

# The Antichrist

📖 Daniel 11:36–39

👤 Pastor Jeremy Thomas

📅 October 2, 2016

🌐 [fbgbible.org](http://fbgbible.org)

📍 Fredericksburg Bible Church

107 East Austin Street

Fredericksburg, Texas 78624

(830) 997-8834

If you would turn with me to Daniel 11. There are two prophecies that are arguably the most remarkable prophecies in the entire Bible. The first is Daniel 9:24-27, the calendar of seventy sevens or 490 years assigned for Israel and Jerusalem to accomplish the six things listed in Daniel 9:24. The 483 year countdown began with the decree of Artaxerxes Longimanus to restore and rebuild Jerusalem and concluded with mathematical precision on the very day Messiah was presented at His Triumphal Entry, after which Daniel 9:26 predicts an intercalation in the calendar during which the Messiah would be cut off and the city of Jerusalem and the Temple destroyed. The intercalation will end when the anti-Christ signs a seven-year peace treaty with the leadership of Israel. This undoubtedly is one of the most impressive and significant prophecies in the entire Bible setting up a prophetic framework for interpreting other prophecies. The second arguably greatest prophecy in the Bible is Daniel 10-12, the great warfare that will affect the Jews during the times of the Gentiles. In Daniel 11 alone more than 150 prophecies are recorded. There is no more highly concentrated portion of prophetic Scripture anywhere in the Bible. And this fact alone makes Daniel 11 one of the most difficult chapters in the Bible and certainly the most difficult in the Book of Daniel. The detail is so specific that critics of the Bible simply cannot accept that Daniel wrote this before the fact, but because we presuppose the God of the Bible who plans all things in advance and reveals some of these things then we have no trouble accepting this chapter as written before the fact. This prophecy through the angel reveals in Daniel 11:2 facts regarding the Persian kings, in Daniel 11:2-4 facts regarding the Greek ruler Alexander the Great and his death resulting in four divisions of the Greek empire, in Daniel 11:5-20 facts regarding wars between two of these branches, the Seleucid and Ptolemaic, in Daniel 11:21-35 facts regarding the Seleucid ruler Antiochus Epiphanes IV who persecuted the Jews and how he foreshadows the anti-Christ. I mentioned six shared characteristics: both are deceivers, both are anti-Semitic, both are religious, both are socialists, both are men of war and both are arrogant and allowed to prosper for a time. Today we will meet the one Antiochus foreshadowed. He is described in Daniel 11:36-45 and is known popularly as the anti-Christ.

You will see then that I am suggesting a large gap of time between Daniel 11:35 and Daniel 11:36, between Antiochus and anti-Christ. There has so far been a 2,175 year gap between verse 35 and 36. That gap of time widens each year that anti-Christ does not come on the scene. Someone asked me last week, "Will we see anti-Christ? Will the Church see anti-Christ?" The Scriptures say no in 2 Thess 2. We will see Christ and we are to be

looking for Him. The rapture will occur first. It is the first truly global event and it will spawn the following global events that will shake the world. When we finish Daniel we will deal with 2 Thess 2 as one of the key prophetic passages on the way to the Revelation. So a gap of time between 11:35-36 between Antiochus and anti-Christ. Such a gap of time should be no surprise for Bible students who have seen similar gaps in the writing of the prophets. As an example, Jesus, in the synagogue of Nazareth in Luke 4:18 quoted Isa 61:1 regarding bringing good news as fulfilled in His first coming but stopped short of quoting Isa 61:2 because it relates to His bringing vengeance at the second coming. So prophetic gaps of time in the OT prophets are commonplace and we see that here between Daniel 11:35 and 36. Now of course there are people who say there is no prophetic gap and that what follows is a continuation of Antiochus. But there are several problems with this view and I want to cite out a few. First of all, Antiochus did not fulfill any of the things described in verses 36-45. We have historical evidence that he fulfilled the details of Daniel 11:21-35 but no historical evidence that he fulfilled anything in Daniel 11:36-45. Therefore, these verses must refer to someone else. Since other passages that describe the anti-Christ fit nicely with the descriptions in these verses then we think these verses describe the anti-Christ. Secondly, verse 36 begins to introduce this person and yet Antiochus had already been introduced in verse 21. It would be strange to re-introduce him since this had already been done. Therefore, it follows that this is an introduction of the anti-Christ and not Antiochus. Third, verse 40 uses the expression, "the end time" and this seems to launch us forward to the period of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week. Otherwise "the end time" has to refer to the times of Antiochus over 2,175 years ago which seems very unlikely. Fourth, Daniel 12:1 says "At that time Michael, the great prince...will arise" and "there will be a time of distress that has never occurred since there was a nation." Since there can only be one time of distress for Israel that is incomparable and that time is stated elsewhere to be the last half of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week, a period of three and a half years, referred to by Jeremiah as the time of Jacob's trouble and by Jesus as the great tribulation, then the timing of this passage is again confirmed to be yet future. It therefore cannot refer to Antiochus over 2,175 years ago but to the yet future anti-Christ. And fifth, we might add that there is precedent for seeing a prophecy of the anti-Christ growing out of a prophecy of Antiochus since Daniel 8 records the same pattern, a prophecy of Antiochus followed immediately by a prophecy of anti-Christ.

