

The Closing Curtain
Daniel 11 – 12
The Laurel Center
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Main Idea: God is the King of human history and destiny.

Introduction

Our interest in the end times focuses on chronology and how we will know that we are in the end times. While the Bible gives us a bit of chronology, it mostly focuses on the fact that God will be victorious no matter how bad things get. Even the chronology the Bible gives us is hard to understand. We are not meant to understand every little thing that will happen but rather place our trust in God and his ability to be victorious.

Daniel 11-12 does not have to do with giving us every little detail of the end times but showing us what happened in Daniel's future and our history. Since we know history and have seen these prophecies especially in chapter 11, we see just how detailed God can be in prophecy. Since we see him showing us such detailed prophecy that is verified by historical events and people, we can trust that God knows exactly how the end times are going to happen. Let us take a look at what Daniel is told will happen and how we have seen much of it play out in human history already.

Text – Daniel 12:1-4

1 “At that time shall arise Michael, the great prince who has charge of your people. And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never has been since there was a nation till that time. But at that time your people shall be delivered, everyone whose name shall be found written in the book. **2** And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. **3** And those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky above; and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever. **4** But you, Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book, until the time of the end. Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase.”

I. God proclaims the immediate future.

A The Persians and Greeks will have their day (11:1-4).

- 1 We must remember that to Daniel, what God tells him is the future for him but history for us. God does this so he can show us how detailed prophecy can be.
- 2 The prophecy of Daniel 11 is so detailed at least 200 years before these events begin to happen. Such detail shows us how in control God really is of all human history.

- 3 First, God explains to Daniel that there will be three Kings after the current King. These three Persian kings will mark the time of three different rains.
- 4 We believe these three Kings to be Cambyses, Gaumata, and Darius I. these are the major kings and leaders of Persia before the fourth game that is mentioned, which is Xerxes known as Artaxerxes in the Bible.
- 5 The prophecy is so specific that we can actually look at world history right after the time of Daniel in the lineup these specific and detailed prophecies with what we know history.
- 6 Next, we will see the mighty King who is no other than Alexander the great. Alexander was a warrior king who took over the Persian Empire. He came after the Persians because they came after the Greek city states in the famous battles of Thermopylae and Marathon.
- 7 Alexander the great rolled over the biggest empire the world had ever known. But he died at the very young age of 30. Because of this lifestyle choices he was susceptible to illness.
- 8 The ending of these verses suggests that for Kings will take his place and history tells us that that is exactly what happened. Alexander the great's Empire was split up by four of his generals.
- 9 The four generals split the mighty empire of Alexander the great into Greece, Asia minor, Syria and Egypt. The most important parts of this empire that deal with Israel, God's people, are Syria and Egypt. Israel geographically sits between these two great empires.

B The Kings of the North and South (11:5-10).

- 1 The King of the South talked about in Daniel is most likely the king of Egypt, Ptolemy I. One of his mighty generals became the king of the north in Syria, solutions I.
- 2 Through several attempts to gain power over each other, daughters were given in marriage and family members were taken advantage of in an attempt to win influence over each other.
- 3 Daniel's prophecy is especially specific about these transactions and the people involved without mentioning any names. Daniel uses geographical locations instead of the names of the Kings.
- 4 The two sons mentioned in verse 10 our solutions the third and Antioch us the third. Antiochus and his descendents will be strong and seize power for the future.

C Power struggles in the region (11:11-20).

- 1 The next section of verses introduce the power struggles that will continue between the North and the South, Syria and Egypt, so that they may control the place between them and its trading routes.
- 2 Israel is placed smack dab in the middle of these two fighting empires. The Greeks would Syria and Egypt for quite some time. Until the time of the Romans, the Greeks would have supremacy in all four corners of the Empire Alexander the great.
- 3 The Israelites would have to decide what to do to keep themselves out of trouble with these empires. In many cases, they chose to back one of the factions.
- 4 On one occasion Antiochus went down to Egypt with a large army but still lost to the Egyptian King, even though the Egyptian King suffered great losses.
- 5 14 years later, Antiochus would approach the Egyptians again and win the battle. He had the help of the Israelites this time. They decided to help him out in his battle. They did choose to 10 sites probably for their survival.
- 6 In an attempt to gain favor and influence in Egypt, he gave his daughter to the Egyptian King but she turned on him and helped him instead. Antiochus then went into Asia minor and Greece in an attempt to vindicate himself.
- 7 He was back and defeated by the Romans and returned to his land in defeat. The ending of his life was quite sad because he was assassinated in his own country.

