

Anti-Christ's Conquests

📖 Daniel 11:40–12:1

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Last time we looked at Daniel 11:36-39. These verses describe anti-Christ and grow out of the previous verses that describe Antiochus because Antiochus is a foreshadowing of anti-Christ. The important thing is to see the similarities between these two men so that if you know Antiochus you'll know anti-Christ when he comes on the scene. Of course, the Church won't be here when he comes on the scene. The rapture first and then the anti-Christ makes his play to become global dictator. As far as anti-Christ's character is concerned, in v 36, he will do as he pleases, meaning he's very arrogant and will do whatever he wants as he rises to power on the world stage. He will also exalt and magnify himself above every god referring to pagan gods and will speak monstrous things against the God of gods, the one true God. The strange thing about it all is he will prosper. This will go on until the indignation is finished, which is the completion of God's discipline of Israel. The completion of God's discipline of Israel is when they nationally repent. The Anti-Christ is, therefore, the rod in God's hand to discipline Israel and bring them to national repentance. The angel says this is decreed. This relates these things to the prophecy of the seventy-sevens or 490 years, and in particular, the final seven years. In v 37 he will show no regard for the gods of his fathers, meaning he will reject his family's religious heritage, whatever it may be. He will show no regard for the desire of women, probably meaning he will not show a natural fondness or affection for the feminine half of the human race. And he will show no regard for any other god. This is to point out the uniqueness of this man since every man worships some god but this man magnifies himself above them all. He will even sit in the temple in Jerusalem and make himself out to be God. In v 38 he will worship military might and use the gold, silver, costly stones and treasures that he acquires by military conquest to fuel his war machine in his rise to global conquest. In v 39 he will take action against extremely strong fortresses with the help of a foreign god. The foreign god is probably Satan and those who readily acquiesce to him he will give great honor and cause them to rule over the new portions of his growing empire and he will parcel out land for a price on his march to global conquest.

Today we come to a description of the anti-Christ's career of conquests. It's a very difficult section and there are a wide range of interpretations. So we read. **"At the end time the king of the South will collide with him, and the king of the North will storm against him with chariots, with horsemen and with many ships; and he will enter countries, overflow them and pass through."** ⁴¹**"He will also enter the Beautiful Land, and many countries will fall; but these will be rescued out of his hand: Edom, Moab and the foremost of the sons of**

Ammon. ⁴²“Then he will stretch out his hand against *other* countries, and the land of Egypt will not escape. ⁴³“But he will gain control over the hidden treasures of gold and silver and over all the precious things of Egypt; and Libyans and Ethiopians *will follow* at his heels. ⁴⁴“But rumors from the East and from the North will disturb him, and he will go forth with great wrath to destroy and annihilate many. ⁴⁵“He will pitch the tents of his royal pavilion between the seas and the beautiful Holy Mountain; yet he will come to his end, and no one will help him. In general, it sounds like a large campaign initiated in verse 40 by an alliance between the king of the South and the king of the North against the anti-Christ. This campaign will be a failure and so the anti-Christ will enter many lands, including Israel and defeat many of them but not all of them. Then he will take over Egypt and Libya and Ethiopia. Then he will hear rumors that will lead him to return to Israel and set up his military headquarters in Jerusalem. Then he will go to destruction. That’s a general picture of what it sounds like will happen but what it means has remained something of an enigma to Bible scholars. I can say that there must be a series of wars for him to rise to world dictator and this may be a description of several of the wars, all in the Middle East. And that alone should tell you that in the end world power will shift from the West to the Middle East. But here are a few views of what this description means.

First, John Whitcomb says the king of the north will come through Israel about the mid-point of the tribulation and kill the anti-Christ and then go and take Egypt and then will hear rumors in Israel that the anti-Christ is alive and so he’ll go back and be defeated by the anti-Christ. He connected this battle with the battle of Gog and Magog in Ezekiel 38-39. Second, Dave Olander says there are four power spheres in the end, this one describes the king of the north and the king of the south but Revelation 16 talks about the kings of the east and the anti-Christ is the king of the west along with the ten kings, three of whom he defeats and this must be talking about a battle between the king of the north allied with the king of the south against the king of the west and anti-Christ is trying to take over those four spheres. Third, Robert Dean said this battle is a prelude to the Campaign of Armageddon which is the seventh bowl judgment and occurs in the second half of the tribulation along with the distinct battle of Gog and Magog that also occurs in the second half. However, he told me that he holds this passage as being the least certain in his understanding of the end-times. Fourth, Arnold Fruchtenbaum says this battle occurs at the mid-point of the tribulation which is not the battle of Gog and Magog because it has to occur at least seven years before the mid-point of the tribulation, nor is it the Campaign of Armageddon because that battle occurs in the second half of the tribulation in eight stages. Fifth, the great commentator Leon Wood says that it occurs at the mid-point of the tribulation and is the same as the battle of Gog and Magog in Ezekiel 38-39 and serves as the prelude to the Campaign of Armageddon which occupies the second half of the tribulation. Sixth, J. Dwight Pentecost says this battle occurs at the mid-point of the tribulation and is the same as the battle of Gog and Magog. Seventh, Thomas Ice doesn’t know for sure when this battle takes place but thinks it might be one of the battles in the second half of the tribulation.

