, but historians shew this view to be false, and condemn his avarice and rapacity. In some points he was superior to his brother Antiochus; although both lustful and cruel to those around him. Through indulgence in great expenses, he could not be moderate and lenient towards his subjects; for luxury and prodigality always draw with them cruelty in the exaction of tribute. For he who is thus profuse, must necessarily extract the very blood from his people. As Seleucus was thus devoted to self-indulgence, this sense is more appropriate — *he made the exactor to pass through*, meaning, he laid new and fresh taxes on all his subjects. Nothing but this is said of him, since he was immediately put to death, as the second clause of the verse informs us. If we prefer taking the words — the glory of the kingdom — by way of opposition, Seleucus will be praised as an honor and an ornament. But I think we must supply the letter *l*, and understand the passage thus, — *He who shall cause the exactor to pass through shall stand in his place, and shall be destroyed in a few days*. By the word “destroyed,” he signifies a bloody death. *But not in anger*, says he. I wonder why some translate it “in mutual *conflict*,” because the Hebrews imply “anger” by this word; meaning, he should not perish in open warfare, or in the course of a battle, but by the hands of his domestics. Historians differ as to the kind of death which he died, some saying he was poisoned, and others, slain by the sword. But this difference is of no consequence. Antiochus Epiphanes next succeeds him.

Daniel 11:21

21. And in his estate shall stand up a vile person, to whom they shall not give the honour of the kingdom: but he shall come in peaceably, and obtain the kingdom by flatteries. 21. Et stabit super locum ejus probrosus, et non dabunt ei ¹⁷⁰ decorem regni, ¹⁷¹ et veniet cum pace, et apprehendet regnum per blanditias.

Historians agree in representing Antiochus Epiphanes to have been of a very crafty disposition, and some state his departure from Rome to have been by stealth. He was most probably dismissed by the Romans, on the news of his father's death, as they were content with his brother Demetrius.

¹⁷⁰ That is, they shall not commit to him. — Calvin.

¹⁷¹ That is, they shall not confer the glory of the *kingdom*. — Calvin.

They had other hostages besides, who were among the chief nobles of the land, as well as this third son of the king. However this was, all are agreed in relating his cunning. He was so cruel and fierce, that Polybius says he was called Epimanes by way of a nickname, and as he assumed the name of Illustrious, he was called the Madman, on account of his turbulent disposition. He was a monster puffed up with various vices; being of a slavish and flattering temperament, he endeavored to acquire the favor of Rome by artifice, as we shall afterwards discover. But when he was not actuated by fear, his cruelty and ferocity were beyond all bounds. For this reason he is called *contemptible*. He was held in some esteem at Rome, and was received by a portion of his people with great applause. But he was not endued with any heroic or even regal qualities, for he always flattered the Romans, and insinuated himself into the favor of the citizens in this way, until he came to his kingdom as a suppliant; and then the angel calls him a contemptible or despicable person. Another reason equally probable may be brought forward, namely, his seizing upon the throne by fraud and wickedness, after setting aside the legitimate heir. For Seleucus left a successor whom this perfidious plotter deprived of his rights, and thus fraudulently acquired the kingdom for himself. We know of what importance God makes every one's calling, and how he restrains men from rashly arrogating anything to themselves, as they ought always to be satisfied with that station which is assigned them by God. As, therefore, Antiochus seized on the kingdom without any right to it, and drove out the lawful heir, he was contemptible before God, and would never have been king at all except; by violence and tyranny on his part, as well as by deceit. and cunning devices. I have no hesitation in stating that the angel here censures the perverse conduct of Antiochus, by calling him *despised* through the absence of all nobleness of feeling.

He next adds, *They shall not confer upon him the honor of royalty*. By these words he announces the injustice of his reign through not being chosen by the votes of the people. We have stated that the son of Seleucus ought to have reigned without any dispute, but the very person who should have been his nephew's guardian, wickedly deprived his ward of his paternal inheritance. Hence the angel speaks of him rather as a robber than as a king, because he seized upon the kingdom, and was not elected by the popular choice. It follows, — *he shall come in peace, and seize the kingdom by flatteries* This is the explanation of the last clause. It might be asked, how did he deprive his nephew of his kingdom? the reply is — *he shall come peacefully*, meaning, he shall lay aside everything which he was agitating in his mind, and should not openly boast of his being king, but should deceitfully act in the character of guardian until he had the power of ruining his ward. *He shall come, then, peacefully, and shall seize the kingdom by flatteries* Thus we see the angel's meaning in these words. Besides, although Daniel did not see all these things, nor even many of the chosen people, yet they tasted enough of these prophecies to satisfy them, and to banish anxiety from their minds. They were permitted to perceive God speaking through his angel, and experience taught them the truth of everything which is contained here, even if many events should be hidden from them. But it was God's object to support the spirits of the pious, even to the advent of Christ, and to retain them in tranquillity amidst the greatest disturbances. Thus they would acknowledge the value of the promise of the Redeemer, after he had been set forth, as will be mentioned at the close of the chapter. I will now proceed to the next words.

Daniel 11:22

22. And with the arms of a flood shall they be overflown from before him, and shall be broken; yea, also the prince of the covenant. **22.** Et brachia inundatione obruentur, *ad verbum, inundabuntur*, a conspectu ejus, et conterentur, atque etiam dux foederis.

We may naturally conjecture that the dominions of Antiochus were not immediately at peace, because a portion of his court favored the lawful heir. As it always happens in every change of government, there were many tumults in Syria before Antiochus could remove his adversaries out of his way. For although the kingdom of Egypt was then destitute of a head, as Ptolemy, called Philometor, was then only a boy, his counselors were in favor of the son of Seleucus, and so by secret supplies afforded their aid to the faction opposed to Antiochus. He had much trouble not only with his own people, but also with the neighboring nations. All pitied the lot of his ward, and his being quite undeserving of it moved many to render him every possible help. The boy was aided by the favor of Egypt, and of other nations. Thus Antiochus was subject to many severe commotions, but the angel announces his final conquest. *The arms*, he says, *shall be inundated*. This is a metaphorical expression; for whatever aid the son of Seleucus acquired, was not by his own efforts, for he could use none, but by that of his friends. *The arms*, then, meaning, all the auxiliaries which should assist in the restoration of the son of Seleucus, *should be overwhelmed by an inundation*. This is another metaphor, signifying, they shall be drowned as by a deluge; and by this figure the angel hints not only at the victory of Antiochus, but at its great facility. It was like a deluge, not by its own strength, but because God wished to use the hand of this tyrant in afflicting the Israelites, as we shall afterwards see, and also in harassing both Egypt and Syria. Antiochus was in truth God's scourge, and is thus compared to a deluge. Hence he says, *out of his sight*. He shews the terror of Antiochus to be so great, that at his very appearance he should dispirit and prostrate his enemies, although he was without forces, and was neither a bold nor a persevering warrior.

And they shall be broken, says he, *and also the leader of the covenant*; meaning, Ptolemy shall take the part of His relative in vain. For the son of Seleucus was the cousin of Ptolemy Philometor, since, as we have said, Cleopatra had married Ptolemy Philopator, whence this Philometor was sprung, and Seleucus was the brother of Cleopatra. He, then, was the *leader of the covenant* Ptolemy, indeed, who was but a boy, could neither undertake nor accomplish anything by his own counsel, but such was his dignity in the kingdom of Egypt, that he was deservedly called *leader of the covenant*, since all others followed the power of that king. The event fully proved with what ill success all who endeavored to eject Antiochus from his possessions, contended against him. It now follows, —

Daniel 11:23

23. And after the league *made* with him he shall work deceitfully: for he shall come up, and shall become strong with a small people. **23.** Et a conjunctione cum eo faciet dolum, et ascendet, et praevalebit cum exigua gente, *vel, manu.*

The angel points out some interruption of the wars, because Antiochus would be content for a time with Syria, and would not make an attempt of Egypt. It was a great point to repel the attempts of all those who wished to recover the rights of his nephew. There is no doubt that the whole country was impoverished and exhausted with the continual expense of these wars; for whenever fresh commotion's arose, it was necessary to draw new levies from these provinces, and This occasioned very great expense. It is not surprising, then, if Antiochus, who was of a cunning disposition, negotiated a temporary peace with his nephew Ptolemy Philometor the king of Egypt. His sister Cleopatra still survived, and this was an honorable excuse. The angel, then, states first, the proposal of a truce leading to settled peace between the two sovereigns. He adds, however, the perfidious conduct of Antiochus in his friendships. *During, or after these agreements, he shall deal treacherously with him* Although, therefore, he pretended to be the friend and ally of his nephew, yet he conducted himself deceitfully towards him. *And he shall ascend, and shall prevail by a small band*; meaning, he shall attack the boy suddenly. For when Ptolemy anticipated a lasting friendship with his uncle, Antiochus took the opportunity of fraudulently attacking some cities with a small force: He thus deceived his enemy, who thought all things would be tranquil with him; and so when Ptolemy had no fear of his uncle, he suddenly lost some of his cities. The angel means this; *he shall rise by deceit, and shall prevail without large forces*, because there shall be no suspicion of warfare. It is easy enough to oppress an enemy in a state of tranquillity, and in the absence of all fear. It is afterwards added, —

Daniel 11:24

24. He shall enter peaceably even upon the fattest places of the province; and he shall do *that provinciae, veniet, hoc est, in deliciis*, et faciet which his fathers have not done, nor his fathers' quae non fecerunt patres ejus, et patres patrum fathers; he shall scatter among them the prey, and ejus: spolia et praedam, et substantiam illis spoil, and riches: *yea*, and he shall forecast his dispertiet, ¹⁷² et super munitiones cogitabit devices against the strong holds, even for a time. cogitationes suas, idque ad tempus.

The history is here continued: The angel shews how Antiochus in a short time and with a small band should acquire many cities, *as he should come in peace upon the fatness of the province*, implying his oppressing them while sleeping in security. He shews also how he should become conqueror, not by any hostile invasion of Egypt, but by cunning and stealth he should deprive King Ptolemy of his cities when he least expected it. There should be no appearance of war; hence he says, *he shall come in peace upon the fatness of the land* The word "fatness" is used metaphorically for "richness." When the Egyptians supposed all danger to be far removed, and were persuaded of the friendship of Antiochus towards them, and relied on him as an ally should any adversity arise, they indulged themselves in luxuries till Antiochus came suddenly and subdued them. He next adds, *He shall despise the spoil, and prey, and goods, which belonged to them* Some take the words for spoil and prey in the sense of "soldiers," and join it with the verb *ibzor*, "he shall disperse,"

¹⁷² Or, he shall disperse their property. — Calvin.

meaning, he shall distribute their possessions among his soldiers, to conciliate their good will, and to prepare them for new wars, as we know how easily soldiers are enticed when they receive the rewards of their service; for they are actuated solely by covetousness and avarice. Some writers expound it in this way — Antiochus shall divide the prey among his soldiers, but I prefer the other sense — he *shall disperse the prey, and the spoil, and the goods, of the Egyptians* After suddenly oppressing the Egyptians, he shall proceed to spoil them like a robber.

He afterwards adds, *And against the fortifications shall he devise machinations*, meaning, he shall lay his plans for seizing the fortified cities. For at first he penetrated as far as certain cities, and occupied first Coelo-Syria, and afterwards Phoenicia, but could not quickly possess the fortified towns; hence he deferred the execution of his plans to a more suitable time. Therefore, the angel says, *he shall arrange his plans against the fortified cities, but only for the time*; meaning, he shall not immediately bring forward his intentions, hoping to oppress his nephew when off his guard. Thus under the disguise of peace an access to these cities would always be open to him, and he would reconcile to himself all whom he could corrupt by either gifts or other devices. We perceive, then, how a summary is here presented to us of the arts and schemes by which Antiochus should deprive his nephew of a portion of his territory and its towns, how suddenly he should invade some of the weakest in a state of unsuspecting tranquillity; and how by degrees he should invent machinations for seizing upon the stronger towns as well as he could. He also says, *for the time* The cunning and malice of Antiochus was always apparent throughout these transactions. He did not engage in open warfare, but was always endeavoring to add to his possessions by indirect frauds, — a course which was not without its success.

When it is said, *He shall do what neither his fathers nor his fathers' fathers did*, this must be restricted solely to Egypt. For Seleucus the first king of Syria enjoyed a wide extent of dominion, then he prospered in warfare, and his fame flourished even to a good old age, and though at last he was unsuccessful in battle, yet on the whole he was a superior and celebrated warrior. Besides this we know him to have been one of the chief generals of Alexander the Great. As to his son Antiochus, we have previously observed the wide extent of his dominion, and how highly he was esteemed for prudence and valor. The angel does not compare Antiochus Epiphanes generally with either his father, his mother, or grandfather, or great-grandfather, but only with respect to Egypt. For his ancestors always longed after Egypt, but their designs against it were entirely frustrated; he, however, was more successful in his aggression where his ancestors had failed in their attempts. Hence it becomes manifest how God overrules the events of war, so that the conqueror and the triumphant hero is not the man who excels in counsel, or in prudence, or valor, but he who fights under the heavenly leader. It pleases God at one time to afflict nations, and at another to set over them kings who are really his servants. So he wished to punish Egypt by the hands of this robber. It afterwards follows,

Daniel 11:25

25. And he shall stir up his power and his courage against the king of the south with a great army; and the king of the south shall be stirred
25. Et excitabit robur suum, et cor suum adversus regem austri, cum exercitu magno: et rex austri irritabitur ad praelium cum exercitu

up to battle with a very great and mighty army; magno, et robusto valde: et non stabit, quia but he shall not stand: for they shall forecast cogitabunt contra eum cogitationes.¹⁷³ devices against him.