There are actually three pictures of anti-Christ that have already been revealed to Daniel prior to Daniel 11:36-45. Each of these pictures reveals details of his character and his career. First, in Daniel 7:8, 11, 21, 22, 24, 25 and 26 we learned that the anti-Christ will begin his career when there are already ten kings in power. He will grow to great power as an eleventh king. He will subdue three of these ten kings; speak out against the Most High and wage war against the Jews for three and a half years at which point he will be destroyed. Second, in Daniel 9:26-27 we learned that the anti-Christ is the prince to come who will make a seven-year peace treaty with the leadership of Israel but in the middle of that seven years will break the treaty by putting to a stop sacrifice and grain offering and committing the abomination of desolation. Jesus said in Matt 24:15 that will mark the beginning of his persecution of the Jews. Third, in Daniel 8:23-25 we are taught that the anti-Christ will be

insolent and skilled in intrigue, he will be mighty but his might will be supernatural, he will destroy to an extraordinary degree and prosper, he will use deceit to succeed, he will destroy many Jews while they are at ease and he will even oppose the Prince of princes but he will finally be defeated supernaturally. So we already know a good bit about the anti-Christ.

Dr Walvoord called Daniel the key to prophetic revelation and that's what I'm wanting you to take away from this; keys to interpreting prophecy. The problem is there are a lot of hair-brained ideas out there when it comes to prophecy. The basic reason is because they haven't dealt carefully with Daniel. Daniel, as you have seen, sets the stage for how to interpret later prophetic passages. It gives us the frame. Later passages like Matthew 24, 2 Thessalonians 2 and Revelation 4-19 all should be interpreted progressively within the frame of Daniel. You can try to interpret them without the frame but when that has been done people end up with strange ideas like the partial rapture or mid-trib or post-trib or pre-wrath. All those views are inconsistent because they claim the church is not involved in the first 69 weeks of Daniel 9 but is involved in the 70<sup>th</sup> week. But Daniel 9 is very clear, the 70 weeks are for Israel and Jerusalem, not for the church. So you want to be real sharp on Daniel or people will dupe you into their phony ideas. The big issue here is that if you think we are going to enter that 70<sup>th</sup> week then you should be looking for anti-Christ, not Christ. And if you are looking for anti-Christ you are going to be a big-time prepper, and I wouldn't blame you because you are preparing to try to survive the end of the world. But that is obviously wrong because the NT repeatedly says we are to be waiting expectantly for Christ and we are not destined for wrath but for the rapture. The difference in these two outlooks could not be more radical. Looking for anti-Christ induces fear; looking for Christ induces hope. The NT is absolutely clear that we are to be looking for the blessed hope of Christ and we are to comfort one another with these words and we will not be here for anti-Christ, we will never meet anti-Christ.

Today we'll look at a fourth picture given to Daniel that adds to the general picture. I'd outline the passage by dividing it into two sections; Daniel 11:36-39 is describing general characteristics of anti-Christ's character and career while Daniel 11:40-45 is describing a particular conflict that results in the formation of the seven-year treaty which is broken at the mid-point when anti-Christ makes Jerusalem his base of operation. 12:1 is the mid-point when Satan is cast out of heaven and indwells the anti-Christ and he will begin his reign of terror against the Jewish people who will be protected by Michael for the last three and one half years.

Let's work into the prophecy starting with the general characteristics of anti-Christ and his career in Daniel 11:36-39. **Then the king shall do as he pleases, and he will exalt and magnify himself above every god and will speak monstrous things against the God of gods; and he will prosper until the indignation is finished, for that which is decreed will be done.** The remarkable thing about this verse is the fact that **he will prosper** doing these things. Remember, in the Book of Daniel, every time we've seen a Gentile king get arrogant God has brought him down. Nebuchadnezzar became arrogant, God humbled him, Belshazzar became arrogant and God divided his kingdom, Alexander the Great became arrogant and God broke him. But there are two individuals in

the Book of Daniel who actually prosper when they get arrogant; one is Antiochus and the other is anti-Christ and both prosper because they share one thing in common, they are disciplinary rods in the hand of God upon Israel. They are sent to do one thing; get Israel's attention so they will repent.