II. God warns us of the Antichrist through an agent King.

A Antiochus Epiphanies is a type of the Antichrist (11:21-35).

- 1 This part of the prophecy lines up very nicely with an important historical figure named Antiochus epiphanies I T. He is important especially to Israel and is spoken of in the book of Maccabees.
- 2 Antiochus came to power through deceit and craftiness. He was not the rightful heir in Syria. But he took the throne anyway. He was related to the King in Egypt at the time.
- 3 Through craftiness and deceitfulness again he went down to Egypt and essentially stole the Empire from his nephew. Antiochus then returned to Syria.
- 4 On his way back, he looted and plundered this little tiny town called Jerusalem. To him it was just a place to loot and destroy. He did not have any special interests there at the time.

- 5 He decided once again at a later date to go down to Egypt and attempted to invade Egypt. This time it did not work out so well for his interests and he was rebuffed by the Romans.
- 6 Out of anger, when he went through Jerusalem this time, he went into the temple and desecrated it by what Daniel calls the abomination of desolation.
- 7 He set up an idol to be worshiped in the Temple itself as well as offered pigs on the altar which were unclean animals for the Jews. He is also said to have walked into the holy of always, a place entered only by the high priest only once a year.
- 8 He violated Jewish law over and over and over. We can read a lot more about him through Josephus in the Maccabees. These events took place in the intra-testamental period.

B Characteristics of the Antichrist and his rule (11:36-39).

- 1 This portion of the chapter and the prophecy is devoted to the characteristics of this error get King who thinks he has complete power to do whatever he wants.
- 2 It is most likely that it details the characteristics of Antioch us epiphanies. But there is also to be found in it the descriptions of the Antichrist who would later come on the scene. As of yet we have not seen the antichrist.
- 3 However antioxidants epiphanies is a perfect type of the antichrist to come. The same characteristics that dominate this Syrian king of the past will also be demonstrated by the antichrist as seen in future Scriptures.
- 4 This passage outlines the kind of person who were proclaimed himself to be a God and demand worship of himself. He will deal with the Temple as Antioch listed. He will destroy and cause chaos.
- 5 These characteristics highlight the character of a person who is anti-God and willing to do anything in his power to destroy the good things that God has for his creation.
- 6 For this reason, most scholars look at this prophecy not just speaking of antioxidants but also looking at the possibility being a type of the antichrist who is to come.

C The Antichrist causes war in the end times (11:40-45).

- 1 The events depicted in this next section of the prophecy do not agree with the history we know well for Antioch is epiphanies. For this reason, many scholars have understood that verses 36-39 may be a transition from the historical Antiochus to the type in the person of the antichrist.

- 2 These events do not happen in the life of Antioch us epiphanies. It is most likely than that they are prophecies of a future king like him who will rule with the same type of spirit and characteristics.
- 3 This King has no trouble making war with surrounding nations and reenacting the wars of the past between the Kings of the South and the North. This prophecy tells us that he is willing to go into Egypt and were with them just like Antiochus epiphanies.
- 4 Many scholars who reject the idea of the antichrist as a person in the future struggle to deal with this section of the text because it does not have a historical reference point based on the history that we have available to us today.
- 5 For the prophecy to be so specific up to this point is unusual. For this reason, I and many scholars believe that these events in these five verses have yet to occur in our time. They will most likely be confirmation of the antichrist when we are already aware of who he is.
- 6 The important thing to realize is that God not only was exact in foretelling Daniels future and Israel's future at Daniel's time, but that we can look back in history and see how specific he can get by verifying these prophecies with historical accounts.

III. God shows us the final victory.

A Frightening times will come upon us before the end (12:1-4).