My point is that it is very difficult to organize this battle into an end-times scenario. In the past I have distinguished this battle from the Battle of Gog and Magog and the Campaign of Armageddon and I still think

that is best. These are the battles for Jerusalem, which is the center of the world and the only city ever chosen by God. In the last times Jerusalem is said to be a cup of trembling and all the nations will falter on it. The battles for Jerusalem probably begin with the battle described here in Dan 11:40-45 and then later the battle of Gog and Magog in Ezek 38-39 and finally the Campaign of Armageddon.

One possibility here is to note that Dan 12:1 is at the mid-point of the tribulation. "Now at that time Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people, will arise. And there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time; and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued." The verse describes the most difficult time in history, an unparalleled period of difficulty for Israel and we know from other passages like Jer 30:7 and Matt 24:21 that this period is the second half of the Tribulation. So if Dan 12:1 is the mid-point of the Tribulation then it's possible that the things in Dan 11:40-45 occur during the first half of the Tribulation. The only trouble with this view is that in 11:45 the anti-Christ "will come to his end, and no one will help him" seems to be describing the very end of the Tribulation when anti-Christ is destroyed. But it's possible, just possible, that it refers to his being killed at the mid-point, which will happen according to Rev 13. Rev 13 goes on to describe him coming back to life. There's no reference to that here but it's still possible that it was something left unrevealed until Rev 13. So I think it could be a description of his rise to power in the first half of the Tribulation and 12:1 is the midpoint introducing the second half of the Tribulation. It's difficult and I don't have certainty on this matter.

There are two scenarios that I see possible. One is that this occurs after the rapture but prior to the peace treaty that the anti-Christ will make with Israel to start the 70th week. In fact, it could be this battle that gives him credence in the eyes of the leadership of Israel so they will enter into the treaty. That's a very interesting suggestion because there is always the question of why the leadership of Israel would want to enter into a covenant with a foreigner? Of course, they have made treaties and pacts with foreign nations before so maybe it's not that strange of a question. But since the treaty seems to have to do with military protection it is a strange question because Israel has had a very strong military showing in the past, even when their military was not on par with the Arab militaries attacking them, as for example, in the 1948 war for independence. By the six-day war in 1967 they had rapidly developed their military might and their strategy was brilliant. The Yom Kippur war in 1973 caught them off guard. It scared Israel. They literally felt that if a few things hadn't happened just right they would have been wiped off the map. Since then the wars have been more along the lines of terrorism and Israel knows more about terrorism and security than any country on earth simply because they literally have to deal with it on a daily basis. So for them to come into a treaty with a foreigner providing military protection is strange in my mind. This guy would have to have an impressive military record and it's possible that the demonstration of power described here would lead them to enter into the seven-year treaty with them. Think about it. **At the end of time the king of the South will collide with him, and the king of the North will storm against him with chariots, with horsemen and with many ships; and he will enter countries, overflow them and pass through.** Now the king of the South throughout this chapter is Egypt and the king of the North is Syria. So if we

stay consistent then these are the kings of Egypt and Syria. The Syrians are not very Jew friendly right now but they've been overrun by Isis and the whole thing is in shambles. The Egyptians aren't very Jew friendly either and they have the largest army in the Arab world.

So these two nations attack Israel. The forces of Syria are not described but the forces of Egypt are described as quite formidable; **chariots, horsemen and many ships**. So a land and sea battle and this would be a pincer movement by land and by sea against Israel. But notice this strange **he** in the passage. They will storm against **him**. That seems to be anti-Christ and what he appears to be doing is defending Israel against Syria and Egypt. If that is so, and he is successful, then what does that do for the anti-Christ in the eyes of the leadership of Israel? It makes him look like your friend. So it's a deception; of course, what he really wants is a foot-hold in the land of Israel, just like Antiochus. But you can see how this could establish his military reputation and Jew-friendly policy toward Israel that could lead to the seven-year treaty. Then v 40 describes him **entering many countries, overflowing and passing through them**. That means military victory in the Middle East region.

Then in verse 41 **He will also enter the Beautiful Land**, which is Israel, and it is beautiful; the word means an ornament, something with splendor. So he enters Israel and this could be when he enters into the seven-year peace treaty with them. Isa 28:15 refers to this as "a covenant with death" and "a pact with Sheol" because it's a bad idea, he's a deceiver and he's going to turn on them when they are at ease. Then the angel says, **and many countries will fall**; meaning he will conquer other enemy nations of Israel in the Middle East expanding his kingdom. **but these will be rescued out of his hand: Edom, Moab and the foremost of the sons of Ammon**. Those three territories are all over in modern day Jordan. So the anti-Christ won't conquer Jordan. If you plug other passages in here, then when the anti-Christ commits the abomination of desolation at the mid-point the believing Jews in Judea are to flee. Isa 34, 63; Jer 49 and Micah 2 all indicate that they will flee to a place called Bozrah, which is the Hebrew word for "sheep-pen", and is known to us as the rock city of Petra. Petra is in Jordan and so we may say that the reason anti-Christ will not conquer Jordan at this time is because that's where the believing Jews are going to flee for protection in the second half.