You see it says in verse 36 that **the king will do as he pleases?** That means anti-Christ is going to do whatever he wants to do when he comes on the world stage. He comes on the world stage after the rapture according to 2 Thess 2. The rapture is the departure there and it is first, then the removal of the restrainer, who I take to be the Holy Spirit, then the revealing of the anti-Christ. So we won't be around. We'll be gone and then he comes on the world stage and he's going to do whatever he wants. He's going to run over everybody. That's what the verse says. It also says in verse 36 that **he will exalt and magnify himself above every god**, these are pagan gods, and you can see here he is extremely arrogant. Most people worship a pagan god but he's going to exalt himself **above every god**. So he is extremely conceited. Now I suggest that behind the **gods** of paganism are always demons. This is the way it was in Egypt at the Exodus. All the ten plagues judged ten aspects of nature that Exodus says were truly the Egyptians gods, behind each were demons and God was showing His superiority to demons in the Exodus. So when it says that the anti-Christ will **exalt and magnify himself above every god** it indicates to me that he is making himself out to be higher than every pagan god and that would mean that he is indwelt by the highest demon in the cosmos and that is Satan himself. Now the way this comes about when we take into account Rev 13 is that at the mid-point of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week the anti-Christ will be killed but amazingly he will be resurrected and then the whole earth will be amazed and will worship him because Satan will give his authority and power to the anti-Christ and by worshipping the anti-Christ they will be worshipping Satan. Now of course the anti-Christ doesn't raise himself from the dead and Satan doesn't raise him either. I take it that only God has the power to raise the dead and God raises him at that time. I'd inject 2 Thess 2:11 in here which indicates God raises him from the dead as a strong delusion for those who rejected the truth so as to be saved. This will set these people for judgment. Now since the anti-Christ will exalt and magnify himself above every god because he is personally indwelt by Satan, it means that he will be the most arrogant person ever. Then notice how arrogant, such that he even **speaks monstrous things against the God of gods**. The noun **monstrous** means "incredible" things, "extraordinary" things, things no one would dare say against God. Humans say horrible things against God but no one has ever dared to say the things the anti-Christ will say about Him. And I take it again that the primary reason he has the degree of arrogance to utter such things is because he is indwelt by Satan.

Now as I said before the strange thing is what is said next, **and he will prosper**. How could such a wicked one prosper? Because Israel is under divine discipline. The entire times of the Gentiles is a time of discipline for Israel. The discipline is designed to restore Israel. All discipline is for the purpose of repentance and restoration. But this is what it's going to take. Hitler was not enough to get them to repent. The Holocaust was a cake walk compared to what is coming. Israel must pass under the rod of discipline for her to recognize her Messiah and so **he will prosper**. And notice, there's a time limit put on his prospering, **until the indignation is finished**, that's the

**indignation** of God against Israel. God is cursing Israel for their rebellion and the anti-Christ is God's rod of discipline so they'll repent. **for that which is decreed will be done**, the seventy sevens or 490 years are the decreed calendar program for Israel. There are six things in Daniel 9:24 decreed that must take place by the consummation of the 490 years; first, to finish the transgression; second, to make an end of sin; third, to make atonement for iniquity. Those three things have all been provided by the death of Christ. Then fourth, to bring in everlasting righteousness; fifth, to seal up vision and prophecy and sixth, to anoint the most holy place - the last three things will be the application of the death of Christ to a repentant Israel. So when the 490 years have expired Israel will have repented and the kingdom will have come.

Verse 37 and here the key is there are three unnatural characteristics of the anti-Christ. Three things that really stand out as strange about this man; **He will show no regard for the gods of his fathers or for the desire of women, nor will he show regard for any other god; for he will magnify himself above them all.** The first area of unnatural character is rejection of his religious heritage. **He will show no regard for the gods of his fathers.** Most people follow or at least respect their family's religious heritage, but not the anti-Christ. We don't know his religious heritage. Some have said he will be a Muslim. This verse says that if his family is Muslim then he will not be a Muslim for he will show no regard for Islam. Frankly, we don't know his religious heritage but we do know that he will not show regard for whatever it is.