The angel here announces how Antiochus Epiphanes after prevailing by fraud, should become bolder in his daring. he should venture to levy a hostile army and invade Egypt openly, without any further dissimulation. He therefore says, *at length he shall rouse his strength and his courage* He had previously crept along through hiding-places and fastnesses, and had not roused either his strength or his courage when remaining quiet at home; meanwhile he obtained the possession of various towns by treachery and other artifices. This was only creeping on by burrowing underground. But he now openly declares war, and brings his forces into the field of battle, and thus *stirs up his strength and his courage* As I have already said, his new method of warfare is here described as unusual with him, as his audacity, doubtless, gradually increased through that series of success which he had enjoyed, and by which he had become more powerful than his nephew, through the practice of deceit. He afterwards adds, *with a great army*. He had mentioned a small band, he now places opposite to it a large army; for it required a long space of time to collect extensive pecuniary resources for carrying on the war, and also for enlarging and extending his own boundaries. He was thus able to enroll fresh levies, while his prosperity induced many to become his auxiliaries. As he found himself in every way superior to his nephew, he collected a great army. *The king of the south also shall be irritated*; that is, he shall not dare to harass his own uncle Antiochus, but shall be forced to open warfare. *He shall come, then, with a great army*, very great, strong, and powerful, says he, *but he shall not stand, because they shall devise devices against him*; meaning, he shall be conquered by treachery. Here the angel signifies that Ptolemy should have sufficient courage to resist, had he not been betrayed by his adherents. We shall more clearly perceive this in the next verse to-morrow.

PRAYER.

Grant, Almighty God, that we may remain quiet under thy shelter and protection, hi the midst of those numerous disturbances which thou ever submittest to our eyes in this world. May we never lose our courage when an occasion is given to Satan and our enemies to oppress us, but may we remain secure trader thy protection, and every hour and every moment may we fly to thy guardianship. Relying on thine unconquered power, may we never hesitate so to pass through all commotion's, as to repose with quiet minds upon thy grace, till at length we are gathered into that happy and eternal rest which thou hast prepared for us in heaven, by Jesus Christ our Lord. — Amen.

LECTURE SIXTIETH

¹⁷³ That is, they shall agitate against him perfidious counsels. — Calvin.

Daniel 11:26

26. Yea, they that feed of the portion of his meat shall destroy him, and his army shall overflow: and many shall fall down slain. **26.** Et qui comedent portionem cibi ejus, conterent eum, et exercitus ejus obruetur, et cadent vulnerati multi.

The angel predicted, yesterday, that Ptolemy should not stand forth in battle, through the treachery of his own adherents. He now expresses the kind of treachery, for his chief courtiers or counselors should be the authors of this perfidy. He opposes the common soldiers to their leaders, for in the second clause, he shews how the soldiers should discharge their duty without sparing either their life or their blood. We now understand the Holy Spirit's intention in this verse, for he says the authors of this perfidy should not be ordinary men, but the chief among the counselors. They are said to eat at the king's table, as in the first chapter we saw how a portion was given to Daniel, and to his companions, from the royal food at the king's table. Thus he shews how dishonorable this perfidy was, as they eat at his table, and were his intimate companions. *They shall destroy him*, says he, *and his army shall be overwhelmed* He shews that many were prepared for this duty, who would boldly and freely expose their lives to danger for their king's safety and their country's defense, *but many should fall wounded* He signifies that there should be a great slaughter in his army, and the issue of the battle would not be according to his wish, because his generals would not preserve their fidelity to their sovereign. By this example the angel describes to us the ordinary situation of kings. They choose their counselors not by their honesty, but by the mere appearance of congeniality in their affections and tastes. If a king is avaricious, or cunning, or cruel, or sensual, he desires to have friends and attendants who will not check either his avarice or his craftiness, his cruelty or his lust. Hence they deserve the conduct which they receive, and experience treachery from those whom they ought not to treat with so much honor, if they considered themselves in duty bound to God and to their people. It now follows,-

Daniel 11:27

27. And both these kings' hearts shall be to do mischief, and they shall speak lies at one table; but it shall not prosper: for yet the end shall be at the time appointed. **27.** Et duorum regum cor ipsorum, hoc est, in malum: et in mensa eadam, una, mendacium loquentur, et non prospere eveniet, quia adhuc finis ad tempus statutum.

The angel here narrates that the close of this war should be by treaties and a hollow pretense of peace after the slaughter which Ptolemy had sustained. Although Antiochus might have followed up his own good fortune, yet he durst not venture to push his advantage to the extremity, but according to his disposition, he thought it more to his interest to make peace with his enemy. We have already alluded to his craftiness and his want of openness and integrity. The angel predicts the existence of bad faith in both these kings; the uncle and nephew will meet, says he, and sup together, and pretend the greatest friendship, *but they shall speak lies*, says he, *at the same table*;

meaning, they shall plot against each other, and each shall act fraudulently for his own ends. This prophecy indeed seems to be of little consequence to the faithful; but it was needful to shew that in such a state of confusion they could not hold out without being furnished with all kinds of support. If the angel had only said generally, first there shall be war, and then a temporary peace, this would not have been sufficient to sustain the minds of the pious; but when the details are so clearly pointed out, a remarkable confirmation is afforded them. Thus the faithful have no reason for doubting that God has spoken, when the angel predicts the future so exactly, and so openly narrates it, as if a matter of history.

He next adds, *Yet it shall not prosper, because the end is for the time*, says he. The angel recalls the faithful to the providence of God, as our minds always naturally rest in the midst of earthly things. We apprehend with our minds only as far as we see with our eyes. We always ask the reasons “why this happens” and “why that course of proceeding has not turned out well,” entirely omitting the will of God. Hence the angel meets this fault and stupidity of men by saying, that whatever these kings were plotting should fail of success, *since the end was for the time*; meaning, God would hold many occurrences in suspense. While, therefore, we are considering only second causes, we perceive how the supreme power resides with God alone, and he governs by his will the mutual transactions of mankind. No slight advantage would result to the faithful from this instruction, because, while kings are devising many schemes, and using great cunning and all the perverse artifices of diplomacy, God still restrains their minds. He holds events by his secret bridle, and allows nothing to happen without his heavenly decree. Although we may gather this general instruction from this passage, yet the angel doubtless restricts what I have said to the historical events immediately before us. The end had not yet approached, yet the fitting time was fixed beforehand by God’s secret counsel, so that Antiochus conquers at one period and retreats at another, as we shall see. It follows: —

Daniel 11:28

28. 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. **28.** Et revertetur in terram suam cum opibus magnis, et cor ejus ad foedus sanctitatis, et faciet, et revertetur in terram suam.

Here the angel predicts the calamitous nature of that peace for the people of God, because Antiochus should turn his arms against Jerusalem and the whole Jewish people. It is said, *He shall return to his own land*, because he shall not possess Egypt. This return implies the victory of Antiochus, and yet his betaking himself within the boundaries of his own realm. When he adds, with great pomp, or *great riches*, he shews the source *whence* that wealth should be *derived*, — *his heart should be against the holy covenant*. He partially destroyed Jerusalem and the temple of God. He was compelled to leave the temple and many treasures, through either shame, or reverence, or a miracle, as we read in the 2nd Book of Maccabees (Maccabees 5:2.) He would willingly have stripped the whole temple, but God then restrained him, while he had gathered for himself great wealth. Hence the angel joins the two events, he should return to Syria with great wealth, and his

heart should be against the holy covenant. Some refer this to persons, as if the angel meant the people who were in covenant with God. But the simpler sense pleases me better, — he should carry on war against God, because he was not enriched with such ample spoils as he had expected. We have mentioned his making peace with his enemy: lest, therefore, this expedition should be fruitless, he spoiled the temple of God. Thus *his heart was elated against God and against his holy covenant*. The other exposition is too cold and too forced.

And he shall do it and shall return to his own land. This return at the end of the verse is taken in a different sense from that at the beginning, as now he should use his own will as a conqueror, and no one should oppose his arrival in his own territories. These two expressions are to be read *together*, — *he shall do it and return to his own dominions*. The meaning of the word for “do” we have already explained. The angel signifies the absence of every obstacle which could prevent the destruction of the city and temple by Antiochus. This was a severe trial, and would cause the minds of the faithful to be disturbed and tossed about because God gave up his temple to this cruel tyrant, and permitted the sacred vessels and the hidden treasures to be carried off with the greatest ignominy. It was necessary, then, to inform the faithful beforehand of this grievous slaughter, lest its novelty should astonish them and overthrow the constancy of their faith. Hence we gather this practical instruction — God often predicts many sorrowful events for us, and yet this instruction ought not to embitter our feelings; for he wishes to fortify us against the trial which the novelty of the event, must occasion. Thus the angel, while treating of occurrences by no means agreeable, was a useful herald of all the calamities which must happen, lest anything unusual or unexpected should fall upon the pious. Thus they would acknowledge the affliction to proceed from God’s hand; and while they were exposed to the lust of Antiochus, yet God by his certain and incomprehensible counsel allowed much license to this impious tyrant. It afterwards follows

Daniel 11:29-30

29. At the time appointed he shall return, and come toward the south; but it shall not be as the former, or as the latter. **29.** Ad tempus revertetur et veniet in Ægyptum: et non erit ut prius, ita posterius.¹⁷⁴

30. For the ships of Chittim shall come against him: therefore he shall be grieved, and return, and have indignation against the holy covenant: so shall he do; he shall even return, and have intelligence with them that forsake the holy covenant. **30.** Et venient contra eum naves Cithim, et debilitabitur,¹⁷⁵ et revertetur, et indignabitur adversus foedus sanctitatis, et faciet, et revertetur, et intelliget,¹⁷⁶ ad desertores foederis sanctitatis.

First of all, the angel says, Antiochus should return a short time afterwards and take possession of Egypt. This was the fruit of that pretended peace and perfidious friendship which has already

¹⁷⁴ That is, the issue should be different, for the latter expedition should not succeed as the former one did. — Calvin.

¹⁷⁵ Or, he shall grieve, which sense I rather prefer. — Calvin.

¹⁷⁶ That is, he shall apply his *mind*. — Calvin.

been mentioned. For the uncle and nephew banqueted together in mutual distrust, as the angel has already stated, and as we found in the 27th verse of this chapter. This deception was shortly afterwards dissolved, when Antiochus, without any reasonable impulse, returned to Egypt. In this way he shewed his want of nothing but an opportunity for breaking the truce, and he only delayed it for a time, because he had no wish to oppress his nephew in haste. This, then, is one point. We may take the word *mogned*, “time,” for a period divinely predetermined; but, as this explanation may seem too forced, I am contented with the common one. *He shall return, then, for a time, and shall come, says he, to Egypt; but the latter exposition shall not be like the former;* for the whole preparation for war which had struck such terror into Egypt should lose its effect. He had seized on a portion of the kingdom, and King Ptolemy Philometor was besieged when Publius Popilius arrived, of whom the angel will presently speak. For the cause of his return is added, —

ships shall come from Chittim We have explained this word elsewhere. By comparing all the passages of Scripture in which the word occurs, we shall find all the Gentiles denoted by it, from Macedon through the whole of Greece, as far as Illyricum and Italy. The ancients used another term for the Macedonians; they call them *Maketoë*, and some think the letter M a useless addition. But whether this be so or not, the circumstances shew the Macedonians, and Greeks, and other transmarine nations, to have been called Chittim. If any one still disputes about this word, let us desist from all contention; still, we cannot help observing what the perpetual tenor of Scripture enables us to discover, — that the Macedonians, Greeks, and Italians are included under this term. This passage is free from all doubt, because Antiochus was restrained not by the Greeks but by the Romans. Ambassadors were sent by them, not for this purpose alone, but to investigate the whole state of Greece and Asia Minor. The affairs of Greece were then very unsettled, and the Romans were turning their attention towards Achaia, for they thought the Achaean league would become too powerful. Among these ambassadors was P. Popilius, a stern man, as we may venture to conjecture, but austere and barbarous. When he met with Antiochus, who was then besieging Alexandria, and held the boy-king in captivity, he addressed him after his own manner. King Antiochus received him graciously, and mildly, and even blandly, and wished even to salute him, for, as we have already stated, his disposition was naturally servile. Popilius rejected all these advances, and ordered him to keep his familiarities for private intercourse; for Antiochus had been intimate with him when a hostage at Rome, during his father’s lifetime. He rejected all these acts of courtesy, and explained to him the commands of the Senate, and ordered him instantly to depart from Egypt. The king said he would consult with his friends. But he was unable to lay aside his accustomed sternness; he drew a circle with the wand which he held in his hand, and ordered the king to summon his counselors, and to deliberate on the spot, otherwise he must declare war at once. When the king perceived this barbarian acting so decisively, he dared no longer to hesitate or dissemble, but threw himself at once into the power of the Senate, and suddenly retired from the country. This history is now described by the angel. All these events were as yet unperformed, but God set before the eyes of the pious what was then entirely concealed and contrary to the expectation of mankind. The angel therefore states the reason wily that expedition of Antiochus should be quite unlike the last one. *There shall come against him, says he, ships of Chittim, meaning Italy, and he shall grieve and return;* that is, he shall obey, although he shall feel indignant at such imperious treatment, and be compelled to retreat with every mark of disgrace. It was unworthy of a king to demean himself so humbly at the mere word of his adversary.

This accounts for his indignation: *But he shall return and be indignant against the covenant of holiness*; meaning, he shall turn his rage against the temple and city of God. This second return involved the Jews in a far longer period of slaughter than the former one. Antiochus was then unwilling to return home, unless laden with spoil, after pretending to establish peace; but now he was compelled to retreat with great disgrace, and this only exasperated and enraged him. Hence he acted most outrageously towards both the people and the temple of God. Thus the angel says, *He shall be indignant against the holy covenant, and shall do so and return* He repeats the same language twice as if he had said, Antiochus should return to Syria without effecting his object, through obeying the Roman Senate, or rather his old friend whom he had known at Rome. We have already stated the reason, which we shall afterwards more fully explain, why the angel predicted the fury of the king as turned *against the holy covenant* It is this, — the confidence of the pious would naturally be injured by observing the divine permission granted to the tyrant for spoiling the temple.

