

DANIEL

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Daniel chapter 11 as we continue our study through the Word of God. Last week, as we looked at Daniel chapter 10 we were given an introduction to what will take place in this last vision that was given to Daniel and specifically covering chapters 11 and 12 although chapter 10 is included because it is the introduction to this vision that was given to Daniel.

Daniel chapters 10-12 cover a time frame from Cyrus through the Second Coming of Jesus Christ and they can be broken down as follows. As I have said, from Daniel chapter 10 through Daniel 11:1 we see an introduction to the vision. We get a behind the scenes look at spiritual warfare that went on back then and continues today!

Then in Daniel 11:2 through Daniel 12:4 we see two major divisions. Daniel 11:2-35 deals with the immediate future from the time of Cyrus through the Persian Empire and into the Grecian Empire, to Antiochus.

Then, from Daniel 11:36 to Daniel 12:4 we see Daniel being informed of the distant future, the latter days. That is the time period of the Great Tribulation up to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

And from Daniel 12:5-13 we see the final message of comfort to Daniel, the judgment of the nations and on into the establishing of the Millennial Reign of Christ!

Now the problem for many as we get into Daniel chapter 11 this evening is that this chapter contains one of the most detailed prophecies that have been fulfilled in the Bible, predicting history over some 375 years, and to the end, with amazing accuracy. And for many, they don't believe that this chapter is prophetic in nature but was written down after these events took place, it is historical in nature!

Commentator Joyce Baldwin explains the mindset of late-daters. She writes, "Though all of this is presented as if it were future, the considered opinion of most scholars is that the writer was using an accepted literary form, which would have deceived no-one. The intention would be to show that the course of history was under God's direction, and so achieving His purposes When the history becomes prophecy the transition can be detected, because events proved him wrong."

I am not sure why she has such a problem with this because if God is God, and He is, then He can tell us the future with 100% accuracy! In fact, over 25% of the Bible is prophetic in nature and many believe it is even higher than that.

What is the big deal about that? Very simply, if God predicted something that was going to come to pass and it didn't happen, then how can we trust Him at all? We couldn't and yet, what we do see is such amazing prophecies that the critics have a hard time believing that this was written before these events took place, hundreds of years before even though the evidence points to the fact that it was written before they occurred! They just refuse to believe.

David Hocking picked up on this idea of negating the prophecies of Daniel to mere history and gives to us some insight into where this got started and how it infiltrated the church.

He wrote,

In the third century A. D., a heathen philosopher by the name of Porphyry, attacked the Book of Daniel as a forgery. He confirmed that the history of this chapter was amazingly accurate and concluded that it could only have been written *AFTER* the events recorded. Church history has fostered his opinion, and until the twentieth century, very few people believed that such a person as Daniel existed much less that the things he wrote were written so long before they came to pass. It is indeed a miraculous chapter!

- David Hocking, Daniel – Prophecies of the Last Days, p. 269

How can I be so sure that Daniel wrote the book of Daniel and he wrote it sometime in the sixth century B. C.? Don't take my word for it, Jesus said in Matthew 24:15, **“Therefore when you see the ‘abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place’ (whoever reads, let him understand).”** Jesus calls Daniel a prophet and confirms to us that what Daniel spoke of was prophetic in nature and not just historic. (See also Mark 13:14)

Let me make one more point here in regards to prophecy because there are so many today who mock God's Word and the prophecies He has given to us. In Isaiah 44:6-8 the Lord says, **“Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel, And his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts: ‘I am the First and I am the Last; Besides Me there is no God. And who can proclaim as I do? Then let him declare it and set it in order for Me, Since I appointed the ancient people. And the things that are coming and shall come, Let them show these to them. Do not fear, nor be afraid; Have I not told you from that time, and declared it? You are My witnesses. Is there a God besides Me? Indeed there is no other Rock; I know not one.’”**

God is telling us that He alone can tell us the end from the beginning, there is no one else who can do that! And in knowing that God has told us the future we do not have to fear, we can rest in knowing that what he has said will come to pass! And we are to be witnesses of these things, of these prophecies that have come to pass and ones that will come to pass shortly.

