

The Final Antichrist

Daniel 11:36-45

Introduction

In this final portion of chapter 11 (vv.36-45) we are given a brief and horrifying picture of Satan's final choice to oppose the plan of God. In Daniel he has been called "the little horn" (7:8); and the willful king (11:36). Paul the Apostle in one of the earliest letters in the New Testament calls him "the man of sin" "the son of perdition" (2 Thess.2:3) and "the wicked one" (2 Thess. 2:8). John the apostle calls him "the beast" (Rev.11:7) and antichrist (1 John 2:18).

The angel speaks of his impudence (vv.36-37) and idolatry (vv.38-39). This final antichrist will blaspheme God and then worship the god of fortresses (power). The angel speaks of his wickedness (vv.36-39) and warfare (vv.40-45). The angel speaks of the ones he will defeat (Israel, Egypt and Libya) and the one who will defeat him (v.45). **The context suggests God Himself will utterly crush the Antichrist somewhere near the city of Jerusalem.**

The British journalist Malcolm Muggeridge speculated; "What will finally destroy us is not communism or fascism, but man acting like God." I might add; what will ultimately save us is God becomes a man. Martyn Lloyd-Jones wrote; "There is going to be an ultimate anti-Christ, one person able to do such wonders that he almost deceives the elect themselves."

His Satanic Pride (v.36)

*Daniel 11:36 (NKJV)*36 "Then the king shall do according to his own will: he shall exalt and magnify himself above every god, shall speak blasphemies against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the wrath has been accomplished; for what has been determined shall be done.

The narrative changes. The picture of Antiochus Epiphanes IV now changes and transforms into another king; a future king. Some Bible teachers see in verse 36 elements and characteristics of Antiochus IV Epiphanes. It is clear that Antiochus Epiphanes IV was allowed to do many things according to his own will; but only for a season.

In verses 36 through 45 Daniel is describing someone else; something else. Daniel 11:1-35 was a description of the future; a future that unfolded in the centuries between the Testaments. Now we are told of another king, a far future king who Daniel calls *the willful king* (v.36).

The details in this portion of the narrative do not fit the historical record of Antiochus IV Epiphanes or his successor rulers. What does it mean that this king shall do according to his own will? It must mean that he has no regard for God's will. His own will seems to coincide with the will of God's enemies.

There is a clue given by Paul in the New Testament concerning this person's motives and power.

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“The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved” (2Thessalonians 2:9-10).

This future antichrist will be energized and enabled by dark powers and Satan himself. The Antichrist will view all humans as tools. And he himself will be the ultimate puppet of the Dark Prince. The tools he employs are lies and suffering and pride.

Who are the most vulnerable? The ones who hate truth. Who are the least vulnerable? Those who love truth.

What are the constituent elements of pride?

Oppose God.

Elevate self.

Invite judgment.

What is pride? Pride lures us—draws us—to live our lives apart from God. Pride undermines our faith. Pride can and often does cut us off from God and others. Pride will ultimately distort our view of God and others.

The life and ministry of Jesus is an open rebuke to pride.

The book of Revelation spells out in graphic detail the Antichrist’s message; *“The beast was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words, and it was allowed to exercise authority for forty-two months. It opened its mouth to utter blasphemies against God, blaspheming his name and his dwelling, that is, those who dwell in heaven” (Revelation 13:5-6 NKJV).*

The AntiChrist is truly anti-Christ. That may seem redundant. But this future king literally places himself in the role of savior and liberator and healer of humanity. This king will insist and demand that the whole world pay him homage. Those who refuse will experience persecution or death.

“he shall prosper till the wrath has been accomplished”. Is this a reference to Antichrist’s wrath or God’s wrath (the tribulation period)? Whatever it means God has set aside a time, a period where Antichrist’s rule and reign is allowed. We may reference verse 35; *“And some of those of understanding shall fall, to refine them, purify them, and make them white, until the time of the end; because it is still for the appointed time”*.

The prophet Isaiah reminded the Jewish people; *“My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose” (Isaiah 46:10).*

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His Satanic Policies (vv.37-38)

37He shall regard neither the God of his fathers nor the desire of women, nor regard any god; for he shall exalt himself above them all.

The word translated God is the Hebrew word *Elohim*. In this context it might better be translated *gods*. This final Antichrist rejects the supernatural powers and deities of past kings and former dictators and rulers.