He next adds, *And he shall act with intelligence towards the forsakers of the holy covenant* The angel here points out the manner in which secret agreements should take place between Antiochus and those apostates who should desert God's holy covenant. It is quite clear that he was summoned to Jerusalem, first, by Jason, and then by Menelaus. (2 Maccabees 4:19-23.) I shall touch but briefly events recorded in history. Profane authors inform us accurately of these occurrences, and besides this, a whole book of Maccabees gives us similar information, and places clearly before us what the angel here predicts. Every one who wishes to read these prophecies with profit, must make himself familiar with these books, and must try to remember the whole history. Onias the elder was a holy man; his son has been previously mentioned. (2 Maccabees 3:1.) For, with the view of escaping from snares, he set out for Egypt and built a temple, as Josephus informs us, and pretended to fulfill that passage in Isaiah which says, There shall be an altar to God in Egypt. But Onias the elder, who discharged faithfully and sacredly the office of high priest, was put to flight, and eventually put to death. Then Jason, whom he had sent to appease Antiochus, assumed the high priesthood, and betrayed the temple and the whole nation, as well as the worship of God. (2 Maccabees 4:35-37; also 7.) He afterwards met with the reward which he deserved, for he was slain, and then Menelaus succeeded him, and conciliated the favor of Antiochus. (2 Maccabees 5:9; 4:27.) The authority of the priesthood prevailed so far as to enable him to draw with him a great portion of the people. Here, then, the angel predicts how Antiochus, on approaching the city, should have deserters and apostates as His companions. The words are, *He shall apply his mind to the forsakers of the holy covenant*, and the sense is by no means obscure. Antiochus should not make open war against the Jews, but one faction should go forth to meet him and ingratiate themselves with him. I run through these events briefly, because when I afterwards arrive at a general summary, it will be far more convenient to elicit the general improvement. The angel says next:

Daniel 11:31-32

<p>31. And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall</p>	<p>31. Et brachia ab ispsō stabunt, et profanabunt sanctuarium roboris, <i>aut virtutis</i>, et abolebunt</p>
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take away the daily *sacrifice*, and they shall place jure, *sacrificium scilicet, et ponent*
the abomination that maketh desolate. *abominationem quae obstupefaciet.* ¹⁷⁷

32. And such as do wickedly against the 32. Et impie agentes contra foedus abducat
covenant shall he corrupt by flatteries: but the in errorem blanditiis, ¹⁷⁸ et populus intelligentes
people that do know their God shall be strong, ¹⁷⁹ Deum suum roborabuntur et facient.
and do *exploits*.

Here the angel describes the intestine evils of the Church, and more fully explains what he touched on in the last verse. He says, *The arms shall stand up for Antiochus* Some explain this of the garrison which that tyrant imposed on Jerusalem But it seems too far-fetched. I do not hesitate to suppose the angel to refer here to the apostates and forsakers of the Law. *Arms*, then, *shall stand up from him*, meaning, he shall not contend in his own strength, but shall rely upon the people's assistance. Many should offer themselves in obedience to him, and thus Antiochus would find a party devoted to himself at Jerusalem, which should willingly prostitute itself to his will. He afterwards adds, *They shall profane the sanctuary of strength* The angel here joins together Antiochus and these impious apostates. (2 Maccabees 5:2.) To favor him, the temple is said to be polluted, and this was fulfilled when the statue of Jupiter Olympius was erected there. The tyranny and violence of Antiochus continued long afterwards, as we shall see in its own place. He brought the statue of the Olympian Jove into the temple, for the purpose of overthrowing the worship of God, and then he introduced other corruption's, which vitiated the purity of God's service. He might in one moment have overthrown the whole Law, but he first tried to mingle many superstitions with God's Law, and thus to estrange the Jews by degrees from true and sincere piety. The angel speaks of *the sanctuary of power*, to shew the faithful that Antiochus is not the conqueror of God, who was never deprived of his power, but continued the guardian and keeper of his temple even unto the end. He uses this epithet for the temple, to assure the pious that God had not given way to the violence of the tyrant. His authority stood untouched and untainted, although his temple was exposed to such foul pollution.

Lastly, he wished the faithful to retain by this teaching a sense of God's unconquered power in choosing that temple for his dwelling-place, although for a time Antiochus was so insulting, and was permitted to profane it with his impious crew. This instruction urged the pious to look upon God's power with the eye of faith, although it was then hidden from their view, and was trampled under foot by the impious in the pride of their audacity. Sorrowful indeed was the spectacle of this statue erected within the temple, for God, according to our previous statement, promised to be the defender of that sacred mountain. When the impious were raging thus insultingly, who would not have thought God to be altogether conquered and unable to defend his residence any longer? The angel then here encourages the faithful to cultivate far different thoughts from those suggested by the prospect before them. The temple, then, seemed weak and deprived of every protection, and yet with respect to God it was still a sanctuary of strength. He next adds, *And they shall abolish the continual sacrifice*, which really occurred; but I pass it over shortly now, as I shall have another

¹⁷⁷ We have treated this word before. — Calvin

¹⁷⁸ That is, he shall pervert them more and more by flatteries. — Calvin.

¹⁷⁹ That is, all the people who acknowledge. — Calvin.

opportunity of explaining it suitably and fully. *And they shall place, or set up, that abomination which shall cause astonishment* For who would not have been astonished when he saw the temple deserted by the Almighty? For if God cared for the temple services, why did he not resist rage like this? Why did he suffer himself to be subjected to such disgraceful indignity? The angel meets such temptations as these by saying, even if the very best men are astonished at such disgrace, yet nothing happens by chance; for God had already foreseen and decreed all things. They would not have been predicted, unless God had wished to prove the people's faith, and to exact the penalty for their ingratitude. But I cannot complete the subject to-day.

PRAYER.

Grant, Almighty God, that as we are instructed by thy Spirit and armed by thy sacred teaching, we may carry on the war bravely with open enemies and with all who boldly oppose true religion. May we also constantly despise all domestic foes and apostates, and resist them manfully. May we never be disturbed, even if various tumults should arise in thy Church. May we fix our eyes upon thee, and always expect a happier issue than appears possible at the time, until at length thou shalt fulfill thy promises. And may all events which now seem contrary to us, issue in our salvation, when thy Son our Redeemer shall appear. — Amen.

LECTURE SIXTY-FIRST

We stated in the last Lecture, the seriousness of the test by which God proved the faithfulness of his people, in allowing Antiochus such unbounded liberty to pollute the Temple, and to abolish, for a time, all the sacrifices and services. He next set up in the midst of the Temple that abomination which cast down the spirits of the pious; for that prodigy could not be witnessed without the most profound astonishment. No one could suppose it possible, that God would expose his own sanctuary to such dishonor, as it was the only one which he had chosen in the whole world. It now follows, *And he shall deceive the transgressors of the covenant with blandishment, but a people knowing their God will retain it firmly and practice it* Here Daniel more clearly expresses what he had previously said of the corruption and overthrow of God's worship, as Antiochus should enticingly win over to himself a perfidious portion of those who were nominally, at least, God's people. He thus repeats what we observed before. These hypocrites were like the arms of Antiochus; for had he captured the city by the force of arms, still he would not have dared to offer these insults to God's Temple, unless he had received assistance from those apostates who rejected all fear of the Almighty, and whom ambition and avarice alone had impelled to unite with that impious tyrant, who was the avowed and professed enemy of their religion. The angel, then, here confirms what he had previously said, shewing how the wicked and impious despisers of the covenant should be tools in the hand of this robber. For the first word of verse 32 is derived from *reshegn*, "to do wickedly," and refers to that special act of sinfulness, their despising God's covenant. This refers to those intestine enemies who had previously boasted themselves to be sons of Abraham, and who were masked by circumcision, the sign of that covenant. He does not here point out any of the mere dregs of the people, but the impious priests, Menelaus, Jason, and others like them, as the passage

has already been explained. He says then, *these should be deceived by the blandishments of Antiochus*. He doubtless offered to the priests and to others what he thought they would value most; one he set over the Temple, another he deceived with vain and fallacious promises for a time, by distributing a variety of gifts among them. In this way he corrupted them all by his flatteries. To these the Prophet opposes the sincere worshippers of God, and the Hebrew copula ought to be understood here as implying this contrast. He had already spoken of many as deceived by vain promises, and had called them transgressors of the covenant: he now adds, *But the people who know God shall strengthen themselves and shall do it*. The angel means that the perfidy of those of whom he had spoken, should not prevail with the pious to lead them into the same alliance of wickedness, and to hurl them headlong into the same snares. Although such was the perfidy of these revolters, yet *all who know God*, says he, *shall strengthen themselves*.

This passage is specially worthy of notice, as experience teaches how very few stand their ground, when many fall away. The example of one often draws with it a hundred into the same rule; but the constancy of a hundred is scarcely sufficient to retain one in his position. In this case we behold the depth of our natural depravity. For we are not only moved, but shaken by the very slightest breezes, and even when God sets before us a firm resting-place, still we do not cease our vacillation. When an Apostle sets before us the examples of the saints, he says, a cloud of witnesses is ever gazing upon us, with the view of retaining us in the fear of God, and in the pure confession of our faith. (Hebrews 12:1.) But that cloud vanishes too soon from our view. Meanwhile, if any trifler whom we know to be a man of no weight, and whom we have ourselves condemned, — if such a one should decline even so little from the right way, we think such an example sufficient to excuse us. Wherefore, I had good reason for stating how this passage lays open to us our perverse and malignant disposition. We can scarcely be attracted towards God by a multiplicity of appliances, but we are easily dragged towards the devil to our own destruction. Hence we ought diligently to meditate upon this passage, and continually to reflect upon the Prophet's language. Although apostates may be deceived by flatteries and reject God's worship, betray the Church and throw off all semblance of piety, yet all the pious shall stand fast in the faith. Let no one therefore quote the example of the thoughtless to excuse his fault, if he trait are the perfidious, the double-minded, and the hypocritical. The angel here depicts to us a picture of the Church, by shewing how many should prove backsliders; but this levity, inconsistency, and perfidy ought never to be an obstacle to the foes of God to impede their progress in faith and piety.

We should also notice the epithet which designates the pious. *They are called a people knowing their God*. The people may be supposed to mean the vulgar, but this is forced. It may also be simply opposed to the profane Gentiles; but I think there is here an implied contrast between the true and genuine sons of Abraham, and the false Israelites, who boasted themselves to be members of the Church when they had nothing but the empty title. For in the prophets as in the writings of Moses, the name "people" is often used in a favorable sense for that elect nation which God had adopted as peculiarly his own. All the Israelites who were descendants of Abraham after the flesh, used to boast with much vanity in their being the elect people, and thus the word was ever on their lips. Wherefore the Prophet reproves the foolish boasting of those who were accustomed to shelter themselves under the name of God, and without having anything real in themselves. Hence *the people*, meaning God's people, *shall strengthen themselves*; but, by way of correcting any erroneous view, he adds, *who shall know God*, as in the 73d Psalm, (Psalm 73:1.) How good is the God of Israel to those who are upright in heart! Here the Prophet restricts the name of Israel to the elect

sons of Abraham who cultivate piety seriously and heartily, as it had become a prevalent habit carelessly to misuse this name of God. So here, *the people who shall know their God*, means his true people — those whom he acknowledges as his elect. The angel here makes a distinction between the pious sons of Abraham and the pious worshippers of God. It is worthy of careful observation, that the angel assigns their knowledge of God as the cause and foundation of their constancy. How then, we may ask, does it come to pass, that some few are left, when the apostates thus prostitute themselves? Because their knowledge of God shall prevail, and enable them to overcome these attacks, and bravely to repel them, and to become superior to any temptations. We see, then, the source whence our own fortitude is derived — the knowledge of God. This acknowledgment is no vain and cold imagination, but springs from that faith which spreads its living root in our hearts. Hence it follows, we do not really acknowledge God, unless we boldly contend when we are put to the test, and remain firm and stable, although Satan endeavors, by various machinations, to weaken our faithfulness. And unless we persist in that firmness which is here described, it is quite clear, that God has never been truly and really acknowledged by us. The relation too is not without its weight in the phrase, *the people who shall know their God* Here is a silent reproof, since God revealed himself to the Israelites as far as was sufficient to retain their allegiance. No one, therefore, could offer any excuse without being guilty of impiety, sacrilege, and perfidy, after being so fully instructed by the Law and the prophets. This instruction must now be applied to our own times.

We observe in these days how many fall off from the Church. Persecution sifts all those who profess to belong to Christ, and thus many are winnowed like chaff, and but a small portion remain steadfast. Their backsliding ought not to overthrow our faithfulness when they so carelessly forsake all piety, either through being enticed by the allurements of Satan, or deceived by the conduct of the ungodly. Let us bear in mind the assertion of the angel, and thus the true knowledge of God will reign supreme in our hearts, and we shall still proceed in the course we have pursued. And to shew how consistently the faithful progress in the teaching of the Law and the Gospel, he says, *they shall strengthen themselves and shall do it*. Here the word “to do” is taken in the sense of to “execute” — “exploiter,” as we say in France; meaning, they shall summon their courage to discharge their duty; for the word “to do,” or “to execute,” is referred to the vocation of the pious; they should not be sluggish or slothful in the discharge of their duty, says the Prophet, but should gather courage for these contests. And whence? from the acknowledgment of God. We observe, too, that faith is no idle feeling or cold imagination, lying suffocated in our minds, but an energizing principle. For we may say that from faith springs strength, and from strength execution, and thus we avoid all slothfulness in our calling. It follows —

Daniel 11:33-34

33. And they that understand among the people shall instruct many: yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by *captivitate*, et direptione, diebus multis. spoil, *many* days.

33. Et intelligentes populi docebunt multos, et cadent in gladio, et flamma, et exilio, *vel*, et direptione, diebus multis.

34. Now when they shall fall, they shall be holpen with a little help: but many shall cleave to them with flatteries. **34.** Et in cadendo, ¹⁸⁰ juvabuntur auxilio ¹⁸¹ modico: et adjungent se illis multi in blanditiis.