Let me show you what I mean. When the Pope says we need a world government to combat climate control, when a leader in Israel calls for the Pope to be the leader of a one world religion that should get our attention because the Lord has warned us of these things in His Word and now they are beginning to come to pass!

Thus, prophecy sheds light on the future by telling us what will happen before it takes place. And as we look back at history it verifies prophecy and we will see that this evening as we study Daniel chapter 11!

With that as our introduction, let's begin reading in Daniel chapter 11 beginning in verse 1 and let's see what the Lord has for us as we study through His Word.

DANIEL 11**VERSE 1**

1. We see here that as the world power passed from the Babylonian to the Medo-Persian Empire, so too did the attitude pass from hostility towards the Jewish people to one that was more favorable. But it was difficult times, things could have gone against Daniel and the Jewish people who were in captivity and thus, we see this angel, possibly Michael, strengthen Daniel at the beginning of the reign of Darius in Babylon during the Medo-Persian Empire. Renald Showers made this interesting point, although I don't see Christ as assisting in this work, He needs no one to assist Him but there is spiritual warfare going on behind the scenes as this new Empire takes control. He wrote,

That was a crucial year. It was the year immediately following Medo-Persia's conquest of Babylon. That conquest made the Jews subject to Medo-Persian control. Thus, in 538 B. C. King Cyrus and his subkings would have been deciding their policy toward Israel. Apparently Satan's prince of Persia saw this as an opportune time to turn the kings of Medo-Persia against Israel from the very outset. . . . Michael succeeded in defeating these early efforts of the prince of Persia [and it] is seen in the fact that King Cyrus adopted a favorable policy toward Israel. [We see that] 538 B. C. was the year in which Cyrus ended the Babylonian captivity of the Jews and permitted them to return home to start building.

- Renald E. Showers, A Commentary on the Book of Daniel, The Most High God, p. 148

VERSE 2

1. Keep in mind that back in Daniel chapter 10 we were told that this vision occurred in the third year of Cyrus the King. So here in chapter 11 we see Daniel being told of 4 Kings that will come after Cyrus in the Medo-Persian Empire. These were those Kings:

A. Cambyses - the son of Cyrus, 529-522 B. C.

B. Pseudo-Smerdis -522-521 B. C.

C. Darius I Hystaspes - 521-486 B. C. (Found in Ezra 5 & 6)

D. Xerxes I - 485-465 B. C. (Found in Ezra 4:6 and the book of Esther)

2. Now let's deal with this fourth King, Xerxes, also known as King Ahasuerus because he will stir the hearts of Greece to finally come down upon this Empire and destroy it. King Xerxes had one of the largest military forces in the ancient world. And as Xerxes took his army against Greece, it did not end well. We are told,

The fourth king was Xerxes - and he was determined to wipe out Greece. With his vast wealth, he spent four years raising an army of two and a half million men. It took seven days to march the men across boats that acted as a bridge from the land mass across the Aegean Sea into the region of Greece. The battle was the bloodiest battle in history as the Greeks fought against Xerxes and his two and a half million men. And, although the Greeks lost, the army of Xerxes was decimated.

For the next one hundred fifty-plus years, the Greeks waited to take revenge.

- Jon Courson's Application Commentary Old Testament, Vol. 2, p. 737

As we read on we will see Greece as the World Empire and what we are told is so specific that it would seem like you were reading news events and yet, these words were given to Daniel long before they took place!

