

# FOR THE TIME OF THE END

Theme: Daniel 11:36-45 tells us the future career of the Antichrist up to the end of the times of Gentile world domination.

The closing verses of Daniel 11 tell us the story of the Antichrist. The name "Antichrist" appears in the Bible only in 1 John 2:18. The prefix "anti" suggests the idea of opposition; but it can also mean "in the place of"; and the word "Christ" means "the anointed one" or "the messiah". Thus, this is describing the career of one who presents himself "in the place of" the Jewish Messiah (the Christ); and whose career also is in complete opposition to the kingdom rule of the true Christ.

He is described by many different names in the Bible; and these names imply something about him. His name "the man of lawlessness" (2 Thessalonians 2:3) suggests his personal wickedness and his operation outside the law of God. His name "the beast" (Revelation 13, 17) suggests his hostility, deep depravity, uncontrollability and brutality. The name "the little horn" (Daniel 7:8) suggests an emphasis on his power as a ruler, as well as on his pride. (The adjective "little" may suggest that he exalts himself to godhood, but remains only a man.) He will be a great leader, and will be hailed as an apparent problem-solver (Daniel 7:8-26; 9:26-27; 2 Thessalonians 2:3-10; Revelation 13:1-9; 17:8-14). Harry Ironside, in his commentary on Daniel (pp. 213-14), believed that the Antichrist is described as "The Assyrian" in Isaiah 10:24-25 and 14:24-25. He is the 'bad shepherd' of Israel described in Zechariah 11:16-17 (and perhaps also in John 5:43). The outstanding wickedness of this man is shown in that, out of all humanity, only he and "the false prophet" will be cast alive into the lake of fire at the coming of the Lord--at least 1,000 years before the final judgment of all others (Revelation 19:20; 20:10, 11-15).

This section of Daniel 11 is marked by a break from verses 2-35. That previous section focused on times that, from the standpoint of Daniel, were future; but that are now, from our standpoint, ancient history. But "the king" that is identified in verse 36 is different from Antiochus Epiphanes (who is described in verses 21-35). An unknown number of centuries stands between verse 35 and verse 36. That this is speaking of a different king is shown by the following: (1) The events that follow do not fit the known history of Antiochus Epiphanes--especially the events of verses 40-45; (2) the king about to be described is shown to initiate policies, whereas Antiochus' policies are already described as established; (3) the person about to be described is simply called "the king" (while Antiochus Epiphanes is always referred to specifically as "the king of the north"), and is distinguished from the king of the north in verse 40; (4) the trouble brought about by the king being described is unprecedented (12:1), and accords with the descriptions of the Great Tribulation found in Matthew 24:21 and Jeremiah 30:7; and (5) since the Antichrist is already mentioned in the Book of Daniel (see 7:8, 11, 19-26; 9:26-27), it shouldn't be a surprise to see him presented again in its closing pages. (These arguments are summarized from Leon Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel*, pp. 304-5.) That a prophecy can begin talking about one person as its subject, and then seem to gradually shift in its focus to another person as the subject of the same prophecy, is demonstrated by Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28. And that the events being described in Daniel 11:36-45 are understood as future is shown by the fact that Jesus Himself referred to them as future at the time of His earthly ministry (compare Daniel 8:11-14, 11:31 and 12:11 with Matthew 24:15 and Mark 13:14).

## I. HIS CHARACTER (vv. 36-39).

Humanly speaking, he will be absolute in power (v. 36). He is described as different from all who preceded him in Daniel 7:23--one who shall "devour the whole earth, trample it and break it to pieces". He will do as he wishes without hindrance.

He will exalt himself above all gods (v. 36). He will even go so far as to demand to be worshiped by all peoples of the world on threat of death (Revelation 13:3-4, 8, 15).

He will speaking blasphemies against the one true God (v. 36). It will not be enough to claim deity to himself. He will also speak against God openly (Revelation 13:5-6). His blasphemies will condemn him; because we're told he will carry on his blasphemies until "the wrath has been accomplished".

He will make a break from the forms of worship of the past (v. 37). He will not regard the God of his fathers (some scholars taking this to suggest that he is Jewish); nor "the desire of women" (a reference to the longing in every Jewish woman's heart to be the mother of the Messiah [see Genesis 3:15; Luke 1:28, 30-33, 42-43, 48]), nor any god, "for he shall exalt himself above [them] all". No other religious system of the past will be permitted to exist as a competition to his self-deification.

He will worship a god of fortresses (vv. 38-39). His sole trust--his sole object of worship--will be military power. Thus, he will exalt the principle of ungodly humanism to its highest practical degree--that man is the measure of all things (except he will present himself to be 'the man'). He will worship this "god of fortresses"--a god his fathers did not know--materially; that is "with gold and silver, with precious stones and pleasant things (see Revelation 18:9-19). He will, through material wealth, conquer the strongest of fortresses and will advance the glory of his 'god'; and will rule over and divide nations.

## **II. HIS CONQUESTS (vv. 40-43).**

At the time of the end (both referring to a future time and to the conclusion of the Gentile domination of the world), the king of the south will attack the Antichrist and his forces. As in the previous verses, "the king of the south" probably refers to Egypt; but it may also involve other nations south of Palestine--including Africa. The king of the north will also come against him "like a whirlwind, with chariots horsemen, and with many ships". This--as in previous verses, and if it indeed speaks of someone distinct from the Antichrist--would most likely be the nation of Syria. But it may also include other nations north of Palestine. This effort against "the king" will result in utter defeat for both the north and the south; because "he shall enter the countries, overwhelm them, and pass through" (see Revelation 6:2).

Israel stands helpless in the midst of this great conflict. What horrible times this will mean for the covenant people of God! The Antichrist is described as overthrowing not only "many countries", but also as entering "the Glorious Land" (see 11:16; that is, Israel). Certain nations will escape his conquests; "Edom, Moab, and the prominent people of Ammon" (the reference probably being to the regions of present day Jordan). Among those who would not escape, however, is Egypt (see also v. 40).

His having stretched out his hand against the countries (v. 42) will result in the acquisition of great wealth (v. 43). He will "have power" (i.e., "rule") over the land of Egypt--as evidenced by his having seized "the treasures of gold and silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt". The wealth he will have acquired to himself will be unimaginable! Plus, he will also have acquired to himself "the Libyans and Ethiopians" who will "follow at his heels"--that is, follow in the train of his conquests. He will finally solve the middle-east problem; but will do so by *owning* the middle-east!

## **III. HIS CONCLUSION (vv. 44-45).**

Then, "news from the east and the north shall trouble him". The east may be a reference to China--who, in the May 21, 1965 edition of *Time Magazine* (p. 35) is reported to have boasted of an army of 200,000,000 (cited in Walvoord, p. 280; see also Revelation 9:14-16; 16:12). And the north may be a reference to Russia. These two powers may combine their forces against the Antichrist; which will result in his going "out with great fury to destroy and annihilate many".

Just as ancient conquerors dwelt in tents during their campaigns; the Antichrist will set his tent in the land he conquers--but it will prove to be at the very place of his own destruction. The reference is to Jerusalem--"between the seas and the glorious holy mountain". The mountain is Mount Zion, where the temple was located; and the seas refer to the Mediterranean and the Dead Seas. Zechariah 14 tells us that it will be to this site that all the nations are gathered together for battle against the Lord (Zechariah 14:1-5; also Revelation 19:11-21). Thus, the Antichrist will come to a sudden end, and no one will help him. He will be consumed with the breath of the Lord's mouth, and destroyed with the brightness of His coming (2 Thessalonians 2:8). And thus will 'the times of the Gentiles' be brought to an end.