

THE PROTOTYPE OF THE ANTICHRIST

TEXT: DANIEL 11:21-35

INTRODUCTION:

1. I have preached a few messages recently on the antichrist, and his prototype, Antiochus Epiphanes.
2. Daniel chapter 11 is entirely prophetic, though most of it (vss. 1-35) has already been fulfilled. Verses 36 to 45 are future and predict the rise and fall of the coming antichrist.
3. All of these prophecies recorded in Daniel 11:21-35 were fulfilled by Antiochus Epiphanes, described in verse 21 as "a vile person."
4. I preached a message on Antiochus Epiphanes back when we were in Daniel chapter 8. The notes and outlines, as well as the audio sermon are online.
5. *Epiphanes* means "the Illustrious One," but people called him *Epimanes*, which means "the Madman."
6. He reigned in the days of the decline of Syria and the rise of the Roman Empire.
7. Tonight, as we look again at Antiochus Epiphanes, emphasizing that he is a type of the antichrist.
8. As a type of the antichrist, Antiochus Epiphanes had all marks of the coming antichrist, as described here in the book of Daniel, II Thessalonians 2, the book of Revelation, and other prophetic Scriptures.

I. FALSE PEACE

1. Verse 21 says, "And in his estate shall stand up a vile person (Antiochus Epiphanes), to whom they shall not give the honour of the kingdom."
2. He did not come to the throne by rightful succession, and the people did not give him "honour." But he seized the throne dishonestly and deceitfully "by flatteries" (11:21).
3. And just like the antichrist, whom he foreshadows, Antiochus Epiphanes posed as a peacemaker (cf. 11:21, 24a), but was actually a brutal and violent man.
4. In this he prefigures the antichrist. Daniel 8:25 says, "by peace shall (the antichrist) destroy many." Daniel 8:24 says the antichrist "shall destroy wonderfully."

5. The Hebrew word translated "wonderfully" in Daniel 8:24 means, "extraordinary, beyond one's power," referring to his Satanic powers. The antichrist will have great Satanic power.
6. Revelation 13:2 says, "the dragon (Satan) gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority." Second Thessalonians 2:9 says, his "coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders."
7. Daniel 8:25 says, "by peace shall (the antichrist) destroy many."
8. First Thessalonians 5:3 says, "For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape."
9. Revelation 6 describes four horsemen. The first horseman is pictured riding a white horse, signifying a man of peace bringing peace to a world that is weary of warfare and terrorism.
10. But we are told in Revelation 6:2, "he went forth conquering, and to conquer." This is the coming antichrist, and a man on a red (picturing bloodshed) horse follows right behind him.
11. Revelation 6:4 says, "And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword."
12. The third horse is a black horse, a picture of famine, which follows the war. And then the fourth horse is a pale horse, "and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth" (Rev. 6:1-8).
13. The antichrist will claim to be a man of peace, but war and famine and death will follow right behind him.
14. Antiochus Epiphanes claimed to be a man of peace, but war and famine and death followed right behind him (Dan. 11:21-26). Verse 22 describes how he came in "with the arms of a flood," and swept away all resistance before him.
15. "The prince of the covenant" (11:22) probably refers to the Jewish high priest Onias III, whom Antiochus had murdered in 170 BC. First Antiochus had him removed as high priest, then he had him murdered.

16. The "covenant" refers to God's covenant Israel (cf. 11:28, 30, 32).

II. ALLIANCE WITH OTHER KINGS (11:23)

1. Like the coming antichrist, Antiochus was a great deceiver. Daniel 11:23 says, "he shall work deceitfully." He will form a "league" (alliance) but will do it "deceitfully" to further his career.
2. Antiochus Epiphanes became "strong with a small people" (11:23), i.e., with a small group of followers.
3. Undoubtedly the antichrist will form a great "League of Nations," along the lines of the United Nations and the European Union.
4. Antiochus Epiphanes entered in peaceably upon "the fattest places of the province" (11:24), i.e., the most fertile and productive places.
5. "He shall forecast his devices" (11:24b; cf. 25b) means he shall "devise his plans" against the strong holds, but only for a time.
6. Under the pretense of good will, he distributed ("scattered") his spoils among the people (11:24). This has always been a popular trick of crafty politicians.
7. After consolidating his kingdom ("And he shall stir up his power" -- 11:25), Antiochus Epiphanes attacked Egypt, the king of the south.
8. The king of the south (Egypt) had a "a very great and mighty army; but he shall not stand: for they shall forecast devices (devised plans) against him" (11:25). Egypt could "not stand" against the army of Antiochus Epiphanes.
9. Even those who ate at his dinner table betrayed the king and destroyed him (11:26a). "His army shall overflow" (11:26) means, "his army shall be swept away, and many shall fall down slain."
10. Both these kings' hearts were bent on mischief (evil). They sat down to discuss peace but did nothing but speak lies at the table (11:27).
11. Therefore, their peace treaties did "not prosper." "For yet the end shall be at the time appointed" means, that despite all of the lying and double-crossing and intrigue, Antiochus Epiphanes was fulfilling Bible prophecy "at the time appointed."