VERSES 3-4

1. This “**mighty king**” is none other than Alexander the Great. And he rose to power and conquered the western world from Greece to India in just some 11 to 12 years. He created an Empire that covered around two million square miles and that stretched across Europe, Africa, and Asia. But all that power, all those accomplishments did not help him to find satisfaction and as he conquered all the known Empires he fell upon his bed and wept for there were no other Kingdoms to conquer. Thus, when he had risen to the zenith of power, at the age of 32, he died of pneumonia complicated by alcoholism and malaria in the city of Babylon, 323 B. C. And after his death his Kingdom would be divided up in 4 directions, “**the four winds of heaven**” but not given to his family!

Neither of his two sons succeeded him, both were murdered. Thus, the Empire of Alexander the Great was seized by his four generals and the strength and power that Alexander brought to this nation was never seen again, for as this Kingdom was divided, so too was its strength and power. The Grecian Empire was divided up as follows:

- A. Seleucus - King of the north and to the east, Syria and Mesopotamia.
- B. Ptolemy - King of the south, Egypt.
- C. Lysimachus - King of the west, Thrace and portions of Asia Minor.
- D. Cassander - King of the west farther than Lysimachus, covering the area of Macedonia and Greece.

Now our focus is going to be the Seleucid Empire to the north and the Ptolemy Empire to the south. Why only focus on these two Empires? Simple, remember the focus is now Israel and its people. Starting in chapter 8 we moved from the Aramaic language back again to the Hebrew language for God is now speaking to the nation of Israel. And so, from verse 5 of chapter 11, through verse 35, we will see these two Empires fight and Israel, sandwiched right in the middle, will be affected!

VERSE 5

1. This King of the South was Ptolemy I Soter, one of Alexander's generals. And he exerted his control over the Holy Land and this occurred soon after the division of Alexander's Empire. And it seems for a time Seleucus I Nicator had an alliance with Ptolemy, in fact he was Ptolemy's general until Seleucus gained the area of Syria and Mesopotamia, becoming stronger than the King of the south who was initially more powerful! This is a history lesson given to us long before these events took place and yet they are so detailed!

VERSES 6-8

1. We see here a peace treaty made between these two Kingdoms, the Kings of the North and the South and this is done by marriage, which was a common way to do it. Ptolemy II Philadelphus, the King of the South who ruled from 285-246 B. C., gave his daughter Berenice in marriage to Antiochus II Theos, the King of the North who ruled from 262-246 B. C., and he is also the grandson of Seleucus I Nicator.

There was only one problem, Antiochus was already married. So he divorced his wife, put her away, and married Berenice around 250 B. C. And again, this marriage was for political reasons and nothing else.

As sand through an hour glass, so goes the days of our lives – it is like a soap opera here! You see, as soon as Ptolemy II dies Antiochus feels he is no longer under any obligation to remain with Berenice and thus divorces her and takes back his former wife, Laodice.

And thus, as Daniel said, “**she shall not retain the power of her authority.**” But Laodice never forgot what her husband did and had Berenice, her son, and her attendants murdered. She then poisoned her husband and thus, as Daniel said, “**his authority shall not stand.**” He went the way of Berenice, her child and her servants. So this peace deal ended in bloodshed, but it is not over yet! I told you, a soap opera!

With the murder of Antiochus, the King of the North, Laodice’s son, Seleucus II Callinicus came to the throne and reigned from 246-227 B. C. Now in the south we see Berenice’s brother, Ptolemy III Euergetes, who reigned from 242-221 B. C. and keep in mind that his rule is in Egypt.

And to say that Berenice’s brother is not happy is to put it mildly! He comes to avenge the death of his sister and attacks the Northern Kingdom and defeats them. That is her ancestral roots, he was family and as Daniel said, that is where he arose from.

And history tells us that Ptolemy III returned to Egypt with hundreds of idols, 2,500 idols and thousands of talents of silver, just as Daniel tells us. Also, the King of the South shall continue more years than the King of the North, which is what history tells us. Seleucus II Callinicus died in a riding accident while Ptolemy III reigned in Egypt for 6 years after that.