The final Antichrist will adopt the notion popularized by Nietzsche, Freud and Marx. There is no God or gods. All religion is a human construct fabricated to give people false hope. What will be the Antichrist's policies concerning religions and religious freedoms?

I am reminded of Gibbon's famous quote in *Rise And Fall Of The Roman Empire*.

The various modes of worship, which prevailed in the Roman world, were all considered by the people, as equally true; by the philosopher, as equally false; and by the magistrate, as equally useful. And thus toleration produced not only mutual indulgence, but even religious concord.

What does the strange phrase "nor the desire of women" mean?

It seems to be a reference to the Jewish Messiah. Did young Jewish girls grow up with the hope that perhaps God would choose them to be the bearer of God's Messiah? Or is this a reference to antichrist's hatred or loathing of women? Does this mean that the Antichrist will hate women or hate the one woman who fulfills the Messianic prophecy and gives birth to the Savior?

Whatever it means we are left with the Antichrist's repudiation of every religion and all religions.

38But in their place he shall honor a god of fortresses; and a god which his fathers did not know he shall honor with gold and silver; with precious stones and pleasant things.

But even the Antichrist will exercise his God-given impulse to worship. And what will be the object of Antichrist's passion? Power. The antichrist will honor a god of fortresses; and how will this Antichrist honor the god of fortresses? With gold and silver and precious stones and pleasant things. The Antichrist will purchase power. Could the reference mean more?

It could mean that the Antichrist figure will take vast human treasure and translate it into an invincible army.

His Satanic Powers (vv.39-45)

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39 Thus he shall act against the strongest fortresses with a foreign god, which he shall acknowledge, and advance its glory; and he shall cause them to rule over many, and divide the land for gain.

And what is this foreign god? If it is the same god of verse 38—power—military might—and what we might call the locus of power or point of power or the thing that makes power possible.

And whatever this power is and how ever the power is exercised; the Antichrist is able to rule and then delegate that authority and then divide the land for gain (profit).

The Antichrist's ultimate goal is world domination. What does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his soul? The Antichrist will put that maxim to the test.

He has already lost his soul. He is the Son of Perdition.

The world is his oyster. What kind of world will present itself ripe for conquest? What must the world look like for this man—energized by Satan with an invincible military machine? No world power will be able to stop him. What world powers do you see around you? What restrains chaos? What might happen that would cause the world to look for a singular savior?

There have been many types and shadows of this Antichrist figure. In Persia Haman was energized by Satan to destroy the Jews. Antiochus Epiphanes IV waged a cruel and costly campaign to wipe out Jews or the things that made Jews different from her Greek and Pagan neighbors.

The future Antichrist will promise rich rewards for those who offer him support and loyalty.

What follows is most interesting. We are given a brief description of the Antichrist's powers (v. 39). But now comes a change. Like Alexander and Antiochus IV there was a season of uninterrupted success. Now opposition comes to **the willful king**.

40 "At the time of the end the king of the South shall attack him; and the king of the North shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter the countries, overwhelm them, and pass through.

Chapter 11 has made repeated references to the king of the South and the king of the North. Throughout the chapter it has constituted the lands governed by the Seleucid rulers in the North and the Ptolemaic rulers in the South.

It would seem that the theatre of the future will once again be The Glorious Land.

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When will all this happen? “*At the time of the end*”. And when is that time? In Daniel’s prophecy we see in sweeping terms; the times of Gentile sovereignty and control; and the time that God has set aside to fully and finally deal with Israel.

These two old rivals; bitter enemies in constant conflict with each other will unite in what seems like a suicidal union. The king of the South will attack the Antichrist. The king of the North will mount a sudden and fierce attack with all the weapons of war that is available. The Antichrist penetrates their strongholds and overwhelms his enemies. Some Bible scholars have suggested these verses may be a reference to the Russian invasion foretold by Ezekiel (chapters 38-39).

I don’t find their argument compelling.

It may be that Russia has already collapsed and presents no threat to the Antichrist’s occupation of the Glorious Land (Israel). Throughout the chapter the kings of the North and the South have referred to those lands that comprised Turkey, Syria, Iran and Iraq. The South was Egypt, Arabia and the coastal regions of North Africa. Egypt’s allies’ included Libya and Ethiopia.

The rebellion is met with *rage and revenge*.

41He shall also enter the Glorious Land, and many countries shall be overthrown; but these shall escape from his hand: Edom, Moab, and the prominent people of Ammon.