III. PERSECUTION OF THE JEWS (11:28)

1. Antiochus Epiphanes, who rose to power and persecuted the Jewish people in their land, was a true type of the coming antichrist, who will mistreat them in a similar way when he comes into power!

2. Verse 28 says Antiochus Epiphanes returned back to Syria ("his land") with great riches (11:28).
3. But his heart was "against the holy covenant." The "covenant" refers to God's covenant Israel (cf. 11:22, 30, 32). Antiochus turned his wrath against the people of Israel, and he persecuted and murdered thousands of them.
4. His "exploits" (11:28) include defiling the temple in Jerusalem (cf. 11:31). Antiochus Epiphanes took away the daily sacrifice of the Jews in Jerusalem and he polluted their sanctuary.
5. This rampage is recorded in I Maccabees 1:20-28 and II Maccabees 5:11-17.
6. Once again Antiochus Epiphanes attacked the south, i.e. Egypt (11:29). This was by divine appointment -- "At the time appointed..." (11:29a).
7. "But it shall not be as the former, or as the latter" (11:29b) means he was not as successful. He was forced out of Egypt after failing to take the city of Alexandria.
8. "For the ships of Chittim (Cyprus) shall come against him" (11:30). At this point, Antiochus Epiphanes was forced to leave Egypt, conceding Egypt to the power of Rome.
9. "Therefore he shall be grieved." Humiliated by his defeat in Egypt, Antiochus took his frustrations out on the Jews -- "and have indignation against the holy covenant."
10. "Intelligence with them that forsake the holy covenant" (11:30) refers to Antiochus coming to an understanding with certain Jews who had forsaken the holy covenant.
11. This treacherous agreement is recorded in I Maccabees 2:18 and II Maccabees 6:1.
12. "And arms (military forces) shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength (referring to the Jewish temple in Jerusalem), and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate" (11:31).
13. This took place in 167 BC when Antiochus Epiphanes offered up a pig to Zeus on the altar. He "polluted" the

sanctuary, and took "away the daily sacrifice" (cf. I Maccabees 1:44-54).

14. In seeking to exterminate Judaism and to Hellenize the Jews, Antiochus forbade the Jews to follow their sacred religious practices. He demanded that copies of the law of Moses be burned. Then he set up "the abomination that maketh desolate" (11:31).
15. This "abomination" prefigures what the antichrist will do during the coming tribulation. Our Lord said in Matthew 24:15, "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)."
16. Our Lord spoke these words in His Olivet Discourse, 200 years after Antiochus Epiphanes. He was obviously speaking of a future antichrist polluting the temple during the coming tribulation -- "When ye therefore shall see (still future) the abomination of desolation..."
17. The entire Olivet Discourse is prophetic.
18. The desecration of the temple precipitated the Maccabean revolt, which was cruelly suppressed by Antiochus, resulting in the death of tens of thousands of Israelites.
19. "And such as do wickedly against the covenant (apostate Jews) shall he corrupt by flatteries" (11:32). Antiochus offered them a great reward if they would abandon the true faith, and worship Zeus.
20. "The people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits" (11:32b) refers to the faithful remnant, notably the Maccabees, who refused to yield to Antiochus Epiphanes.
21. They remained "strong" and eventually defeated Antiochus, who died in 163 BC. Verses 33 and 34 are an assurance that God would raise up faithful teachers who would "instruct many" despite "many days" of persecution -- falling by the sword and flame, by captivity and spoil (plunder).
22. They would stumble and fall, but they would receive a "little help." The repetition of the word "fall" (11:33, 34, 35) stresses their severe suffering and death, and has reference to the Maccabean revolt.

23. "But many shall cleave to them with flatteries" (11:34b).
24. This "purging" process (11:35) will continue up "to the time of the end: because it is yet for a time appointed."
25. This has reference to the second coming of Christ when the antichrist ("the king" in 11:36) is defeated.

CONCLUSION:

1. The stage is being set for the arrival of the antichrist.
2. People all over the world are frightened, and are growing tired of seeing beheadings on their television every night.
3. The world is in turmoil and the antichrist will promise solutions to all the problems of the nations.
4. He will be promoted as a peacemaker who will bring affluence and prosperity.
5. And he will claim to be a friend of Israel.
6. According to the ninth chapter of the book of Daniel, he will make a covenant with Israel, but in the midst of Daniel's seventieth week (half-way through the seven-year tribulation period), the antichrist will break his promises and turn against Israel.
7. This is prefigured in the eleventh chapter of Daniel by the prophecies regarding Antiochus Epiphanes, who "shall come in peaceably" (11:21), and "shall enter peaceably" (11:24).
8. But in reality, he was a vile and violent person, who polluted the sanctuary, and took away the daily sacrifice, and placed the abomination that maketh desolate in the temple (11:31).
9. Next week, Lord willing, we will see what Daniel says about the destruction of the coming antichrist, which will coincide with the end of the world as we know it (11:36-45).
10. In the book of Revelation, this is called the Battle of Armageddon.
11. In the midst of that awesome confrontation, the great final battle between God and the devil,

between Christ and antichrist, between good and evil, the Lord Jesus Christ will return from heaven.

12. Soon Christ will return. God will intervene from heaven and the end of history will come.

13. Are you ready?