VERSES 9-10

1. With the victory of Ptolemy III against Callinicus, the King of the South now controlled Israel. But this would not last long. Callinicus had two sons. Seleucus III Soter, who died shortly after his reign, 227-223 B. C. and Antiochus III, or Antiochus the Great, who became King of the North, from 223-187 B. C. Callinicus tried to get the land back that was lost in this battle, but failed. But his sons, and in particular Antiochus the Great, swept through Israel with 75,000 soldiers and was able to penetrate all the way to the southern fortress, thus restoring to Syria the territory as far south as Gaza.

Keep in mind that when these two Kingdoms did battle who was in the middle? It was Israel and they were kind of the buffer zone between these two Kingdoms but it was never good for Israel! They lost no matter what.

VERSES 11-12

1. At the time of Antiochus the Great's invasion, Ptolemy IV Philopator, who was the King of the South, the Ptolemy's Empire, were not happy at what had taken place. He therefore raised up an army of 70,000 infantry, 5,000 cavalry, and 73 elephants that were used as beasts of burden and battering rams and marched against Antiochus and we see that Ptolemy IV and the Seleucus Empire marched their way to the North and he was successful in his attack.

History tells us that Antiochus the Great was defeated at the battle of Raphia and lost 10,000 infantry, 300 cavalry and 5 elephants in the battle. In fact, Jerome tells us that, "Antiochus lost his entire army and was almost captured as he fled to the desert."

But Ptolemy was not strengthened in his victory, he was not able to capture Antiochus and thus, he just returned back to Egypt and return home to his life of ease! But that was not going to last forever, Antiochus was not going to sit idly by and lose part of his Kingdom.

VERSES 13-15

1. It was some 13 years after Antiochus' defeat at the hands of Ptolemy IV that he returned towards Egypt, this time with a greater army. At this point in history Ptolemy Philopator and his wife died. In his place his son, who was only four years old took to the throne. And Antiochus the Great saw this as the opportune time to come against Egypt and he did!

He gathered unto his side some apostate Jew's, "**violent men**" or "**robbers.**" Not only that but he made an alliance with Philip V of Macedonia and Egyptian rebels who opposed their child-king. Thus, in 199 B. C. the King of the North routed the Southern Kingdom or Egypt, the Ptolemy Empire!

VERSES 16-19

1. As we can see, Antiochus captured the glorious land, Israel. And even though he treated the Jewish mercenaries who joined forces with him with favor, they and the nation were under his control. The nation did not receive its freedom.

And I love how he tries to bring down the Southern Kingdom, the Ptolemy Empire. He gives his daughter Cleopatra in marriage to the Egyptian King Ptolemy IV Epiphanes, who ruled from 204-181 B. C.

And Cleopatra was only a young child at this time. Now Antiochus thought that his daughter would assist him and do things that would be favorable to his Kingdom, but in reality just the opposite occurred and Cleopatra sided with her husband instead of her father.

Now keep in mind that this is not the famous Cleopatra that we know from history but an ancestor of hers. The Cleopatra we are familiar with lived some 100 years after this one!

2. Now for this King of the North, Antiochus who ruled the Seleucus Empire, captured the area around Israel he set his sights on the coast lands of Greece and the Mediterranean islands. But in 191 B. C. he was defeated by them and was forced to return to the **“fortress of his own land.”**

John Walvoord puts it like this in regards to what happened to Antiochus. He wrote, “Antiochus the Great, who could have gone down in history as one of the great conquerors of the ancient world if he had been content to leave Greece alone, instead fulfilled the prophecy of verse 19 in that he had to return to his own land, defeated and broken.”

And his life ended when he was killed trying to plunder a temple because he needed the money badly and this temple was dedicated to Jupiter in Elam. He was murdered by enraged local citizens.

VERSE 20

1. Keep in mind that Rome was gaining power at this point and they exacted taxes upon the Syrian or Ptolemy Empire. And after the death of Antiochus the Great he was succeeded by his son Seleucus IV Philopator, 187-176 B. C. And Rome required him to pay 1,000 talents each year as tribute.