In verse 42 he expands his kingdom further, **Then he will stretch out his hand against other countries, and the land of Egypt will not escape**. He leaves the land of Israel, presumably leaving some of his army to protect them and he starts to attack **other countries** in the region and take them over. The **land of Egypt** won't **escape** because he's already defeated the king of Egypt in verse 40 so going in and taking over the land of Egypt and its spoils is not a problem. Verse 43, **he will gain control over the hidden treasures of gold and silver and over all the precious things of Egypt**; this is the war booty of Egypt and he'll use it to fuel his military conquest. Also **Libya** which is on the northern coast of Africa **and Ethiopia**, which is south of Egypt. Further expansion of his kingdom. His goal is to take over the whole world and the Middle East is undoubtedly by this time the nexus of world power. Verse 44, **But rumors from the East and from the North will disturb him, and he will go forth with great wrath to destroy and annihilate many**. In other words, his progress is hindered just as Antiochus'

progress was hindered and this frustrates him and makes him angry. Rumors from the **East** could be a reference to Iran and **the North** could be Russia and Turkey. The primary players in the Battle of Gog and Magog are Iran and Russia. That battle is quite interesting because it is an alliance of several Islamic nations and they want to invade Israel for spoil and what did we read in v 43 but the anti-Christ has taken all the treasures of gold and silver and precious things of Egypt. So it's possible this battle is a precursor of the Battle of Gog and Magog. Another interesting thing about that war is that when they try to invade Israel, God sends fire out of heaven and just wipes them out. I think that battle is near the end of the first half of the Tribulation and so now all the Islamic problem is solved and the anti-Christ can make his power play.

Notice the end of verse 44. **And he will go forth with great wrath to destroy and annihilate many.** I take it that he has now committed the abomination of desolation, breaking his seven-year treaty with the leadership of Israel. Then he goes after the Jews to destroy them and he will destroy many of them. Many Jewish believers will make their escape to Petra. And so in verse 45 you see his new base of operation, **He will pitch the tents of his royal pavilion between the seas and the beautiful Holy Mountain; yet he will come to his end, and no one will help him.** **between the seas** is the land of Israel, the land between the Mediterranean Sea and the Dead Sea. There he sets up his **royal pavilion** which is his central military headquarters. It will be in the city of Jerusalem. The Hebrew says, "at the beautiful Holy Mountain," which is Mt Zion where the future Temple will be located. And in this scenario we'd be at the midpoint of Daniel's 70th week and then **he will come to his end, and no one will help him** could go all the way to the end of the tribulation or it could be at the mid-point. It's difficult to tell because he is killed at the mid-point and raised. Either way, that's one scenario. It would mean this passage basically describes the battle that gives the anti-Christ credence in the eyes of the leadership of Israel so that they will enter the seven-year treaty with them, and from there he will expand his kingdom in the Middle East but he will come to his end. The other scenario is that all these things happen in the first half of the Tribulation and his defeat of Syria and Egypt are part of his fulfilling the peace treaty that he already made with Israel. Either way it seems to be something like that.

Daniel 12:1 picks up at the midpoint when the angelic conflict will intensify because it's at this time that anti-Christ is turning against the Jews and the Jews need help and so we read, "**at that time Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people, will arise. And there will be a time of distress,**" see up to this time Israel has been at rest under his security, but at this time "**a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time;**" that's the second half of the tribulation. And Jesus said in Matt 24:15, "When you see the abomination of desolation, flee to the wilderness," don't go back and get your cloak, just flee and it's at this time that the believing remnant will flee to the areas of verse 41, Edom, Moab and Ammon which the anti-Christ didn't conquer, it's in modern day Jordan and other passages say they'll be kept in the sheep-pen of Bozrah or Petra, the ancient rock city of the Nabateans, and Revelation 12 says that within that rock city God will supernaturally nourish them for three and a half years, the conclusion of which God will rescue them, **everyone who is found written in the book will be rescued.** Those **written in the book** are the Jewish

believers. They'll be rescued from the anti-Christ. Then comes the kingdom and Daniel 12:2 gets into the resurrection of the remnant of Israel to enter the kingdom.

Alright, that's my thinking on this passage. I have to admit it's the best way I can put it together and harmonize it with other prophetic passages but I could be wrong. The bottom line is vv 40ff describe how the anti-Christ will win the trust and confidence of Israel and why they will enter the seven-year treaty with him and then the aftermath of his attempt at a global conquest which will result in him being killed in the land. Rev 13 is only brought in to show that he will be raised and then turn against the Jews committing the abomination of desolation and the Jews will flee to Petra in modern Jordan which is a region the anti-Christ will never conquer.