History = His Story Part 4: The Coming Anti-Christ and the “Time of the End”

Daniel 11:36-45

**Introduction**

 This morning we are concluding the fourth part of our series addressing the 11th chapter of Daniel which has been a prophetic vision showing Daniel the events that would take place after his life all the way through to the end times. In the first three parts of our series, we have seen the downfall of Persia, the victories of Alexander the Great and then the events that took place after Alexander’s death when his kingdom was divided into four regions and power distributed among four of his generals. The past two weeks we have been looking specifically at the conflict and deception that took place between the Kingdom of the South (Egypt) and the Kingdom of the North (Syria). Last week the entirety of verses 21-35 described the exploits of Antiochus the IV who was the last major king of the north discussed in the chapter. Today as we look at verses 36-45, we will see the chapter transition to the time of the end where the actions of the Anti-Christ will usher in the eventual arrival of the true king of glory, the Lord Jesus Christ. With our time together today we will be addressing four applications of this passage on our lives: 1. We must be on guard against the selfish attitude of pride. Antiochus IV saw himself to be greater than God, we must not slide into that attitude. Are we humbling ourselves under God’s authority or do we desire to be in charge? 2. The king of the future will honor fortresses. We must be able to answer this question: What do we truly honor- God, power, security, comfort, etc? 3. God’s people must remain focused on His kingdom rather than on the powers in the world clashing. Do not let fear or political division dominate your life. 4. This future king will eventually fall because God has limited his time in power. We must remember that God has the final word so we need to stay faithful.

**The Final King Will Be Arrogant (vv. 36-37)**

**36 Then the king will do as he pleases, and he will exalt himself and boast against every god and will speak dreadful things against the God of gods; and he will be successful until the indignation is finished, because that which is determined will be done. 37 And 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 boast against them all.**

 As we begin this passage it is worth noting that what we are seeing here is a transition from a description of the life of Antiochus IV to the rule of the future Anti-Christ at the end of the age. This conclusion has been reached by many theologians specifically because as we read last week, Antiochus was a worshiper of the Greek gods because he erected a statue of Zeus and put it in the temple. As we have just read, this future leader will reject the gods of his fathers meaning that no other system of faith will lead him. Secondly, this future leader has actions that do not match with the historical actions of Antiochus that we have provided for us in outside sources from the Bible. Therefore, we can conclude rather solidly that this passage is referring to the Anti-Christ.

 In verse 36 we read that this king “will exalt himself and boast against every god.” This is the root problem that has plagued humanity since the first sin was committed in the Garden of Eden. The allure of pride and the desire to be either like God or to be more powerful than Him. This reminds us of the spiritual warfare that takes place on the earth today that Daniel was told about in chapter 10. The demons of Satan are constantly feuding with the angels of God. The agents that are carrying out the will of God and Satan are human beings that have been created in God’s image. Not only will this leader consider himself to be greater than God, but he will also “speak dreadful things against the God of gods.” The things that this leader will say and the blasphemy that will be uttered against God will be so dreadful that he will be known by his words and actions. The hatred that will burn against God will be easily seen and heard. We are already hearing such blasphemies in the culture today with the things that have been said against God. I do not have the time to mention them all, but let us quickly remind ourselves of how we can be assured of whether a teacher of the word is speaking the truth or blasphemies. The apostle John gave us this test to use **“Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. 2 By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God; 3 and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming, and now it is already in the world” (1 John 4:1-3).** John says that the spirit of the Anti-Christ is already operating in the world working to deceive. We must be on guard against such blasphemies.

 This king will be successful until he has accomplished all things that has been allowed for him by God. Once again, we see that his time is limited. What this is most-likely speaking of is the time of tribulation that will take place that will bring an end to his rule when Jesus Christ returns to defeat the Anti-Christ and put Satan into his prison for 1,000 years. Just like we have learned in the chapter up to this point, God is sovereign and everything that happens is under His direction and control.