With reference to the words, they mean, *those who shall be taught among the people shall make many understand* Some take the first word of the verse transitively, as “those who shall instruct,” but this is wrong; and they shew their ignorance by supposing the relative pronoun understood before the next verb, as if it were, “and those who shall teach.” The simple sense is, “Those who shall be wise among the people shall teach many.” Here the Prophet, under the angel’s guidance, predicts the multitude of apostates as well as the existence of some of an opposite character, who should retain the people within the pure worship and fear of God. Without doubt, he speaks specially of the priests. The greater part were defaulters, and they implicated the foolish vulgar in their wickedness. We observe similar effects at this day in the Papacy, as they corrupt the whole world by their sacrifices. At that time the priests laid snares for the people, and drew them almost all with them into the same impiety. The angel here allows the existence of some wise men among the people; I do not restrict this entirely to the priests, although I suppose the angel to begin with them. A small portion of them taught the truth, and God joined a party with them, but yet the angel predicts the existence of another remnant. Yet afterwards, in the second place, he embraces others who were truly proficient in God’s law, and although the obligations of the priesthood did not bind them, yet they labored to recall the wandering into the way of salvation. He says, then, *Whosoever should be skillful should teach many*. There is also here a tacit contrast between the honest servants of God and those fictitious teachers who pride themselves on their titles; as we observe an instance of this in these days in the Papacy. For bishops and cardinals, abbots and pretenders of this kind, strut about with insolence and stupefy the miserable vulgar. What? do not we represent the Church? Is not judgment with us, as well as the interpretation of the Law and of Scripture? As, therefore, in these times these impostors arrogate to themselves all knowledge and wish to be thought equal to the angels, so we know it came to pass among the ancient people. The Prophet, therefore, here chastises that foolish confidence by saying, *Those who shall be understanding among the people*; meaning, the truly wise. As if he had said, those masked hypocrites acquire reputation for themselves, but without the slightest reason. God considers those only intelligent who remain in the pure doctrine of his Law, and practice piety with simplicity and sincerity. Hence he calls these, *the intelligent among the people*. He repeats the word “people,” in the same sense as before, implying that all who use this name are not true Israelites before God, as true knowledge of him is required. What kind of knowledge or skill is meant, we easily ascertain from the next verse. For all knowledge which men think they possess without this acquaintance with God, is nothing but vanity. These, therefore, *shall teach many* This prediction of the angel not only asserts the existence of some among the people who should remain constant amidst such grievous assaults, and should preserve the integrity of their faith, but says they should be the directors of others; as if he had said, God will grant to each of his elect, not only the power of a bold resistance and of preserving himself pure and uncontaminated amidst every corruption, but at the same time he will render these good

¹⁸⁰ When they shall fall. — Calvin.

¹⁸¹ These two words spring from the same root; as “they shall be fortified,” comes from “fortitude,” so “they shall be assisted,” from “assistance.” — Calvin.

men the supporters of others, either in preventing their decline, or if they have fallen off, in bringing them back into the right path.

Lastly, the angel signifies how small a seed God should preserve in his Church as the teachers and rulers of others, though but few in number; as Isaiah says, God shall consume his people, but that consumption should leave some remnant, and then it shall flow forth. (Isaiah 10:22.) The sentiment of this passage is the same; even if many should degenerate and depart from the faith, and this spirit should extend to the whole people, yet some few should stand firm perhaps ten in a thousand — and these should be God's ministers in gathering together a new Church; and thus the land which was formerly sterile, should profit by this irrigation and produce new seed. *Those, therefore, who shall be wise among the people shall teach many.* While the angel is here predicting the future, we ought to take to ourselves this admonition: the more each of us becomes a proficient in the faith, the more he ought to exert his utmost endeavors to teach his rude and ignorant neighbors according to this exhortation of the angel. God does not stretch forth his hand to us to lead each of us to follow his own course, but to assist others and to advance their spiritual progress. We read therefore here, a condemnation of the slothfulness of those on whom God has bestowed much knowledge and faith, when they fail to use the trust committed to them for the edification of their brethren. This prediction of the angel ought to influence each of us, as a law and rule, to seek the profit of his brethren according to the measure of his *intelligence*. The angel adds, — these should not be teachers of shadows, who prescribe men's duty at their ease, and dispute without inconvenience, danger, or personal trouble, about what is right in itself and pleasing to God, but they should be strenuous warriors for the truth. Here, therefore, the angel joins his instruction with fortitude, as by this measure it would overcome all dangers, anxieties, and terrors. The passage becomes, in this way, most useful to us in these days, if we only learn to reflect upon what God delivers to us by his angel and his prophet. In conclusion then, the angel demonstrates how God never approves of any teachers as true and legitimate, unless they deliver their message as if ready to defend it, and prepared to seal it with their blood whenever it shall be necessary. We must read the two clauses together, *Those who teach many the worship of God shall fall by the sword and the flame*; meaning, they would rather fall or perish a hundred times by the sword and the flame than desist from their office of teaching. Besides, the angel here mentions the various kinds of death, for the sake of exhortation; for, had he mentioned only *the sword*, he would not have fully expressed the usefulness of this instruction. Whatever teachers God sets over his Church, they are not fully proved in the discharge of their duty by overcoming a single form of temptation, but they must contend with foes on the right hand and on the left, and must not allow the variety of their perils to weaken either their constancy or their fortitude. If the sword threaten them on one side, and fire on the other, — if they must suffer the spoiling of their goods and banishment from home, nevertheless these teachers must persevere in their course. We observe, then, the multiplicity of conflicts here enumerated by the angel, to teach us the strength of the grace of the Spirit in supporting the teachers and rulers of the Church, and in preventing them from yielding to any temptations while contending even with the sword, and fire, and exile, and the spoiling of their goods.

He adds, *And that too for many days* This circumstance possesses great weight, as we observe many endure for a time with a manly and intrepid courage, who afterwards languish, and then vanish away and become utterly unlike their former selves. The angel, however, here promises to those who should be sustained by the Spirit of God an invincible constancy. They should gather

fresh courage for fresh conflicts, not only for a single day, or month, or year, but it should never fail them. He adds next,

And when they shall fall, or shall have fallen, they shall be strengthened, or assisted, *with a small help* Without the slightest doubt, the angel here speaks of the Maccabees, by whose assistance the faithful were gathered together and *completely* separated from those apostates who had betrayed God's temple and worship. He calls the help *small*, and truly it was so. For what could the Maccabees do to resist Antiochus? The powerful influence of this king is well known; and what was Judea when compared with Syria? The Jews indeed had destroyed their own power; we have already seen how they violated treaties, and corrupted the majority of their own people there was neither skill, nor plan, nor concert among them. *The help, then, was small*, which God sent them. But then the angel shews how God would afford succor to his people when in distress, and allow them some alleviation from the cruelty of the tyrant.

He adds next, *Many shall join themselves to them by flatteries* Even from this small number the angel cuts off the greater part, and informs them of the miserable condition of the Church, because very few should dare to oppose the madness of the tyrant, and out of these few many should be hypocrites The whole of this chapter must be interpreted of Antiochus, and yet doubtless God wishes to promote our improvement by these prophecies. They belong equally to us; for as God governs his Church in a variety of ways, so he always sustains it under its various crosses and trials.

Besides this, the old enemy the devil, who formerly opposed the Church, is equally troublesome to us. He assails us partly by enemies without and partly by enemies within. Such teaching as this was useful, not only to the ancients, but, to us also in the present day. First of all, the angel predicts the assistance to be received by the faithful as *small*. Let us learn, then, when God wishes to succor and to help us, — that he does not always exert the fullness of his power. He does not thunder from heaven and overthrow our enemies by the first stroke of his lightning; but he enables us to contend successfully with our cross, and thus we are far separated from the reprobate by our firmness in resistance. Again, from the second clause we must notice the absolute certainty of many hypocrites being found mingled with the souls of God, and when God purges his Church, but a small portion will remain sincere, just as in these days the very counterpart of this prophecy is exhibited before our eyes. The whole Papacy is called the Church of God; we are but few in number, and yet what a mixture exists even among us? How many in these days profess attachment to the Gospel, in whom there is nothing either solid or sincere! If God should search narrowly into small Churches, still among these few, some would be found deceivers. It never has been otherwise, or shall be different. until the end of the world. Here, then, we are admonished to desire, as far as lies in our power, the purity of the Church, and to avoid all impurity, because, in desiring auxiliaries too eagerly on the pressure of any urgent necessity, we shall be certain to become sprinkled with many stains which may ultimately cover us with confusion. The angel doubtless here reproves a fault in the conduct of the Maccabees. Although God stirred them up to afford some consolation to his Church, their proceedings are not to be approved; for it does not follow that all their actions were praiseworthy because their cause was pious and holy. But I must defer this subject till to-morrow.

PRAYER.

Grant, Almighty God, as at this day thou dost try the faith of thy people by many tests, that they may obtain strength from the unconquered fortitude of thy Holy Spirit. May we constantly march under thy standard, even to the end, and never succumb to any temptation. May we there join intelligence with zeal in building up thy Church: as each of us is endowed with superior gifts, so may he strive for the edification of his brethren with greater boldness, manliness, and fervor, while he endeavors to add numbers to the cause. And should the number of those who are professed members of thy Church diminish, yet may some seed always remain, until abundant produce shall flow forth from it, and such fruitfulness arise as shall cause thy name to be glorified throughout the whole world, in Jesus Christ our Lord. — Amen.

LECTURE SIXTY-SECOND

We began yesterday to explain what the angel said about the future persecution of the Church, and its subsequent consolation. He first shewed how all the intelligent among the people should be subject to the cruelty of their enemies, in consequence of their manly perseverance in teaching others. We have shewn how inefficient those teachers whom God has set over his Church would be, if they discharged their duties at ease and in the shade, and were unprepared to undergo all contests, and intrepidly to expose their lives to a variety of dangers. This, then, is a living and efficacious method of touching, when we do not cease to discharge our duties in the midst of sword and flame. But, on the other hand, we must notice how much this instruction is sought for when these fatal conflicts arise. Many in these days listen to our instruction concerning Christ; only they must continue without injury or annoyance. We observe many greedily drinking in the evangelical doctrines; but yet when anything disperses the crowd they flee immediately, and with as little consideration as when they first joined the assembly. That conduct which we daily observe was equally common in former times. Clearly enough this fault has been rampant throughout all ages, and it is innate in men not only to escape the cross and all things vexatious, but especially to disclose their own infirmities, because they are unwilling to undergo any danger for the worship of God and the free confession of the truth. This passage, then, must be noticed, since the Prophet not only exhorts the learned and the wise to instruct others, but he prescribes a rule for the infirm and unlearned, urging them to strengthen theme-selves against all temptations, when they see all things in confusion, and Satan plotting for the complete annihilation of piety. As this is the angel's language, we must diligently notice the circumstances of the times, for he was not here instituting a peaceful school, and discoursing like philosophers at their ease concerning virtue without any practical contest; but he enforces the duty of both learning and teaching, even if a variety of deaths should be placed before our eyes. He speaks next, as I have lately stated, the language of consolation. God shews how he would afford help to his elect, although it might possibly seem of no consequence to them. For he dwells on *the smallness of the assistance* — which literally happened. Without doubt the angel referred to Mattathias and his sons, usually called the Maccabees. (1 Maccabees 2:1.) A restriction is put upon that help by an allusion to the members who should prove hypocritical out of that small band. We are fully aware how the Church would be reduced in its extent, for all would not prove sound in the faith, but the greater part would be drawn aside by those fallacies which the angel here calls *blandishments*. This was a very grievous trial to the faithful when they perceived their own fewness and weakness in the face of their enemies. Besides, they dared not

trust those allies who had pledged their faith to them and made wonderful promises, since many were deceived by these flatteries, and abandoned the cause through want of sincerity of mind.

We have already adverted to the usefulness of such instruction for our own times.; for we ought to apply it personally to ourselves, as our circumstances are similar to those of the ancients. Out of the great multitude of those who wish to be esteemed Christians, we observe how very few retain the pure and uncorrupted worship of God. The Papists treat their own community, which is defiled with filth of all kinds, as the only Church; there piety is utterly subverted or else contaminated with the multitude of superstitions. And even in that small company which has withdrawn itself from the Papal idolatries, the greater part is full of perfidy and deceit. They pretend to remarkable zeal, but if you thoroughly examine them, you will find them full of deception. For if God should probe his Church to the quick, as he did some years ago in Germany, and as he may do shortly in our own case, in all these serious conflicts, and amidst these persecutions, many will boast in the bravery of their championship, and yet their zeal will quickly ooze away. When the Lord, therefore, exercises us by methods similar to those by which he proved the ancient Church, this instruction ought always to occur to our remembrance, lest our minds should grow dull and languid.

This passage may lead us to inquire whether the angel approved of all the exploits of the Maccabees. We may reply to the question in two opposite ways. First of all, if any one persists in contending from the angel's words for God's approval of every action of the Maccabees, this view is by no means correct. God might use the Maccabees in succoring the wretched Israelites, and yet it does not follow that they conducted the good cause properly and lawfully. It very often occurs, when the faithful offer their services to God, and have one object set before them, that they fail either through inconsiderate zeal, or through partial ignorance. Whether we take this view or not, our object is often good when our manner of proceeding is objectionable. And thus it was with the Maccabees; God, doubtless, stirred up Mattathias to collect the dispersed remnant of the people, to restore his worship, and to purge his temple from the abominations which Antiochus had set up. Yet in the troublous times which occurred, his sons, doubtless, failed in many points of duty. The cause which they undertook was just, while particular actions of theirs cannot be approved by us. It now follows —

Daniel 11:35

<p>35. And <i>some</i> of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge, and to make <i>them</i> ¹⁸² in <i>ipsis</i>, ¹⁸³ et mundandos, ¹⁸⁴ et dealbandos white, <i>even</i> to the time of the end: because <i>it is</i> usque ad tempus finis, <i>id est, finitum</i>, quoniam yet for a time appointed.</p>	<p>35. Et ex intelligentibus cadent ad probandum adhuc usque ad praefixum tempus.</p>
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The angel pursues the same sentiment as before shewing us how the children of God, in their eagerness to defend the cause of piety, should be subject to many grievous persecutions. *Some of*

¹⁸² Or, to be tried; the word properly signifies to pour out. — *Calvin*

¹⁸³ That is, to purify them. — *Calvin*.