So Seleucus levied heavy taxes upon his people who were in his Kingdom. Also, according to II Maccabees 3:7-40 we see a traitorous Jew named Simon who sent back information to Seleucus that the Temple in Jerusalem contained enough treasure to meet all the King's needs.

So he sent Heliodorus to Jerusalem to take the treasures of the Temple. Zockler points out that "Soon after Heliodorus was dispatched to plunder the temple, Seleucus was suddenly and mysteriously removed. This explains the statement, 'Within a few days he shall be destroyed' (11:20), possibly by poison administered to him by the same Heliodorus."

It is amazing the details that God gives to us regarding these events, and it should encourage us that what God has promised, what He has said, will come to pass, not might!

VERSES 21-27

1. I think you can see as you read through this that this King is not a nice guy to say the least! This vile person spoken of here is none other than the "**little horn**" of Daniel chapter 8, Antiochus IV Epiphanes, who ruled the Seleucus Empire from 175-163 B. C.

We are told that he obtained the throne by "**flattery**" or "**intrigue**" seizing it rather than obtaining it honorably. This man devastated the Egyptians and their King, Ptolemy VI Philometor, who ruled from 181-145 B. C. And he did so by making friends with them while he was also plotting against them. They made many agreements with each other, but none stuck. And he was clever, got many to side with him by taking from the rich and giving to the poor. He was slick!

Of this man Clarke tells us, “He *flattered Eumenes*, king of Pergamus, and *Attalus* his brother, and got their assistance. He *flattered* the Romans, and sent ambassadors to court their favour, and pay them the arrears of the tribute. He *flattered* the Syrians, and gained their concurrence.”

2. In verse 22 we read of this “**prince of the covenant**” and this relates to the murder of the High Priest in Israel, Onias which was ordered by Antiochus in 172 B. C.

And in verse 27 we see these two Kings sitting down together, but their hearts were full of evil. They spoke lies to each other. But for Ptolemy, even his own counselors were plotting against him according to verse 25.

Now since the first attack by Antiochus failed to give him complete control of Egypt, he returned northward, back home, and as he passed through Israel he killed many Jews, causing much suffering in the land.

3. Like I have said, this man is a type or a picture of the Antichrist and as evil as this man was, the Antichrist will be even worse. What I find interesting is the title that Antiochus IV gave himself, “Theos Epiphanes” or “*the God Made Manifest!*” Talk about pride and yet, today he has gone back to the dust of the earth and most people don’t even know who he was. And for him, his fate is sealed, eternity apart from God awaiting the Great White Throne Judgment and the Lake of Fire! Not only that, but his enemies nicknamed him “Epimanes” or “Madman!” A little different than the title he gave himself!

VERSES 28-30

1. This second attack by Antiochus against Egypt didn't turn out as he planned, either. This time Egypt was prepared and they got help from "**Kittim**" or the islands of Cyprus. The Septuagint identifies this group of people as the "Romans."

And this was a humiliating defeat for Antiochus! History tells us that the Roman soldiers actually drew a line in the sand and said, "Step over that line toward Egypt and you're dead." He obviously didn't, he knew he was defeated but he was not happy, not at all.

So Antiochus kicked the dog you might say in his anger and I am speaking of Israel! He vented his anger against Jerusalem and he plundered the city and went home with at least something for his troubles I guess! Listen to what he did to Jerusalem.

VERSES 31-35

1. As I have said, this mad man is symbolic of the Antichrist and what he will do. He placed guards around the Temple to prevent the worship of God and on one of the Sabbaths he had women and children slaughtered. He also had a pig slaughtered on the altar and he forced the priests to eat the pork from this sacrifice, which was not kosher. He also set up an image of Zeus at the Temple altar and demanded sacrifices to this image. Wood said, "It was in truth an abomination, which brought a desolate condition to the Temple, for now no one would come to worship at all."