 In verse 37 this future leader will show no regard to the gods of his fathers or the desire for women. This is telling us that this future king will have no use or interest in exalting any god that has been worshiped in the past. His ultimate hatred will be against the God above all other gods and therefore anyone who dares to speak in the name of God almighty will feel his wrath. Not having the desire for women can mean that this leader will not have the desire to get married or have children because his number one goal is to deceive the entire world against the one true God. The verse concludes with the mention that this leader will have no use for any god because he will boast against all of them. This is showing us that in the time of the end the Anti-Christ will be so prideful and full of himself that he will not allow any other deity to be worshiped other than himself. This is reminiscent of how King Nebuchadnezzar built the statue and made everyone in the kingdom bow down to it. He did not want allegiance to anyone other than himself. Demanding such high honor and praise with the threat of violence is a certain sign of the coming of the Anti-Christ.

**This King will Focus on Power in His Reign (vv. 38-39)**

**38 But instead he will honor a god of fortresses, a god whom his fathers did not know; he will honor him with gold, silver, precious stones, and treasures. 39 And he will take action against the strongest of fortresses with the help of a foreign god; he will give great honor to those who acknowledge him and will make them rulers over the many, and will parcel out land for a price.**

The way that this king will rule will be similar to what other earthly arrogant kings have done, but we are learning that he will take things a bit further. “He will honor a god of fortresses” tells us that rather than worshiping any other god his desire will be to have power and he will use war to gain that power. He will be willing to use the sword and violence to obtain the power he seeks. The way that he will satisfy those cravings for power will be by obtaining gold, silver, precious stones and treasures. By having all of this wealth this Anti-Christ figure will be able to use deceit, manipulation as well as bribery to get all of the other kingdoms of the world to ally with him. This is what is meant when we read that he “will parcel out land for a price.” When these nations have allied themselves with him and he has secured the control over the world this is when he will dishonor the treaties he had made with them and force all nations to cede their power to him. Anyone who refuses will be destroyed because we have already mentioned that this king will not tolerate any competition for power or influence.

**There will be Much Conflict in the Final Days (vv. 40-43)**

**40 “And at the end time the king of the South will wage war with him, and the king of the North will storm against him with chariots, 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 reach out with 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.**

In verse 40 we see that there will be a great war near the time of the end. All of the major nations of the world will gather to do battle at the end of the age. This will happen because this future leader will be having much military success by defeating many nations forcing them to comply with all his orders. As he enters the Beautiful Land, we see that the final battle will be taking place in the Promised Land. What we need to take from these verses is that those who are alive when all of this takes place will see the final battle on earth that will be happening between the forces of Satan and those of Jesus Christ. When we see the increase of wars and rumors of wars this is part of what Jesus told the disciples as He explained the time of the end in Matthew 24. Please open your Bibles or use a pew Bible and look up Matthew 24 with me. Let us read what Jesus taught regarding the end times. (We will read Matthew 24:4-13). We see in this passage that wars will increase, many false messiahs will appear teaching false doctrines, persecution on followers of Christ will increase, but those who remain faithful will be saved. We must keep these words of encouragement in our hearts. Times on this earth will continually become more difficult, but those who remain faithful will be rewarded. Jesus has promised us this and we can rest assured that His promise is true!

**This Final King Will Fall! (vv. 44-45)**

**44 But rumors from the East and from the North will terrify him, and he will go out with great wrath to eliminate and annihilate many. 45 And 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.**

 This final king of evil will come to his end after he experiences a major defeat in battle. The One who will defeat him will be the Lord Jesus Christ who will bring with Him the host of heaven. This victory over the Anti-Christ is explained to us in Revelation 19:19-21 **“19 And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies, assembled to make war against Him who sat on the horse, and against His army. 20 And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire, which burns with brimstone. 21 And the rest were killed with the sword which came from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh.** Jesus Christ will come at the appointed time with the hosts of heaven to finally defeat Satan, the Anti-Christ as well as the False Prophet who will be proclaiming the false gospel of the Anti-Christ. This confirms what we who trust in Christ have known all along, God will be victorious over the forces of evil.