¹⁸⁴ Or, to purge them again. — *Calvin*.

the learned shall fall; meaning, that calamity shall not be for a single moment only; for those who earnestly desired to defend the true worship of God should perish by the sword, and by fire, and by other methods of destruction, and their successors, too, should suffer the same calamities. The phrase, *the learned should fall*, implies the perishing of the very flower of the Church. There will always be much refuse among a people, and the greater part of it flies off and revolts when their religion requires of them the sacrifice of their life. A few remain, here called intelligent, who, as we stated yesterday, are not wise after the flesh. Making provision for the flesh, implies taking care of themselves, and of their own interests, running no risks, and avoiding all troubles; while those are called intelligent, who, forgetful of their own lives, offer themselves in sacrifice to God. They do not hesitate to incur universal hatred, and are prepared to meet death with fortitude. The angel, therefore, predicts the perishing of the flower of the Church. For who could have expected the name of God to have existed upon earth when all His sincere worshippers were thus murdered with impunity? The severity of the despotism of Antiochus is notorious, no one dared to utter a word, all the sacred books were burnt, and he thought the worship of God entirely abolished. Women with their children were promiscuously seized for burning, and the satellites of this tyrant did not spare the mothers with infants hanging on their breasts. (1 Maccabees 1.) During the progress of such atrocious cruelty, who would not have thought the whole seed of God to have been extinct? But the angel here shews the true result to have been different, namely, *that the sons of God should be purged, cleansed, and whitened* He signifies that all events should not prove so destructive, but should rather promote their salvation. This passage unfolds to us the nature of true prudence in the sight of God; for we ought to be prepared for death, rather than be turned aside from the free and ingenuous profession of the heavenly doctrine, and from the true worship of God. For this necessity is imposed on the sons of God — to fall either by the sword or by fire, and to suffer the spoiling of their goods, and banishment from their homes. The angel points out from the result how persecutions which seem to issue in the destruction of the Church, are yet profitable and salutary to the sons of God, as This is the method of their being *purified, and cleansed, and whitened* But we must always remember how some defiling dregs, which require clearing out, remain in the elect, nay, even among the holy Martyrs. The angel does not here treat of hypocrites, or of ordinary believers, but of whatever is most conspicuous and most perfect in the Church, and yet asserts their need of purification. None, therefore, he concludes, possess such sanctity and purity as to prevent the remnant of some pollution which requires to be removed. Hence it becomes necessary for them to pass through the furnace, and to be purified like gold and silver. This is extended to all God's martyrs.

This reminds us of the great folly of the Papists, in imagining the merits of saints to be transferred to us, as if they had more than they required for themselves. Indulgences, as they call them, depend upon this error, according to the following reasoning, — had Peter lived to the ordinary period of human life, he would have proved faithful to the end, and then would have merited the crown of the heavenly kingdom; but when he went beyond this, and poured out his blood in martyrdom, some merits were superabundant; these ought not to be lost, and hence the blood of Peter and Paul profit us at this day for the remission of sins. This is the Papal theology, and these miserable sophists are not ashamed of these gross blasphemies, while they vomit forth such foul sacrilege. But the angel's teaching is far different; — the martyrs themselves are benefited by meeting death for their adherence to the truth, because God *purges, and cleanses, and refines, and whitens them*. The angel would not have said this except some admixture of dross still defiled the purity of the saints. But

this doctrine ought to be more than enough to animate us to undergo all dangers, when we see ourselves stained and polluted with hidden dross; besides this, we ought certainly to determine that death would be profitable in this sense, as God will then purge us from those vices by which we are both infected and defiled. Whence the value of the repetition here; the angel does not simply say *to purge* them, but adds, *to cleanse and whiten them*. Whatever holiness may shine forth in the best of men, yet many stains and much defilement he concealed within them; and thus in consequence of their many failings, persecution was always useful to them.

The angel mitigates whatever might seem exceedingly bitter, by saying, *until the time of an end*, meaning, a fixed and definite time. These words imply the merciful character of God, in not urging his people beyond their strength, as Paul also states his faithfulness in granting them a happy issue out of their trials, and in not pressing us beyond the measure of that strength and fortitude which he has conferred upon us. (1 Corinthians 10:13.) The angel predicts an end to these evils, and confirms this opinion by saying, *even to a determined time*. In the last clause he signified the temporary nature of the persecutions of which he had spoken; for they should not cease directly, nor yet for two or three years. By the words, *as yet even to a time determined*, he urges the sons of God to prepare themselves for new contests, as they should not reach the goal for the space of a year. But if God wished to humble them for three, or ten, or a hundred years, they should not despond, but wait for the time divinely predetermined, without depending on their own will. This is the substance of the instruction conveyed. It now follows:

Daniel 11:36

36. And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvelous things against the God of gods, and loquatur mirabilia, et prospere aget usque ad shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done.

36. Et faciet secundum voluntatem suam, *vel*, *libidinem*, rex: et extollet se, et magnificabit se supra omnem Deum, et contra Deum deorum consummationem irae, quoniam decisio facta est, *vel decisio est, nempe consumptio.*

This passage is very obscure, and has consequently been explained in very opposite ways by interpreters. And whatever is obscure, is usually doubtful, and there would be little utility and no termination, if I were to narrate the opinions of them all. I shall therefore follow another method, and omitting all superfluous labor, I shall simply inquire the angel's meaning. I must, however, refer briefly to opinions received by the consent of the majority, because they occupy the minds of many, and thus close the door to the correct interpretation. The Jews, for instance, are not agreed among themselves, and their difference of opinion only serves to produce and perpetuate darkness, rather than to diffuse the clearness of light. Some explain it of Antiochus, and others of the Romans, but in a manner different to that which I shall afterwards state. The Christian expositors present much variety, but the greater number incline towards Antichrist as fulfilling the prophecy. Others, again, use greater moderation by supposing Antichrist to be here obliquely hinted at, while they do not exclude Antiochus as the type and image of Antichrist. This last opinion has great probability, but I do not approve of it, and can easily refute it. Antiochus did not long survive the pollution of

the Temple, and then the following events by no means suit the occurrences of this time. Nor can his sons be fairly substituted in his place, and hence we must pass on to some other king, distinct from Antiochus and his heirs. As I have already stated, some of the Rabbis explain this of the Romans, but without judgment, for they first apply the passage to Vespasian, and Titus his son, and then extend it to the present times, which is utterly without reason, as they chatter foolishly, according to their usual custom. Those who explain it of Antichrist, have some color of reason for their view, but there is no soundness in their conclusion, and we shall perceive this better in the progress of our exposition. We must now discover what king the angel here designates. First of all, I apply it entirely to the Roman Empire, but I do not ¹⁸⁵ consider it to begin at the reign of the Caesars, for this would be unsuitable and out of date, as we shall see. By the word “king” I do not think a single person indicated, but an empire, whatever be its government, whether by a senate, or by consuls, or by proconsuls. This need not appear either harsh or absurd, as the Prophet had previously discussed the four monarchies, and when treating of the Romans he calls their power a kingdom, as if they had but a single ruler over them. And when he spoke of the Persian monarchy, he did not refer to a single ruler, but included them all, from Cyrus to the last Darius, who was conquered by Alexander. This method of speech is already very familiar to us, as the word “king” often means “kingdom.” The angel, then, when saying, *a king shall do* anything, does not allude to Antiochus, for all history refutes this. Again, he does not mean any single individual, for where shall we find one who exalted himself against all gods? who oppressed God’s Church, and fixed his palace between two seas, and seized upon the whole East? The Romans alone did this. I intend to shew more clearly to-morrow how beautifully and appositely everything related by the angel applies to the Roman empire; and if anything should appear either obscure or doubtful, a continued interpretation will bring it to light and confirm it.

We lay this down at once; the angel did not prophesy of Antiochus, or any single monarch, but of a new empire, meaning, the Roman. We have the reason at hand why the angel passes directly from Antiochus to the Romans. God desired to support the spirits of the pious, lest they should be overwhelmed by the number and weight of the massacres which awaited them and the whole Church even to the advent of Christ. It was not sufficient to predict the occurrences under the tyranny of Antiochus; for after his time, the Jewish religion was more and more injured, not only by foreign enemies, but by their own priesthood. Nothing remained unpolluted, since their avarice and ambition had arrived at such a pitch, that they trod under foot the whole glory of God, and the law itself. The faithful required to be fortified against such numerous temptations, until Christ came, and then God renewed the condition of his Church. The time, therefore, which intervened between the Maccabees and the manifestation of Christ ought not to be omitted. The reason is now clear enough why the angel passes at once from Antiochus to the Romans.

We must next ascertain how the Romans became connected with the elect people of God. Had their dominion been limited to Europe alone, the allusion to them would have been useless and out of place. But from the period of the kings of Syria being oppressed by many and constant devastation’s in war, both at home and abroad, they were unable to injure the Jews as they had previously done; then new troubles sprang up through the Romans. We know, indeed, when many of the kings of Syria were indulging in arrogance, how the Romans interposed their authority, and that, too, with bad faith, for the purpose of subjecting the east to themselves. Then when Attalus

¹⁸⁵ The edit. of 1617 has *nunc* instead of *non*, which is the correct reading. — *Ed.*

made the Roman people his heir, the whole of Asia Minor became absorbed by them. They became masters of Syria by the will of this foolish king, who defrauded his legal heirs, thinking by this conduct to acquire some regard for his memory after his death. From that period, when the Romans first acquired a taste of the wealth of these regions, they never failed to find some cause for warfare. At length Pompey subdued Syria, and Lucullus, who had previously carried on war with Mithridates, restored the kingdom to Tigranes. Pompey, as I have already remarked, subjected Syria to the Romans. He left, indeed, the Temple untouched, but we may conjecture the cruelty which he exercised towards the Jews by the ordinary practice of this people. The clemency of the Romans towards the nations which they subdued is notorious enough. After Crassus, the most rapacious of all men, had heard much of the wealth of the Jews, he desired that province as his own. We know, too, how Pompey and Caesar, while they were friends, partitioned the whole world among themselves. Gaul and Italy were assigned entirely to Caesar; Pompey obtained Spain, and part of Africa and Sicily; while Crassus obtained Syria and the regions of the east, where he miserably perished, and his head, filled with gold, was Carried about in mockery from place to place. A second calamity occurred during that incursion of Crassus, and from this time the Jews were harassed by many and continual wars. Before this period, they had entered into an alliance with the Romans, as we are informed by the books of the Maccabees, as well as by profane writers. Therefore, when they granted liberty to the Jews, (1 Maccabees 8, and 14) it; was said ¹⁸⁶ they were generous at the expense of others. This was their ordinary and usual practice; at first they received with friendship all who sought their alliance by treaty, and then they treated them with the utmost cruelty. The wretched Jews were treated in this way. The angel then alludes to them first, and afterwards speaks of Antiochus. All these points, thus briefly mentioned, we must bear in mind, to enable us to understand the context, and to shew the impossibility of interpreting the prophecy otherwise than of the Romans.

I now proceed to the words, *The king shall do according to his will* I have stated that we need not restrict this expression to a single person, as the angel prophesies of the continued course of the Roman monarchy. *He shall raise himself and magnify himself*, says he, *above every god*. This will be explained by and bye, where the king is said to be a despiser of all deities. But with reference to the present passage, although impiety and contempt of God spread throughout the whole world, we know how peculiarly this may be said of the Romans, because their pride led them to pass an opinion upon the right of each deity to be worshipped. And, therefore, the angel will use an epithet for God, meaning fortitude's and munitions, *megnezim* as in Daniel 11:38. That passage, I shall show you to-morrow, has been badly explained; for interpreters, as we shall discover, are utterly "at sea" as to its meaning. ¹⁸⁷ But here the angel, by attributing contempt of the one God and of all deities to the Romans, implies their intense pride and haughtiness, in which they surpassed other profane nations. And, truly, they did not preserve even a superstitious fear of God; and while they vauntingly paraded the superior piety of both their ancestors and themselves, yet, an accurate perusal of their writings will disclose what they really thought. They made a laughingstock of all divinities, and ridiculed the very name and appearance of piety, and used it only for the purpose of retaining their subjects in obedience. The angel then says most truly of his empire, *it shall magnify itself*

¹⁸⁶ The Latin is "*ille dicebat*," the French has "*un quidam disoit*," — a curious mixture which implies uncertainty. Can it be Crassus? — *Ed.*

¹⁸⁷ See the Dissertations at the end of this volume.

against all deities; and it shall speak wonderful things against the God of gods, by which the Jewish religion is intended. For before they had passed into Asia Minor, and penetrated beyond Mount Taurus, they were ignorant of the law of God, and had never heard of the name of Moses. They then began to take notice of the worship of some peculiar god by that nation, and of the form of their piety being distinct from that of all other people. From the period of the knowledge of the peculiarities of the Jewish religion being spread among the Romans, they began to vomit forth their blasphemies against *the God of gods*. We need not gather together the proof of this from their histories; but Cicero in his oration for Flaccus, (section. 28,) tears most contemptuously to pieces the name of the true God; and that impure slanderer — for he deserves the name — so blurts out his calumnies, as if the God who had revealed himself to His elect people by his law, was unworthy of being reckoned with Venus or Bacchus, or their other idols. Lastly, he treats the numerous massacres to which the Jews were exposed, as a proof of their religion being hated by all the deities; and this he thinks ought to be a sufficient sign of the detestable character of their religion. The angel then has every reason to declare the Romans puffed up with pride and haughtiness, as they did not hesitate to treat the name of the true God with such marked contempt.

He shall utter, says he, remarkable things against the God of gods The angel seems to refer to a single individual, but we have stated his reference to be to this empire. He adds next, *And he shall prosper until the consumption, or completion, or consummation of the indignation, since the determination has been made* Here also the angel treats of a long succession and series of victories, which prevent the application of the passage to Antiochus. For he died immediately after he had spoiled the Temple; all his offspring perished by each other's hands; and the Romans, to their great disgrace, acquired possession of Syria and that portion of the East. We must necessarily explain this of the Romans, as they notoriously prospered in their wars, especially on the continent of Asia. And if they were sometimes in difficulties, as we shall see to-morrow when treating the words which the angel will then use, they soon recovered their usual success. The angel here says, *This king shall prosper till the end of the indignation*; meaning, until God should punish the hypocrites, and thus humble his Church. I refer this to God, as I shall explain more at length tomorrow.