Make no mistake about it, his attack on Jerusalem was brutal! Let me show you what I mean. In his attack on Jerusalem Antiochus IV is said to have killed 80,000 Jews, taken 40,000 more as prisoners, and sold another 40,000 as slaves. He also plundered the Temple, robbing it of approximately \$1 billion by modern calculations.

And all of this was supported by the apostate Jews. But Judas Maccabeus led a revolt against Antiochus and defeated him between 168-165 B. C. Of this Renald Showers wrote,

Mattathias Maccabeus, a priest of God, and his five sons refused to forsake the covenant of God. They understood the issues of the day and could distinguish clearly between the truth of God and the errors of Hellenism. Mattathias refused to offer the pagan sacrifice and killed Antiochus' representative who ordered him to offer it. He and his sons forsook their personal possessions and fled to the mountains. Through this example they gave many others understanding of the issues of the day. Others joined them in their revolt against Antiochus' repressive measures. This was the beginning of the Maccabean revolt (1 Macc. 2:1-30). These people paid a high price. Many of them were killed and abused by Syrian forces (v. 33) (1 Macc. 2:44; 3:5, 8). . . .

God permitted these things to happen to His people so that they might be purified in order to serve Him more effectively. Christ indicated that such a refining process of God's people would go on, not only during the persecutions by Antiochus Epiphanes, but also throughout the entire end time (the word translated "until" also means *during*) This refining process would continue until the time that God has appointed for it to end – the end of the end time at the second coming of Christ. Once again Daniel was reminded of two things. First, God is sovereign – He has determined the significant times of history. Second, Israel would continue to be persecuted until Christ's second coming (v. 35).

- Renald E. Showers, A Commentary on the Book of Daniel, pp. 161-162

2. As I read what the Maccabee's did in the revolt against Antiochus and their stand for God, we are not much different today. We are at a point in history where we are being pressured to compromise our faith, to give in and like for the Jews, it was the most dangerous thing they could do.

If God is for us then really who can be against us? No one and that is the reality. I am not saying it is going to be easy but if we hide our light, if we compromise our faith then how are people going to see Jesus? They won't. Take a stand, put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand strong against the whiles, the scheming's of the Devil! And in His power and in His strength we will see the victories! May we not lose sight of that!

3. Now we are going to jump into the future beginning in verse 36, and see a man we call the Antichrist emerge! As Daniel tells us, it is speaking of "**the time of the end.**" Now just so you don't think that this is a recent idea regarding these verses referring to the Antichrist, listen to what Jerome said over 1500 years ago, 347- 420 A. D.

He said, "Those of our persuasion believe all these things are spoken prophetically of the Antichrist who is to arrive at the end time . . . Antiochus is to be regarded as a type of the Antichrist, and those things which happened to him in a preliminary way are to be completely fulfilled in the case of the Antichrist." So let's read on and see what the Lord is showing Daniel and us.

VERSE 36

1. Remember, this is future now, we have seen what was spoken of the Seleucus Empire and Ptolemy Empire fulfilled. Now we are moving to a final world dictator, the Antichrist!

Remember back in Daniel 10:14 Daniel was told, **“Now I have come to make you understand what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision refers to many days yet to come.”**

Daniel is told that these things will happen in **“the latter days”** and I believe those days are quickly coming upon us. This is not what took place in the past, this is still future and when you look at what this man does you will see that it has to be speaking of the Antichrist for it fits his description perfectly, it is what the Bible says of this beast!

This man who will be coming on the scene will have absolute authority over all the nations of the world. He will even exalt himself above the true and living God! That is exactly what the New Testament tells us of this man we call the Antichrist.

Paul, in II Thessalonians 2:3-4 tells us, **“Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.”**

We saw that with Antiochus and the title that he gave himself, “Theos Epiphanes” or ***“the God Made Manifest!”*** And that is what we see here with the Antichrist! The thing I want you to remember is that Daniel is told that these things will not last forever, there is an end point and praise the Lord for that!