**Applications**

**1. We must be on guard against the selfish attitude of pride. Antiochus IV saw himself to be greater than God, we must not slide into that attitude. Are we humbling ourselves under God’s authority or do we desire to be in charge?**

The desire to be in control of our lives is something that we hear from the culture. Sometimes we hear cries of independence such as “my body, my choice” or as Burger King used to say “Have it Your Way!” It is very tempting to think that we have the ability to make every decision and plan the course of our lives. It is true that God allows us to have free will to make decisions in our lives. He allows this because He is a loving God who has allowed His total power to be limited so that you and I can freely make decisions in our lives. But even though He allows us to have free will He is ultimately in charge of everything that happens in this world. Our will cannot trump His will. What we must remember is that God is the Creator and sustainer of this universe, so everything belongs to Him. Obedience to His Word and acknowledgement of Him as sovereign over our lives is the best way to live in comfort, joy and peace. It is much more peaceful when we realize that we do not have to control everything. The old expression “Let Go and Let God” is appropriate as long as we remember that God is sovereign while He also desires for us to be active in following His will and sharing His gospel with others.

**2. The king of the future will honor fortresses. We must be able to answer this question: What do we truly honor- God, power, security, comfort, etc?**

What do we prioritize in our lives? Are we more concerned with power, comfort, money, security or recognition than we are with honoring God? We cannot be like this future king who will desire power and glory over all other things. The priorities that we have in our lives will be shown by how we live. If our ultimate goal is comfort then we will do whatever is needed to be comfortable in this life. Having things is a joy that God has blessed us with, but we cannot let those things become our idol. When challenging times come into our lives it will be the reliance on God and His strength that will get us through. May we be people who honor God and His Word above all other things because it is God that gives true peace, hope and joy.

**3. God’s people must remain focused on His kingdom rather than on the powers in the world clashing. Do not let fear or political division dominate your life.**

How many of us have laid awake at night worrying about the things that are happening in this world? I will not ask for a show of hands, but I am certain this has happened to all of us. The temporary things of this world can cause us anxiety and make us fear the future. I am not saying that we should never be concerned for others or care about things that are happening here. What I am saying is that we should not fear about these things more than we should place our trust in God. Jesus said in Matthew 6:25-34 that we should not worry about what we will eat, drink or clothe ourselves with. Also, we should not worry about tomorrow because it has enough worries of its own. When we choose to allow political division or the fear of the future dominate our lives, we are choosing to allow these temporary issues to become more powerful in our lives than God. We have learned in Daniel that all of history is in Gods hands. If we know that fact then it should impact our daily lives. May we trust in God and allow each day to bring its challenges. When we do so we can face them with courage and reliance on our God.

**4. This future king will eventually fall because God has limited his time in power. We must remember that God has the final word so we need to stay faithful.**

As we have just mentioned in Application #3 we do not need to fear leaders such as the Anti-Christ because their time of rule has been limited by God. He will not allow anything to take place that goes against His perfect plan. What does God ask of us in His Word? He tells us to remain faithful until the day when we are called to be in His presence. Faithfulness means that no matter what happened in the culture our number one priority must be to share the good news of Jesus Christ with everyone. We must also stand upon the truth of God’s Word because it is through His Word that people know the truth that can set them free. We need to also stay in communication with God through prayer. Prayer is the conduit that connects us with the almighty who allows us to approach Him at any time. May we not neglect this wonderful time to connect with our Creator who shows us how much He loves us every day.

As a way of closing today I would like to share with you something that my church used to do every day when we opened Vacation Bible School. What we would do every morning we gathered was say the pledge of allegiance to the flag of the country, then we would say the pledge to the Christian Flag and then finally the pledge of allegiance to the Bible. Some of you might be familiar with these, but I thought I would share the pledge to the Christian Flag and Bible with you. These words are etched in my mind still to this day because we used to say them together so much. May these words encourage us as we live out our faith every day!