PRAYER.

Grant, Almighty God, as in these days the affairs of the world are in a state of disturbance, and as wherever we turn our eyes we see nothing but horrible confusion: Grant, I pray, that we may be attentive to thy teaching. May we never wander after our own imaginations, never be drawn aside by any cares, and never turn aside from our stated course. May we remain fixed in thy word, always seeking thee and always relying on thy providence. May we never hesitate concerning our safety, as thou hast undertaken to be the guardian of our salvation, but ever call upon thee in the name of thine only-begotten Son. — Amen.

LECTURE SIXTY-THIRD

We yesterday commenced an explanation of the prophecy, in which the angel begins to treat of the Roman Empire. I then shewed the impossibility of applying any other exposition to the

passage, as it would have been absurd to pass by the point most necessary to be known. At the very beginning, we stated that God did not inform Daniel of other occurrences for the purpose of pandering to the foolish and vain curiosity of the many, but to fortify his servants, and to prevent their falling away in the midst of these most grievous contests. But after the death of Antiochus, we know by what various and grievous machinations Satan had endeavored to overthrow the faith of all the pious. For this reason their courage required propping up. If the whole of this period had been passed over in silence, God would have appeared to have neglected his servants. Therefore either our yesterday's subject of comment would have been useless, or else this clause ought to be added, lest the prophecy should appear either defective or mutilated. And we previously observed, while the angel was predicting future changes, there was no omission of the Roman Empire, which is again introduced here. Let us remember, then, that the angel is not now speaking of Antiochus, nor does he make a leap forwards to Antichrist, as some think, but he means a perpetual series. Thus the faithful would be prepared for all assaults which might be made upon their faith, if this rampart had not been interposed. The remainder of the verse now remains to be explained, *Even to the end of the wrath, because the decision has been made* The angel had narrated the perverseness of this king in not sparing the living God, but in darting his calumnies against him. He now adds, *He shall prosper even to the end of the wrath* The angel doubtless here meets the next trial which might utterly overwhelm the faithful, unless they hoped for some termination to it. By *wrath* he does not mean the rage of those who were sent as proconsuls into Asia and the East, or even the bitterness and rigor of the Roman people and Senate, but the word refers to God. We must remember, then, what I have previously impressed, namely, the sons of God are called upon to examine their faults, to humble themselves before God, without either murmuring or complaining when chastised by his rods. We know how impatient human nature is in bearing adversity, and how grudgingly men submit to the cross, not only stubbornly refusing it, but openly rebelling against God. Hence those who are oppressed by his hand are always outrageous, unless he displays himself as their judge. The angel then here presents us with a reason why God did not rashly expose his Church to the lust of the impious; he only wished to exact the punishment due to their sins; and judgment ought always to begin at the house of God, as we learn from another prophet. (Isaiah 10:12; Jeremiah 25:29; 1 Peter 4:17.)

The conclusion, then, the angel, in the first place, exhorts the pious to repentance, and shews them how deservedly God laid his hand upon them, because it was absolutely necessary. He then mitigates what would otherwise have been too severe, by adding, *till the end*, or completion. The word signifies both consumption and end, but it here means end, or completion. The explanation next follows, *since the determination, or decision, has been made*, says he. This means, God will not pursue his children to extremities without moderation, but will bring their punishment to an end after they have been humbled. As we read in the 40th chapter of Isaiah, the time of their warfare was completed, when God pitied his Church, and freed it from the tyranny of its enemies. (Isaiah 40:2.) Isaiah there speaks in the person of God; the Church had received double, meaning, sufficient punishment had been exacted. It almost implies his being displeased with himself for having been too severe against his Church, as we are familiar with the indulgence with which he usually treated his children. He says, then, in this passage, *Even to the end of the wrath*; meaning, the punishment should be but temporary, as God had prescribed a certain termination which should put an end to all their troubles and anxieties. It follows: —

Daniel 11:37

<p>37. Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all.</p>	<p>37. Et ad deos patrum suorum non attendet, et ad desiderium, <i>vel, amorem</i>, mulierum, et ad ullum Deum non attendet, quia super omne, <i>super omnia</i>, sese magnificabit.</p>
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I do not wonder at those who explain this prophecy of Antiochus, experiencing some trouble with these words; for they cannot satisfy themselves, because this prediction of the angel's was never accomplished by Antiochus, who did neither neglect all deities nor the god of his fathers. Then, with regard to the love of women, this will not suit this person. But it is easy to prove by other reasons already mentioned, the absence of all allusion here to Antiochus. Some refer this prophecy to the Pope and to Mohammed, and the phrase, the love of women, seems to give probability to this view. For Mohammed allowed to men the brutal liberty of chastising their wives, and thus he corrupted that conjugal love and fidelity which binds the husband to the wife. Unless every man is content with a single wife, there can be no love, because there can be no conjugal happiness whenever rivalry exists between the inferior wives. As, therefore, Mohammed allowed full scope to various lusts, by permitting a man to have a number of wives, this seems like an explanation of his being inattentive to the love of women. Those who think the Pope to be intended here remind us of their enforcing celibacy, by means of which the honor of marriage is trodden under foot. We know with what foulness the Roman Pontiffs bark when marriage is hinted to them, as we may see in the decrees of Pope Siricius, in the seventh chapter of the first volume of the Councils.¹⁸⁸ They quote the passage, Those who are in the flesh cannot please God; and thus compare marriage with fornication, thereby disgracefully and reproachfully throwing scorn upon an ordinance sanctioned by God. We observe, then, some slight correspondence, but the remaining points will not suit this idea. Some assert that as Mohammed invented a new form of religion, so did the Pope; true indeed, but neither of them are intended here, and the reason is, because God wished to sustain the spirits of his people until the first coming of Christ. Hence he predicts by his angel the sufferings to be endured by the Church until Christ was manifest in the flesh. We must now come to the Romans, of whom we began to explain the passage.

The angel says, *The king shall pay no regard to the gods of his fathers*. The application of this clause is at first sight obscure; but if we come to reflect upon the outrageous pride and barbarity of the Romans, we shall no longer doubt the meaning of the Prophets words. The angel states two circumstances; this king should be a despiser of all deities, and yet he should worship one god, while the singular and magnificent pomp displayed should exceed all common practices. These two points, so apparently opposite, were found united in the Romans. Our explanation will appear clearer by adding the following verses,

Daniel 11:38-39

¹⁸⁸ The French edition altogether omits this reference to the *Concilia — Ed.*

38. But in his estate shall he honour the God of forces: and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honour with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things.

38. Et Deum fortitudinum, *vel, munitionum,* in loco suo honorabit: et Deum quem non cognoverunt patres ejus honorabit cum auro, et argento, et lapide pretioso, et desiderabilibus,¹⁸⁹ *hoc est, rebus omnibus pretiosis.*

39. Thus shall he do in the most strong holds with a strange god, whom he shall acknowledge and increase with glory: and he shall cause them to rule over many, and shall divide the land for gain.

39. Et faciet adversus fortitudinum cum Deo alieno, quem agnoverit, *munitiones* multiplicabit gloriam, et dominari faciet eos in multis, et terram dividet pretio.

As I have already hinted, at the first glance these statements seem opposed to each other; the king of whom we are now treating shall despise all deities, and yet shall worship a certain god in no ordinary way. This agrees very well with the Romans, if we study their dispositions and manners. As they treated the worship of their deities simply as a matter of business, they were evidently destitute of any perception of the divinity, and were only pretenders to religion. Although other profane nations groped their way in darkness, yet they offered a superstitious worship to some divinities. The Romans, however, were not subject to either error or ignorance, but they manifested a gross contempt of God, while they maintained the appearance of piety. We gather this opinion from a review of their whole conduct. For although they fetched many deities from every quarter of the world, and worshipped in common with other nations Minerva, Apollo, Mercury, and others, yet we observe how they treated all other rites as worthless. They considered Jupiter as the supreme deity. But what was Jupiter to them in his own country? Did they value him a single farthing, or the Olympian deity? Nay, they derided both his worshippers and himself. What then really was their supreme god? why the glow of the Capitol; without the additional title of Lord of the Capitol, he was nobody at all. That title distinguished him as specially bound to themselves. For This reason the Prophet calls This Roman Jupiter *a god of bulwarks*, or of powers. The Romans could never be persuaded that any other Jupiter or Juno were worthy of worship; they relied upon their own inherent strength, considered themselves of more importance than the gods, and claimed Jupiter as theirs alone. Because his seat was in their capital, he was more to them than a hundred heavenly rulers, for their pride had centered the whole power of the deity in their own capital. They thought themselves beyond the reach of all changes of fortune, and such was their audacity, that every one fashioned new deities according to his pleasure. There was a temple dedicated to fortune on horseback; for this gratified the vanity of the general who had made good use of it is cavalry, and obtained a victory by their means; and in building a temple to equestrian fortune, he wished the multitude to esteem himself as a deity. Then Jupiter Stator was a god, and why? because this pleased somebody else; and thus Rome became full of temples. One erected an image of fortune, another of virtue, a third of prudence, and a fourth of any other divinity, and every one dared to set up his own idols according to his fancy, till Rome was completely filled with them. In this way Romulus was deified; and what claim had he to this honor? If any one object here — other nations did the same — we admit it, but we also know in what a foolish, brutal, and barbarous state of antiquity

¹⁸⁹ That is, with all precious things. — *Calvin.*

they continued. But; the Romans, as I have already intimated, were not instigated to this manufacture of idols by either error or superstition, but by an arrogant vanity which elevated themselves to the first rank among mankind, and claimed superiority over all deities. For instance, they allowed a temple to be erected to themselves in Asia, and sacrifices to be offered, and the name of deity to be applied to them. What pride is here! Is this a proof of belief in the existence of either one god or many? Rome is surely the only deity, — and she must be reverently worshipped before all others!

We observe then how the expression of this verse is very applicable to the Romans; *they worshipped the god of bulwarks*, meaning, they claimed a divine power as their own, and only granted to their gods what they thought useful for their own purposes. With the view of claiming certain virtues as their own, they invented all kinds of deities according to their taste. I omit the testimony of Plutarch as not quite applicable to the present subject. He says in his problems, it was unlawful to utter the name of any deity under whose protection and guardianship the Roman State was placed. He tells us how Valerius Soranus was carried off for foolishly uttering that deity's name, whether male or female. These are his very words. And he adds as the reason, their practice of using magical incantations in worshipping their unknown divinity. Again, we know in what remarkable honor they esteemed "the good goddess." The male sex were entirely ignorant of her nature, and none but females entered the house of the high priest, and there celebrated her orgies. And for what purpose? What was that "good goddess?" Surely there always existed this *god of bulwarks*, since the Romans acknowledged no deity but their own selves. They erected altars to themselves, and sacrificed all kinds of victims to their own success and good fortune; and in this way they reduced all deities within their own sway, while they offered them only the specious and deceptive picture of reverence. There is nothing forced in the expression of the angel, — *he will pay no attention to the gods of his fathers*; meaning, he will not follow the usual custom of all nations in retaining superstitious ceremonies with error and ignorance. For although the Greeks were very acute, yet they did not dare to make any movement, or propose any discussions on religious matters. One thing we know to be fixed among them, to worship the gods which had been handed down by their fathers. But the Romans dared to insult all religious with freedom and petulance, and to promote atheism as far as they possibly could. Therefore the angel says, he *should pay attention to the god of his fathers* And why? They will have regard to themselves, and acknowledge no deity except their own confidence in their peculiar fortitude. I interpret the phrase, *the desire of women*, as denoting by that figure of speech which puts apart for the whole, the barbarity of their manners. The love of women is a scriptural phrase for very peculiar affection; and God has instilled this mutual affection into the sexes to cause them to remain united together as long as they retain any spark of humanity. Thus David is said to have loved Jonathan beyond or surpassing the love of women. (2 Samuel 1:26.) No fault is there found with this agreement, otherwise the love of David towards Jonathan would be marked with disgrace. We know how sacred his feelings were towards him, but "the love of women" is here used *par excellence*, implying the exceeding strength of this affection. As therefore God has appointed this very stringent bond of affection between the sexes as a natural bond of union throughout the human race, it is not surprising if all the duties of humanity are comprehended under this word by a figure of speech. It is just as if the angel had said; this king of whom he prophesies should be impious and sacrilegious, in thus daring to despise all deities; then he should be so evil, as to be utterly devoid of every feeling of charity. We observe then how completely the Romans were without natural affection, loving neither their wives nor the female sex. I need not refer to even a few examples by which this assertion may

be proved. But throughout the whole nation such extreme barbarity existed, that it ought really to fill us with horror. None can obtain an adequate idea of this, without becoming thoroughly versed in their histories; but whoever will study their exploits, will behold as in a mirror the angel's meaning. This king, then, should cultivate neither piety nor humanity.