And yes, the Church will not be here for the Tribulation Period, we will be caught up to be with the Lord prior to the start of this judgment upon a Christ rejecting world. And knowing that the time is short that should give to us a passion to bring the Gospel to as many people as we can!

VERSES 37-39

1. Here we see Daniel being told what this man is like, what is manifested in this person and you can see that as a smooth talker he can make people believe anything and yet, look at what is in his heart because that is going to be manifested in the things that he does and he is brutal! So let's look at these four specific things that are manifested in this person.

First of all we are told that *he shall not regard the God of his fathers* and some say it should be “gods” of his fathers. What is the point? The point is that this man will not respect the traditional religion of his forefathers. The God that his fathers worshiped, he will reject. He will have no respect for his religious heritage. Because of that it seems that this man will be an apostate Jew. I tend to lean in that direction. While others say it just means any so-called god, no matter who they are since he himself will demand to be worshiped.

The one point that I will bring out is that I can't see any Jew worshiping a man who is not a Jew as their Messiah and that is what this political leader will claim to be and the Jews are looking for him, they are expecting him to show up on the scene at any time.

The problem is that their Messiah has come, it is Jesus and this man that they will begin to worship will be the Antichrist and it won't be until the 3½ year mark of the seven-year Tribulation Period that they will recognize that fact. In fact, Jesus warned them in John 5:43, “**I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive.**”

The second point regarding what is manifested in this man is that *he shall not regard the desire of women*. Now some read this to mean that this man is a homosexual or he doesn't care for women. I think that is reading too much into the text, he may be but not because of what this text is saying.

I think this goes along with the idea of worship. That no one else is to be worshiped except him. In Haggai 2:6-7 we read of the glory of the Lord filling the Temple at His return, “**For thus says the LORD of hosts: ‘Once more (it is a little while) I will shake heaven and earth, the sea and dry land; ‘and I will shake all nations, and they shall come to the *Desire of All Nations*, and I will fill this temple with glory,’ says the LORD of hosts.**” That phrase “**the Desire of all Nations**” is a title for Christ, the Messiah is the Desire of all Nations!

Then, in Genesis 3:15, as God is pronouncing judgment upon the serpent, we read, “**And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.**”

Thus, the hope of Jewish women was that she would be the one who would bear the child who would bruise the serpent's head, she would bring forth the Messiah. It was the desire of women, Jewish women. And so the phrase "**the desire of women**" is speaking of the Antichrist opposing the desire of women, the Messiah Jesus Christ! Which, of course, makes a lot of sense!

The third point regarding what is manifested in this man is that *he shall have no regard for any God except himself*. That is why I feel that when he did not regard the God of his father, it must make him Jewish, for here we are told that not only does he not regard the God of his father, but any god! He himself wants the worship, the glory, just as Satan does!

Remember what we were told in Isaiah 14:12-15, "**How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations! For you have said in your heart: 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation On the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.'** Yet you **shall be brought down to Sheol, To the lowest depths of the Pit.**" (Also see Ezekiel 28:11-19)

And the fourth point we see manifested in this man is this idea of *the god of fortresses* spoken of and it is relating to his military strength. Thus, his strength will be in his vast wealth that he has accumulated and his military might - a war machine you might say. That is where he places his confidence in and in a bold way he is exalting himself over the true and living God by his military might. Bad idea!

Now who is the god that his fathers did not know? It is this military might, for the Jews, they trusted in the power of God, not in the strength of war horses, kings, money and-so-on. And thus, in a sense, it is Satan himself that the Antichrist is trusting in. The power of this war machine is fueled by Satan himself. And again, the Jews worshiped the one true God, not the many god's of the Gentiles.

VERSES 40-43

1. Here we see the beginning of the end for this man and his rebellion against God with all those who follow after him. What two Empires have we been looking at in this chapter? We have been looking at the Seleucus Empire or Syria to the north and the Ptolemy Empire or Egypt to the south. And keep in mind that the area of the Seleucus Empire was not just Syria that we think of today. It covered an area of land that encompassed modern-day Afghanistan, Syria, Lebanon, Iran, and Iraq, plus parts of Armenia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikista and even Israel from time-to-time!