Some people say this phrase means the anti-Christ will be a Jew. Actually there are three arguments used to say the anti-Christ will be a Jew. First, they use the KJV of verse 36 which says "Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers..." They see the capital G-o-d and so they think this is referring to the one true God and therefore since the anti-Christ will not regard the one true God who is the God of the Jews then he must be a Jew. That argument has a problem. Dan 9:26 says the anti-Christ will be a descendant of the people of the prince who is to come who destroy the city and the temple. The people who destroyed the city and temple were the Romans and so the prince who is to come will be a Roman. The prince is the anti-Christ and so the anti-Christ will be a Roman, not a Jew.

Second argument that the anti-Christ will be a Jew is that in Rev 7 the 144,000 are mentioned, 12,000 from each of the twelve tribes. But the tribe of Dan is not mentioned and so the argument is that their absence indicates the anti-Christ must be a Jew from the tribe of Dan. That's a weak argument because there are nineteen lists of the twelve tribes in the Bible and every one of them is different and leaves off one tribe. The reason for the different lists is because, in a way, there are thirteen tribes because Joseph was given two portions by his tribe being divided into Ephraim and Manasseh. But every time the tribes are listed only twelve are in the list. Therefore, one tribe is always left off in all nineteen lists. So the absence of a tribe in a list does not mean the anti-Christ is from that tribe. The fact is no one really knows why Dan is not mentioned in that list of the 144,000 as witnesses. The best speculation is that it's because the 144,000 are witnesses and Dan is the tribe that fell into the worst idolatry and lost their witness. But Dan is listed in the land divisions in the millennial kingdom and so

Dan will be recognized in the millennium. The bottom line is Dan's absence in the list of Rev 7 has nothing to do with the idea that the anti-Christ is a Jew, especially when Daniel 9:26 says he will be a Roman and Romans are Gentiles.

Third, some say that the anti-Christ must be a Jew because the Jews would never accept a Gentile Messiah. However, the Bible never teaches that Jews will accept a Gentile Messiah. It teaches that they will enter into a peace treaty with a Gentile. Since they have done this many times before then it should not be a surprise that they will do it again in the future.

That covers the arguments that claim the anti-Christ will be a Jew. The fact is he will not be a Jew, he will be a Gentile and the first unnatural thing about this Gentile is that he will reject his religious heritage, whatever that is.

The second unnatural thing about the anti-Christ will be that he will **show no regard...for the desire of women**. There are three views as to what this means. First, some say this means he will be a homosexual. Second, some say it means he will have no regard for the Messiah since the desire of women in the OT was to give birth to the Messiah. Third, some say it means he will have no regard for the natural affection for women, being kind to them, being gentle with them. Instead he will abuse them. I think the third view is best.

Finally, the third unnatural thing about anti-Christ is **he will show no regard for any other god; for he will magnify himself above them all**. So the reason he will turn from his religious heritage is because he will make himself out to be God. Antiochus did this and anti-Christ will do this. I call attention to 2 Thess 2 where it predicts he will sit in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God and receiving the worship of the world. He does this because he will be killed and then indwelt by Satan who is extremely arrogant and desirous of worship. So in conclusion, verse 37 reveals three unnatural characteristics of the anti-Christ; he will reject his religious heritage, he will not show affection toward women and he will make himself out to be God.

Daniel 11:38 and here we find he does worship something in addition to himself, that he is a polytheist, **But instead he will honor a god of fortresses, a god whom his fathers did not know; he will honor him with gold, silver, costly stones and treasures**. His honor or respect will be for **a god of fortresses**. The Hebrew word for **fortresses** refers to a place of safety or a means of safety. It might be a shelter or a means of securing shelter, perhaps referring to his war machine as his means of acquiring safety. I take it that he will put his trust in military might. Revelation 13 says that after he is resurrected the whole world will wonder and say, "Who is able to wage war with the beast?" He will be waging war by means of Satan and he will appear undefeatable and he will put his trust in his military might. So a **god of fortresses** seems to refer to his trust in his military might by which he will seek to secure his kingdom. This god the verse says is **a god whom his fathers did not know**; meaning they did not worship military might but rather some pagan god or gods. But the anti-Christ will and further he will **honor** military might **with gold, silver, costly stones and treasures**. That is, he will take the war

booty that he takes from his military campaigns and use it to build his military arsenal in his quest for global conquest.

Daniel 11:39, **He will take action against the strongest fortresses with the help of a foreign god, he will give great honor to those who acknowledge him and will cause them to rule over many, and will parcel out land for a price.** So when he enters a new territory to conquer and if the people quickly acquiesce to him he will give them **great honor**, probably setting them up as rulers in those areas as he marches onward. And the expression he **will parcel out land for a price** means literally that he will reward those who readily acquiesce to him with larger areas of rule. This will be part of his strategy toward global conquest.