And he shall not pay attention to other gods, because he shall magnify himself against them all. The cause is here assigned why this king should be a gross despiser of all deities, and fierce and barbarous against all mortals, *because he should magnify himself above them all* That pride so blinded the Romans, as to cause them to forget both piety and humanity; and so this intolerable self-confidence of theirs was the reason why they paid no honor to any deity, and trampled all mortals under foot. Humility is certainly the beginning of all true piety; and this seed of religion is implanted in the heart of man, causing them whether they will or not to acknowledge some deity. But the Romans were so puffed up by self-consequence, as to exalt themselves above every object of adoration, and to treat all religions with contemptuous scorn; and in thus despising all celestial beings, they necessarily looked down on all mankind, which was literally and notoriously the fact. Now, the second clause is opposed to this, *He shall worship or honor the god of fortitude's* He had previously used this word of the Temple, but this explanation does not seem suitable here, because the angel had before expressed the unity of God, while he now enumerates many gods. But the angel uses the word "fortitude's," or "munitions," for that perverse confidence by which the Romans were puffed up, and were induced to treat both God and men as nothing in comparison to themselves. How then did these two points agree — the contempt of all deities among the Romans, and yet the existence of some worship? First, they despised all tradition respecting the gods, but afterwards they raised themselves above every celestial object, and becoming ashamed of their barbarous impiety, they pretended to honor their deities. But where did they seek those deities, as Jupiter for instance, to whom all the tribe of them were subject? why, in their own capitol. Their deities were the offspring of their own imaginations, and nothing was esteemed divine but what pleased themselves. Hence it is said, *He shall honor him in his own place.* Here the angel removes all doubt, by mentioning the place in which this god of fortitude's should be honored. The Romans venerated other deities wherever they met with them, but this was mere outward pretense. Without doubt they limited Jupiter to his own capitol and city; and whatever they professed respecting other divinities, there was no true religion in them, because they adored themselves in preference to those fictitious beings. Hence *he shall worship the god of ramparts in his place, and shall honor a strange god whom his fathers knew not* ¹⁹⁰

Again, *He shall honor him in gold, and silver, and precious stones, and all desirable things;* meaning, he shall worship his own deity magnificently and with remarkable pomp. And we know how the riches of the whole world were heaped together to ornament their temples. For as soon as any one purposed to erect any temple, he was compelled to seize all things in every direction, and so to spoil all provinces to enrich their own temples. Rome, too, did not originate this splendor for the sake of superstition, but only to raise itself and to become the admiration of all nations; and thus we observe how well this prophecy is explained by the course of subsequent events. Some nations, in truth, were superstitious in the worship of their idols, but the Romans were superior to all the rest. When first they became masters of Sicily, we know what an amount of wealth they

¹⁹⁰ The word "Mahuzzin" has occasioned a great variety of translations. See Wintle *in loco*, and the Dissertation on this passage at the end of this volume.

abstracted from a single city. For if ever any temples were adorned with great and copious splendor and much riches, surely they would confess the extreme excellence of those of Sicily. But Marcellus stripped almost all temples to enrich Rome and to ornament the shrines of their false deities. And why so? Was it because Jupiter, and Juno, and Apollo, and Mercury, were better at Rome than elsewhere? By no means; but because he wished to enrich the city, and to turn all sorts of deities into a laughingstock, and to lead them in triumph, to shew that there was no other deity or excellence except at Rome, the mistress of the world. He afterwards adds, *He shall perform* Here, again, the angel seems to speak of prosperity. Without doubt he would here supply courage to the pious, who would otherwise vacillate and become backsliders when they observed such continued and incredible success, in a nation so impious and sacrilegious, and remarkable for such barbarous cruelty. Hence he states how the Romans should obtain their ends in whatever they attempted, if their fortitude should prevail, as if it were their deity. Although they should despise all deities, and only fabricate a god for themselves through a spirit of ambition; yet even this should bring them success. This is now called a *foreign deity*. Scripture uses this word to distinguish between fictitious idols and the one true God. The angel seems to say nothing which applies especially to the Romans. For the Athenians and Spartans, the Persians and the Asiatics, as well as all other nations, worshipped strange gods. What, then, is the meaning of the name? for clearly the angel did not speak after the ordinary manner. He calls him *strange*, as he was not handed down from one to another; for while they boasted vainly in their veneration of the idols received from their ancestors, together with all their sacred institutions and their inviolable rites, yet they inwardly derided them, and did not esteem them worth a straw, but only wished to retain some fallacious form of religion through a sense of shame. We remember the saying of Cato concerning the augurs, "I wonder when one meets another how he can refrain from laughing!" thus shewing how he ridiculed them. If any one had asked Cato either in the senate or privately, What think you of the augurs and all our religion? he would reply, "Ah! let the whole world perish before the augurs; for these constitute the very safety of the people and of the whole republic: we received them from our ancestors, therefore let us keep them for ever!" Thus that crafty fellow would have spoken, and thus also would all others. But while they prated thus to each other, they were not ashamed to deny the existence of a Deity, and so to ridicule whatever had been believed from the very beginning, as entirely to reduce to nothing the traditions received from their forefathers. It does not surprise us to find the angel speaking of a *strange god* which was worshipped at Rome, not, as I have said, through superstition or mistake, but only to prevent their barbarity from becoming abominable throughout the world. *That God*, says he, *whom he had acknowledged*: great weight is attached to this word. The angel means, that the whole divinity rested on the opinion and will of the sovereign people, because it was agreeable to its inclination, and promoted its private interest. As the plan of worshipping any gods would be approved, and they would pride themselves in their own pleasure, they should boast with great confidence, that there could be no piety but at Rome. But why so? Because they acknowledge strange gods, and determine and decree the form of worship which was to be preserved. The angel thus places the whole of the religion of Rome in lust, and shews them to be impure despisers of God.

He afterwards says, *He shall multiply the glory* This may be referred to God, but I rather approve of a different interpretation. The Romans should acquire great wealth for themselves, and should increase wonderfully in opulence, in the magnitude of their empire, and in all other sources of strength. Therefore *they shall multiply the glory*, meaning, they shall acquire new territories, and increase their power, and accumulate a multitude of treasures. This explanation fits in very well

with the close of the verse, where he adds, *he shall make them rule far and wide* This is a portion of that glory which this king shall heap upon himself, for he should be superior to the kings over many lands, and should distribute the booty which he had acquired, and that, too, *for a price* He says, therefore, *he shall make them rule over many*; for the relative is without a subject, which is a frequent practice of the Hebrews. Whom, then, should the Roman king, or the Roman empire, thus cause to have dominion? Whoever rendered them any assistance should receive his reward from a stranger, as we know Eumenes to have been enriched by the booty and spoil of Antiochus. The provinces also were distributed according to their will. The island was given up to the Rhodians, while a kingdom was wrested from another, and the Aetolians enlarged their dominions. As each party labored hard for their benefit, and incurred large expenses, so the Romans conferred riches upon them. After conquering Antiochus, they became the more liberal towards Attalus and Eumenes, and thus they became masters of the greater part of Asia. Again, when they had deprived Nabis, the tyrant of Sparta, of the greater part of his territories, those who had taken care to gratify the Romans, were favored with the spoils they had seized from him. We have another instance in the favor's conferred upon Massinissa after the conquest of Carthage; for after being expelled from his own kingdom, his dominion extended far and wide throughout the continent of Africa: after being deprived of his paternal sovereignty, he had not a spot in the world on which to plant his foot until they bestowed upon him what they had seized from the Carthaginians. And how did they manage this? *They shall divide the soil for a price*, says the angel; thus obliquely reproving the cunning of the senate and Roman people, because they did not give away these ample dominions gratuitously; they would willingly have devoured whatever they had acquired, but they found it better policy to sell them than to retain them. They did not sell at any fixed price — for the word “price” here need not be restricted to a definite sum of money — but displayed their avarice, and sold and distributed for the sake of gain, just as much as if all these territories had been immediately reduced into provinces of their empire. They had need of great resources; it was objectionable to continue their garrison in perpetuity in the cities of Greece, and hence they proclaim perfect freedom through them all. But what sort of liberty was this? Each state might choose its senate according to the pleasure of the Romans, and thus as each acquired rank and honor in his own nation, he would become attached and enslaved to the Roman people. And then, in this condition of affairs, if any war should spring up, they sought aid from these friends and allies. For had they been only confederate, the Romans would never have dared to exact so much from each tributary state. Let us take the case of the Carthaginians. After being reduced by many exaction's to the lowest pitch of poverty, yet when the Romans made war against Philip and Macedon, and against Antiochus, they demanded ships from these allies. They demanded besides, as a subsidy, an immense quantity of gold, silver, provisions, garments, and armor, till at length these wretched Carthaginians, whose very life-blood the Romans had drained, still sent for the war whatever gold they had remaining, and all they could scrape together. Thus Philip king of Macedon is compelled to destroy himself, by plunging his own sword into his body; for every state of Greece was forced to contribute its own portion of the expenses of the war.

We perceive, then, how *the lands were divided for a price*, each with regard to its own utility, not by fixing a certain defined money value, but according to the standard of political expediency. And what kind of bargaining did they afterwards mutually execute? We have an instance of it in the prevalence of proscription among the Romans, by which they turned their rapacity against their own vitals. They had previously confiscated the goods of their enemies. Philip, for instance, was

forced to pay a large sum of money to repurchase the name of king and the portion of territory which remained his own. Antiochus and the Carthaginians were subject to the same hardship. The Romans, in short, never conquered any one without exhausting both the monarch and his dominions to satisfy their insatiable avarice and cupidity. We now perceive *how they divided the lands for a price*, holding all kings in subjection to themselves, and bestowing largesses upon one from the property of another.

We now perceive the angel's meaning throughout this verse, *The King should be so powerful as to bestow dominion on whomsoever he pleased in many and ample territories*, but not gratuitously. We have had examples of some despoiled of their royal dignity and power, and of others restored to the authority of which they had been deprived. Lucullus, for instance, chose to eject one king from his dominions, while another general restored him to his possessions. A single Roman citizen could thus create a great monarch; and thus it often happened. Claudius proposed to the people to proscribe the king of Cyprus, although he was of the royal race; his father had been the friend and ally of the Roman people, he had committed no crime against the Roman empire, and there was no reason for declaring war against him. Meanwhile he remained in security at home, while none of those ceremonies by which war is usually declared took place. He was proscribed in the market-place by a few vagabonds, and Cato is immediately sent to ravage the whole island. He took possession of it for the Romans, and this wretched man is compelled to cast himself into the sea in a fit of despair. We observe, then, how his prediction of the angel was by no means in vain; the Roman proconsuls distributed kingdoms and provinces, *but yet for a price*, for they seized everything in the world, and drew all riches, all treasures, and every particle of value into the whirlpool of their unsatisfied covetousness. We shall put off the remainder.

PRAYER.

Grant, Almighty God, as in all ages the blindness of mankind has been so great as to lead them to worship thee erroneously and superstitiously, and since they manifest such duplicity and pride as to despise thy name, and also the very idols which they have fashioned for themselves: Grant, I pray thee, that true piety may be deeply rooted in our hearts. May the fear of thy name be so engraven within us, that we may be sincerely and unreservedly devoted to thee. May each of us heartily desire to glorify thy name, and may we endeavor to lead our brethren in the same course. Do thou purge us more and more from all dissimulation, until at length we arrive at that perfect purity which is laid up for us in heaven, through Jesus Christ our Lord. — Amen.

LECTURE SIXTY-FOURTH

Daniel 11:40

<p>40. And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over.</p>	<p>40. Et im tempore finis configet cum eo rex austri, et tanquam turbo iruet rex aquilonis, cum curru et equitibus, et navibus multis: et veniet in terras, et exundabit, et transibit, <i>pervadet</i></p>
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As to the time here mentioned, it is a certain or predetermined period' the kings of the south and the north we have already shewn to refer to Egypt and Syria, such being their position with respect to Judea. The word *neech, confliget*, is literally he shall "push with the horns," while the word translated, "he shall rush as a whirlwind," is deduced from *segner*, "to be stormy." The angel here predicts the numerous victories by means of which the Romans should extend their empire far and wide, although not without great difficulties and dangers. He states, *The king of the south should carry on war with the Romans for a definite period* I dare not fix the precise time intended by the angel. So great was the power of Egypt, that had the kings of that country relied upon their native resources, they might have summoned courage to make war upon the Romans. Gabinius the proconsul led his army there for the sake of restoring Ptolemy. He expelled Archelaus without much trouble, and then like a mercenary he risked his life and his fame there, as well as his army. Caesar was in danger there, after vanquishing Pompey; then Antony next made war upon Augustus, assisted by the forces of Cleopatra; then Egypt put forth all her strength, and at his failure was reduced herself to a province of Rome. The angel did not propose to mark a continued series of times, but only briefly to admonish the faithful to stand firm amidst those most grievous concussions which were then at hand. Whatever be the precise meaning, the angel doubtless signified the difficult nature of the struggle between the Romans and the Egyptians. I have already stated the witness of history to the fact, that the Egyptians never made war against the Romans in their own name; sometimes events were so confused that the Egyptians coalesced with the Syrians, and then we must read the words conjointly — thus the king of the south, assisted by the king of the north, should carry on war with the Romans. The angel thus shews us how the king of Syria should furnish greater forces and supplies than the Egyptian monarch, and this really happened at the beginning of the triumvirate. He states next, *The king of the south should come with chariots and horses and many ships*. Nor is it necessary here to indicate the precise period, since the Romans carried on many wars in the east, during which they occupied Asia, while a part of Libya fell to them by the will of its king without arms or force of any kind.