I do not see this King of the north being Russia because Russia was destroyed prior to the start of the Tribulation Period and you can read of that in Ezekiel chapters 38 and 39. Also, it does not fit into the text of what we are reading of here, the King of the north was not Russia but the Seleucus Empire!

But sometime during the Tribulation Period, probably after the half-way mark, we see these nations rise up against the Antichrist. And to put down this rebellion we see that the Antichrist mobilizes his forces and as he goes out he destroys many lands, many nations, putting down these rebellions.

2. But some nations are spared. We see that Edom, Moab and Ammon, which are the area of Jordan, are spared from the attack of the Antichrist. Why? Because this is the place that God has prepared for the Jewish remnant to flee to for safety, Petra, after the Antichrist goes into the rebuilt Temple and demands to be worshiped as god.

And for 3½ years God will protect them until Jesus returns to set up His Kingdom. We are told of this in Isaiah 16:1-4, **“Send the lamb to the ruler of the land, from Sela [Petra in the Greek] to the wilderness, to the mount of the daughter of Zion. For it shall be as a wandering bird thrown out of the nest; so shall be the daughters of Moab at the fords of the Arnon. Take counsel, execute judgment; make your shadow like the night in the middle of the day; hide the outcasts, do not betray him who escapes. Let My outcasts dwell with you, O Moab; be a shelter to them from the face of the spoiler. For the extortioner is at an end, devastation ceases, the oppressors are consumed out of the land.”** (See Matthew 24:15-21)

VERSES 44-45

1. Just as he is taking control of the rebellion from the King of the south, more bad news comes. This time trouble from the East and the North. Here we are seeing the coming together of a massive army to fight in the Valley of Megiddo for the final battle called Armageddon.

This massive army from the east could be speaking of China, as China is east of Jerusalem and it does have a military of over 200 million soldiers. And we can read the gathering together of this massive army in Revelation chapter 16, which says, **“Then the sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, so that the way of the kings from the east might be prepared. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. . . . And they gathered them together to the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon.”** Revelation 16:12-14, 16.

As these soldiers move in from the east, also taking a northern route because of the sheer numbers of men, they will meet the forces of the Antichrist coming from the south in the glorious land, Israel! This is where this last battle will take place.

I believe that the home base for the Antichrist will be Jerusalem, that will be his headquarters you might say as verse 45 tells us, **“And he shall plant the tents of his palace between the seas and the glorious holy mountain . . .”** And as he goes towards the south to fight against Egypt he gets word that there is a massive army moving in from the east and the north, and of course that troubles him, he is losing control.

And so he turns back to fight against these nations in the Valley of Megiddo. And as they all converge in this valley, they will join forces to fight against Jesus, but it is not really a battle, for the Lord destroys them with the sword or the Word that proceeds from His mouth.

We see this played out for us in Revelation chapter 19, as the Lord returns to set up His Kingdom. We read beginning in verse 15, **“Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. Then I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in the midst of heaven, ‘Come and gather together for the supper of the great God, that you may eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them, and the flesh of all people, free and slave, both small and great.’ 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. 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 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.”** Revelation 19:15-21.

As strong and powerful as the Antichrist thinks he is, he will be destroyed by the Lord. This is not a battle for the Lord! And notice that it says, “**no one will help him.**” Why is that? Because the reality is, only the Lord can save us and thus, whatever man may try to do is futile. Man is alone before God apart from Christ and as he stands in the balances of God he has come up short and thus, judgment will come as we see here with the Antichrist!

And it is then we will see the Lord set up His Kingdom on this earth as righteousness fills this land! And we will be with Him when He returns. What a day that will be! Keep your eyes focusing upward His return is drawing closer!