- 1 The angelic figure, or the pre-incarnate Christ, tells Daniel that Michael will come to rescue God's people during this time of great tribulation in danger.
- 2 We did not fear what comes because whether we will be here are not God will protect us. Because of his protection we can surely indoor what ever is coming in the end times.
- 3 Jesus goes on to tell Daniel that there's can be a time of great trouble and tribulation in the land that has never been seen before. Many people believe that this refers to the end times rather than to the times of Antioch us epiphanies.
- 4 It seems that as the world continues to become gradually more and more wicked and trouble some both naturally and socio-politically, and not getting better than the times of Antioch us.
- 5 God continues to reassure us and Daniel that God's people will be protected and delivered in these times of distress, even in the end of the world. Some people believe in the rapture of the saints that will deliver God's people from these dangers and other people believe that God will somehow protect his people from them.

- 6 Verse two indicates the resurrection of the righteous and the wicked dead. It is referring to a physical and bodily resurrection. The Bible further teaches us that there will be a judgment time.
- 7 The fact of the resurrection stated here as well as the times becoming worse than when any other nation had been on earth indicate that this is speaking of the end times and not the times of Antioch us epiphanies.
- 8 This makes us realize that the references here are not to his time but to the end times that we have yet to face in our human history. These are the times that Jesus spoke of as birth pangs that are preparing for the final battle between good and evil, God and Satan.
- 9 Daniel is then commanded to seal up the words of the prophecy until the end times. The ceiling of the prophecy can suggest that these things will not happen for quite a while but also suggests that they will soon be revealed.
- 10 Finally, the Lord tells us that in the end times many will seek an increase in knowledge. This is been happening from the very beginning of human existence until now. We are always learning more and more. But especially in these times we are seeing an explosion in the increase of knowledge due to technology and human ingenuity.
- 11 All of these indicators tell us that we are right now living in these 10 times the Bible refers to. The time is short for us on this earth according to the prophecies of the book of Daniel. We need to be prepared for what God has for us.

B God knows the timing of all of the and events (12:5-13).

- 1 At the very end of Daniels prophecy more celestial beings show up but it is unclear if they are there to simply asked Jesus questions or if they have another part to play.
- 2 They begin as Jesus about when these things will take place. We see once again the timing given as “a time, times, and half a time.” This has been used elsewhere in the book of Daniel in chapter 7 referring to the antichrist.
- 3 Many scholars understand it to mean that there is a connection between the antichrist and Daniel seven and the antichrist here. This antichrist seems to live in this time of increasing the knowledge and terrible times of distress.
- 4 The timing that is mentioned here probably stands for 3 ½ years. This is what most have understood it to mean. But other timings are mentioned soon after this.

- 5 Much like Daniel in verse eight, many of us can sympathize as we study prophecy and look at what the word of God says about the end times that we heard but did not fully understand what was said.
- 6 I believe that some of this is meant to be partially revealed to us now to prepare us but not to be fully understood until it begins to happen. Much of prophecy functions in this way.
- 7 We can take comfort and be challenged in the fact that those who are wise and righteous will be purified and refined by the events but that they will effect the wicked in a dangerous way. (Verse 11)
- 8 We are then given a time for all limitation in the end times from the time the abomination of desolation is set up, which if it is Antiochus epiphanies the time would begin from BC.
- 9 The amount of time given from that time forward is 1290 days. On a lunar calendar 30 days per month, works out to almost 3 ½ years. The problem is that the text does not tell us what the expected end of this time period is, whether it is the end of the world or the end of tribulation. It may correspond with the time, times, and half a time.
- 10 Then we are told that the man who arrives at 1335 days is blessed. This is a difference of 45 days from the previous number. That 45 days would probably fit within the 3 ½ years.
- 11 Whatever happens at the end of these days, the person who can endure it is blessed. But once again we are not told what will happen at the end of this time. Or where it fits within the historical scheme of the prophecy of Daniel.
- 12 Many speculate that if it does have to do with the antichrist will have to do with the years of tribulation at the end of time. The fact is that we are not sure how to interpret these things properly. Perhaps the message of prophecy is more about seasons than specifics and more about preparation than about knowing all things.

Conclusion

we have studied the book of Daniel in great detail in these past weeks. We have learned a lot about how to be like Daniel and we have also learned a lot about how God is preparing us for what is going to happen in our time. Prophecy prepares us and teaches us what to look for. It can be very specific or it can give general ideas. But it always prepares us to see that God is the king of human history and he commands as he wills. Let us place our trust in Jesus knowing that he knows the end from the beginning and he has pronounced victory for his people. Let us also know that we live in the last days in our time is short so we must be doing the work of Jesus until he returns.