With reference to these two kingdoms which have been so frequently mentioned, many chiefs ruled over Syria within a short period. First one of the natives was raised to the throne and then another, till the people grew tired of them, and transferred the sovereignty to strangers. Then Alexander rose gradually to power, and ultimately acquired very great fame: he was not of noble birth, for his father was of unknown origin. This man sprang from an obscure family, and at one period possessed neither authority nor resources. He was made king of Syria, because he pretended to be the son of Seleucus, and was slain immediately, while his immediate successor reigned for but a short period. Thus Syria passed over to the Romans on the death of this Seleucus. Tigranes the king of Armenia was then sent for, and he was made ruler over Syria till Lucullus conquered him, and Syria was reduced to a province. The vilest of men reigned over Egypt. Physcon, who

was restrained by the Romans when attempting to wrest Syria from the power of its sovereign, was exceedingly depraved both in body and mind and hence he obtained this disgraceful appellation. For the word is a Greek one, equivalent to the French *andouille*; for *physce* means that thicker intestine into which the others are usually inserted. This deformity gave rise to his usual name, signifying “pot-bellied,” implying both bodily deformity and likeness to the brutes, while he was not endowed with either intellect or ingenuity. The last king who made the Romans his son’s guardians, received the name of Auletes, and Cicero uses this epithet of “flute-player,” because he was immoderately fond of this musical instrument. In each kingdom then there was horrible deformity, since those who exercised the royal authority were more like dogs or swine than mankind. Tigranes, it is well known, gave the Romans much trouble. On the other side, Mithridates occupied their attention for a very long period, and with various and opposite success. The Romans throughout all Asia were at one period put to the sword, and when a close engagement was fought, Mithridates was often superior, and he afterwards united his forces with those of Tigranes, his father-in-law. When Tigranes held Armenia, he was a king of other kings, and afterwards added to his dominions a portion of Syria. At length when the last Antiochus was set over the kingdom of Syria by Lucullus, he was removed from his command by the orders of Pompey, and then, as we have stated, Syria became a province of Rome. Pompey crossed the sea, and subdued the whole of Judea as well as Syria; he afterwards entered the Temple, and took away some part of its possessions, but spared the sacred treasures. Crassus succeeded him — an insatiable whirlpool, who longed for this province for no other reason than his unbounded eagerness for wealth. He despoiled the Temple at Jerusalem; and lastly, after Cleopatra was conquered, Egypt lost its royal race, and passed into a Roman province. If the Romans, had conquered a hundred other provinces, the angel would not have mentioned them here; for I have previously noticed his special regard to the chosen people. Therefore he dwells only on those slaughters which had more or less relation to the wretched Jews. First of all he predicts the great contest which should arise between the kings of Egypt and Syria, *who should come on like a whirlwind*, while the Romans *should rush upon the lands like a deluge, and pass over them*. He compares the king of Syria to a whirlwind, for at first he should rush on impetuously, filling both land and sea with his forces. Thus he should possess a well-manned fleet, and thus excite fresh terrors, and yet vanish away rapidly like a whirlwind. But the Romans are compared to a deluge. The new king of whom he had spoken *should come*, says he, *and overflow*, burying all the forces of both Egypt and Syria; implying the whole foundations of both realms should be swept away when the Romans passed over them. *He shall pass over*, he says; meaning, wherever they come, the way shall be open for them and nothing closed against them. He will repeat this idea in another form. He does not speak now of one region only, but says, *they should come over the lands*, implying a wide-spread desolation, while no one should dare to oppose them by resisting their fury.

Daniel 11:41-42

41. He shall enter also into the glorious land, **41.** Et veniet in terram desiderii, et multae, and many *countries* shall be overthrown: but *regiones scilicet*, cadent, et hae evadent e manu

these shall escape out of his hand, *even* Edom, ejus, Edom, Moab, et principium filiorum and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon.

Ammon.

42. He shall stretch forth his hand also upon **42.** Et mittet, *hoc est, extendet*, manum suam the countries: and the land of Egypt shall not in terras, et terra Aegypti non erit in evasionem. escape.

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The land of Judea is called the pleasant or desirable land, because God thought it worthy of his peculiar favor. He chose it for his dwelling-place, called it his resting-place, and caused his blessing to remain in it. In this verse also, regions are treated, and not merely cities, as the regions of Edom and of Moab. After the angel had briefly predicted the occurrence of the most grievous wars with the Romans, he now adds what he had briefly commenced in the last verse, — namely their becoming conquerors of all nations. *They shall come*, he says, *into the desirable land* This is the reason why the angel prophesies of the Roman empire, for he was not sent to explain to Daniel the history of the whole world, but to retain the faithful in their allegiance, and to persuade them under the most harassing convulsions to remain under the protection and guardianship of God. For this reason he *states*, — *they shall come into the desirable land* This would be a dreadful temptation, and might overthrow all feelings of piety, as the Jews would be harassed on all sides, first by the Syrians and then by the Egyptians. And we know with what cruelty Antiochus endeavored not only to oppress but utterly to blot out the whole nation. Neither the Syrians nor the Egyptians spared them. The Romans came almost from the other side of the globe; at first they made an alliance with these states, and then entered Judea as enemies. Who would have supposed that region under God's protection, when it was so exposed to all attacks of robbery and oppression? Hence it was necessary to admonish the faithful not to fall away through this utter confusion.

They shall come, then, *into the desirable land, and many regions shall fall*; meaning, no hope should remain for the Jews after the arrival of the Romans, as victory was already prepared to their hand. The angel's setting before the faithful this material for despair was not likely to induce confidence and comfort, but, as they were aware of these divine predictions, they knew also that the remedy was prepared by the same God who had admonished them by means of the angel. It was in his power to save his Church from a hundred deaths. This prophecy became an inestimable treasury, inspiring the faithful with the hope of the promised deliverance. The angel will afterwards add the promise intended to support and strengthen and revive their drooping spirits. But he here announces that God's aid should not immediately appear, because he would give the Romans full permission to exercise a cruel sway, tyranny, and robbery, throughout the whole of Asia and the East. He says, *The lands of Edom, Moab, and a portion of Ammon should escape from their slaughter* This trial would in no slight degree affect the minds of the pious: What does he mean? He suffers the land that he promised should be at rest, to be now seized and laid waste by its enemies! The land of Moab is at peace and enjoys the greatest tranquillity, and the condition of the sons of Ammon is prosperous! We should here bear in mind what the prophets say of these lands: Esau was banished into the rugged mountains, and God assigned to the Moabites a territory beyond the borders of the land of blessings. (Malachi 1:3.) The Jews alone had any peculiar right and privilege to claim that

¹⁹¹ That is, "shall not escape," or "snatch itself away." — Calvin.

territory in which the Lord had promised them perfect repose. Now, when Judea is laid waste and their foes according to their pleasure not only seize upon everything valuable in the city and the country, but seem to have a special permission to ravage the land at their will, what could the Jews conjecture? The angel therefore meets this objection, and alleviates these feelings of anxiety to which the faithful could be subject from such slaughters. He states that the territories of *Edom* and *Moab*, and of the *children of Ammon*, should be tranquil and safe from those calamities. By the expression, *to the beginning of the children of Ammon*, he most probably refers to that, retreat whence the Ammonites originated. For doubtless the Romans would not have spared the Ammonites unless they had been concealed among the mountains, for every district in the neighborhood of Judea was subject to the same distress. Those who interpret this passage of Antichrist, suppose safety to be extended only to that portion of the faithful who shall escape from the world and take refuge in the deserts. But there is no reason in this opinion, and it is sufficient to retain the sense already proposed as the genuine one. He afterwards adds, *The Romans should send their army into the land, and even in the land of Egypt, they should not escape* The angel without doubt here treats of the numerous victories which the Romans should obtain in a short time. They carried on war with Mithridates for a long period, and then Asia was almost lost; but they soon afterwards began to extend their power, first over all Asia Minor, and then over Syria; Armenia was next added to their sway, and Egypt after that: meanwhile this was but a moderate addition, till at length they ruled over the Persians, and thus their power became formidable. Wherefore this prophet was fulfilled by *their extending their power over many regions, and by the land of Egypt becoming a portion of their booty* It follows:

Daniel 11:43

43. But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt: and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps. **43.** Et dominabitur thesauris auri, et argenti, et omnibus desiderabilibus ¹⁹² AEgypti, et Lybiae, et Aethiopiae ingressibus suis.

I have previously stated that though the language applies to a single king, yet a kingdom is to be understood, and our former observations are here confirmed. Although many nations should endeavor to resist the Romans, they should yet be completely victorious, and finally acquire immense booty. Their avarice and covetousness were perfectly astonishing; for he says, *they should acquire dominion over the treasures of gold and silver, and should draw to themselves all the precious things of Egypt, Libya, and Ethiopia; and that, too, in their footsteps*. In these words he more clearly explains our previous remarks upon the emblem of the deluge. All lands should be laid open to them; although the cities were fortified, and would thus resist them by their closed gates, yet the way should be open to them, and none should hinder them from bursting forth over the whole east, and subduing at the same time cities, towns, and villages. This we know to have been actually

¹⁹² That is, over all precious things. — Calvin.

accomplished. Hence there is nothing forced in the whole of this context, and the prophecy is fairly interpreted by the history. He afterwards adds, —

Daniel 11:44

44. But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many. **44.** Rumores vero, ¹⁹³ terrebunt eum ab oriente, et ab aquilone: egredieturque cum ira magna, ut perdat et interneccione deleat multos.

The angel's narrative seems here to differ somewhat from the preceding one, as the Romans should not succeed so completely as to avoid being arrested in the midst of their victorious course. He says, *they shall be frightened by rumors*, and the events suit this case, for although the Romans subdued the whole east with scarcely any trouble, and in a few years, yet they were afterwards checked by adversity. For Crassus perished miserably after spoiling the temple, and destroyed himself and the flower of the Roman army; he was conquered at Carrse, near Babylon, in an important engagement, through betrayal by a spy in when he had placed too much confidence. Antony, again, after dividing the world into three parts between himself, and Octavius, and Lepidus, suffered miserably in the same neighborhood against the Parthians. We are not surprised at the angel's saying, *The Romans should be frightened from the east and the north*, as this really came to pass. Then he adds, *they should come in great wrath*; meaning, although they should lose many troops, yet this severe massacre should not depress their spirits. When their circumstances were desperate, they were excited to fury like savage beasts of prey, until they rushed upon their own destruction. This came to pass more especially under the reign of Augustus; for a short period he contended successfully with the Parthians, and compelled them to surrender. He then imposed upon them conditions of peace; and as the Roman eagles had been carried into Persia, much to their disgrace, he compelled this people to return them. By this compulsion he blotted out the disgrace which they had suffered under Antony. We see, then, how exceedingly well this suits the context, — *the Romans shall come with great wrath to destroy many*; as the Parthians expected to enjoy tranquillity for many ages, and to be perfectly free from any future attempt or attack from the Romans. It now follows, —

Daniel 11:45

45. And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him. **45.** Et figet tabernacula palatii sui inter maria ad montem desiderii sanctitatis, et veniet ad finem suum, et non auxiliator ei.

¹⁹³ Probably "reports" or "statements" which should be heard. — Calvin.

The angel at length concludes with the settled sway of the Romans in Asia Minor and the regions of the coast, as well as in Syria, Judea, and Persia. We have already shewn how everything here predicted is related by profane historians, and each event is well known to all who are moderately versed in the knowledge of those times. We must now notice the phrase, The Roman king *should fix the tents of his palace* This expression signifies not only the carrying on of the war by the Romans in the east, but their being lords of the whole of that region. When he had said they should fix their tents according to the usual practice of warfare, he might have been content with the usual method of speech, but he contrasts the word “palace” with frequent migrations, and signifies their not measuring their camp according to the usage of warfare, but their occupying a fixed station for a permanence. Why then does he speak of tents? Because Asia was not the seat of their empire; for they were careful in not attributing more dignity to any place than was expedient for themselves. For this reason the proconsuls took with them numerous attendants, to avoid the necessity of any fixed palace they had their own tents, and often remained in such temporary dwellings as they found on their road. This language of the angel — *they shall fix the tents of their palace* — will suit the Romans exceedingly well, because they reigned there in tranquillity after the east was subdued; and yet they had no fixed habitation, because they did not wish any place to become strong enough to rebel against them. When he says, *between the seas*, some think the Dead Sea intended, and the Lake of Asphalt, as opposed to the Mediterranean Sea. I do not hesitate to think the Persian Sea is intended by the angel. He does not say the Romans should become masters of all the lands lying between the two seas, but he only says *they should fix the tents of their palace between the seas*; and we know this to have been done when they held the dominion between the Euxine and the Persian Gulf. The extent of the sway of Mithridates is well known, for historians record twenty-two nations as subject to his power. Afterwards, on one side stood Asia Minor, which consisted of many nations, according to our statement elsewhere, and Armenia became theirs after Tigranes was conquered, while Cilicia, though only a part of a province, was a very extensive and wealthy region. It had many deserts and many stony and uncultivated mountains, while there were in Cilicia many rich cities, though it did not form a single province, like Syria and Judea, so that it is not surprising when the angel says the Romans *should fix their tents between the seas*, for their habitation was beyond the Mediterranean Sea. They first passed over into Sicily and then into Spain; thirdly, they began to extend their power into Greece and Asia Minor against Antiochus, and then they seized upon the whole east. On the one shore was Asia Minor and many other nations; and on the other side was the Syrian Sea, including Judea as far as the Egyptian Sea. We observe, then, the tranquillity of the Roman Empire *between the seas*, and yet it had no permanent seat there, because the proconsuls spent their time as foreigners in the midst of a strange country.

At length he adds, *They should come to the mountain of the desire of holiness* I have already expressed the reason why this prophecy was uttered; it was to prevent the novelty of these events from disturbing the minds of the pious, when they saw so barbarous and distant a nation trampling upon them, and ruling with pride, insolence, and cruelty. When, therefore, so sorrowful a spectacle was set before the eyes of the pious, they required no ordinary supports lest they should yield to the pressure of despair. The angel therefore predicts future events, to produce the acknowledgment of nothing really happening by chance; and next, to shew how all these turbulent motions throughout the world are governed by a divine power. The consolation follows, *they shall come at length to their end, and no one shall bring them help* This was not fulfilled immediately, for after Crassus

had despoiled the temple, and had suffered in an adverse engagement against the Parthians, the Romans did not fail all at once, but their monarchy flourished even more and more under Augustus. The city was then razed to the ground by Titus, and the very name and existence of the Jewish nation all but; annihilated. Then, after this, the Romans suffered disgraceful defeats; they were east out of nearly the whole east, and compelled to treat with the Parthians, the Persians, and other nations, till their empire was entirely ruined. If we study the history of the next hundred years no nation will be found to have suffered such severe punishments as the Romans, and no monarchy was ever overthrown with greater disgrace. God then poured such fury upon that nation as to render them the gazing-stock of the world. Tim angel's words are not in vain, *their own end should soon come*; after they had devastated and depopulated all lands, and penetrated and pervaded everywhere, and all the world had given themselves up to their power, then the Romans became utterly ruined and swept away. *They should have gone to help them* Without doubt this prophecy may be here extended to rite promulgation of the gospel; for although Christ was born about one age before the preaching of the gospel, yet he truly shone forth to the world by means of that promulgation. The angel therefore brought up his prophecy to that point of time. He now subjoins, —