The Antichrist’s victories result in the subjugation of some of the surrounding regions of the Middle East. Certain countries and peoples are spared. The list includes Edom, Moab and the prominent people of Ammon. These ancient names comprise the territory of the modern state of Jordan. Why do they escape? Historically these areas have brought consistent problems for the people of Israel. Will God set them aside for mercy or for judgment?

Once again Israel is caught in the cross-hairs of Satan’s attempt to elevate and honor his choice for world ruler. In the New Testament Satan offers the kingdoms of this world to Jesus. In the future Satan will offer and his candidate will accept **Satan’s suggestion**. Global governance requires the disappearance of the Jewish State and the Jewish people.

Could it be that the Jewish State and the Jewish people finally realize that this Antichrist figure is in fact a counterfeit Christ.

Isaiah prophesied; “And in that day there shall be a Root of Jesse, Who shall stand as a banner to the people; For the Gentiles shall seek Him, and His resting place shall be glorious.” (11) It shall come to pass in that day that the Lord shall set His hand again the second time To recover the remnant of His people who are left, From Assyria and Egypt, From Pathros and Cush, From Elam and Shinar, From Mammoth and the islands of the sea.”

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What constituted the first time or the first return of Israel from her lands of captivity? Some suggest the Egyptian captivity (Exodus 14:26-29). The second will be from her world wide dispersion (see 51:9-11).

What if this is the prophecy reported by Zechariah 14:2? “For I will gather all nations to battle against Jerusalem; the city shall be taken, The houses rifled, And the women ravished. Half of the city shall go into captivity. But the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city.”

What is going on? This is the climax of the time of Jacob’s Sorrow—or Jacob’s trouble (Jeremiah 30:5-7). This is the time of purging, refinement and cleansing and judgment (see Revelation 16:13-14; 16).

42He shall stretch out his hand against the countries, and the land of Egypt shall not escape.

43He shall have power over the treasures of gold and silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt; also the Libyans and Ethiopians shall follow at his heels.

44But news from the east and the north shall trouble him; therefore he shall go out with great fury to destroy and annihilate many.

Antichrist subdues Egypt and Egypt’s allies. The Antichrist is given access to Egypt’s resources and treasures. The Libyans and Ethiopians submit to Antichrist.

And what is the news from the east and the north? Why does it trouble the Antichrist?

Some have suggested that Japanese technology might join with Chinese manpower crossing the Euphrates and attacking Antichrist’s position. Opposition to Antichrist’s rule is growing. Other nations are joining in the rebellion. Who else might join in the campaign? Mongolia? Siberia? Korea? Will the Muslim countries resist the Antichrist?

45And he shall plant the tents of his palace between the seas and the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and no one will help him.

What does this mean? It may mean that the Antichrist sets up his command and control center in the Middle East in order to deal with the chaotic unraveling of his global empire. Where is this? Somewhere between the Mediterranean Sea and the Dead Sea (this Hebraism—between the sea or perhaps the Sea of Galilee). The glorious holy mountain must be Mount Zion—or the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. The antichrist’s troops fill the land (the planting of the tents). **But no one is able to help him stand against God who will by the return of the Messiah bring antichrist to his end (see Revelation 19:19-21).**

“And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army. (20) Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive

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into the lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the rest were killed with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse. And all the birds were filled with their flesh.”

In Daniel chapter 9 we learned there is an outstanding seven—a period that God has set aside for a final confrontation. The countdown began when the Antichrist figure signs a treaty that ensures the safety and security of Israel from her surrounding neighbors.

The angel’s final word to Daniel about this future Antichrist figure is imparted; “he shall come to his end, and *no one will help him.*”

Conclusion

The Antichrist’s reign of terror is about to end. But the angel has more to say. What follows in chapter 12 is a description of the end times (vv.1-4) and the duration of those end times (see vv. 5-13). The closing comments by the angel includes a warning about great pain and suffering for Daniel’s people. But Israel has a prince—an angel Michael who will protect and preserve a remnant. God has a book. And those whose names are written in that book will be delivered (12:1). The angel speaks of a time of suffering; and separation. In the last day, all will be resurrected; some to everlasting life and others to everlasting punishment. The angel speaks of a shining—the righteous will shine like stars; and a sealing—the prophecies of Daniel are sealed until the time of the end (v.4). Three specific time periods are given; a period of 1260 days (vv. 5-10); a period of 1290 days (v.11); a period of 1335 days (vv.12-13).

What does it all mean? Join me as we conclude our exciting study of the Book of Daniel.