

“Antichrist Foreshadowed – Part 2”
Daniel 8
(Preaches at Trinity, August 24, 2014)

I’m supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord’s Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I’ll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. Last time I directed your focus to the “little horn” described here in **Chapter 8**. He comes forth from the divided Greek Empire after the death of Alexander the Great. Alexander is clearly identified with the shaggy goat in **Verse 21**. There is little doubt that the “little horn” that rose from this empire is Antiochus Epiphanes.
2. After the death of Alexander in 323 BC the Greek Empire was divided. One of the divisions was the Seleucid Empire. It was a major center of Greek culture.
 - A. In 175 BC Antiochus IV or Antiochus Epiphanes came to power. By this time the empire had weakened significantly. The title “Epiphanes” was one he gave himself which means, “Illustrious God.”
 - B. In his efforts to Hellenize the Jews he outlawed the practice of Judaism. This led to the Maccabean Revolt. Forty thousand Jews died in the space of three days. In 167 BC Antiochus profaned the Temple by setting up a pagan idol, presumably Zeus, and sacrificed swine on the altar.
 - C. Daniel overheard that it would be a lengthy but definite persecution:
Daniel 8:13-14 NAU - "Then I heard a holy one speaking, and another holy one said to that particular one who was speaking, "How long will the vision *about* the regular sacrifice apply, while the transgression causes horror, so as to allow both the holy place and the host to be trampled?" ¹⁴ He said to me, "For 2,300 evenings *and* mornings; then the holy place will be properly restored."
3. This has been referred to as the Abomination of Desolation, describing the attack upon God’s people and the desecration of that which is holy.
Daniel 11:31 NAU - "Forces from him will arise, desecrate the sanctuary fortress, and do away with the regular sacrifice. And they will set up the abomination of desolation."
4. But there has been a progression of this throughout history. The church in the Gospel age has been a suffering, persecuted church. This is the primary theme of the Book of Revelation.
 - A. Antiochus is the “little horn.” He occupies a major part in the visions of Daniel.
 - B. Jesus makes it clear that a second manifestation of the Abomination of Desolation occurred in 70 AD. It was merely a continuation of the evil that all of the antichrists would share.
Matthew 24:15-16 NAU - "Therefore when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), ¹⁶ then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains."
5. Last week we began looking at the characteristics of Antiochus Epiphanes described here as they foreshadow the final one referred to as the Antichrist – the one Paul refers to as the “man of lawlessness” in **2 Thessalonians**.

6. I pointed out that there is one thing consistent with all of these manifestations of antichrist. They all wage war against the people of God
This was true with Antiochus and all who follow his hatred of God and His worship.
- A. **Chapter 7**
Daniel 7:21 NAU - " kept looking, and that horn was waging war with the saints and overpowering them"
- B. **Chapter 8**
Daniel 8:9 NAU - "Out of one of them came forth a rather small horn which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the Beautiful *Land*." (Jerusalem)
Daniel 8:11 NAU - " even magnified *itself* to be equal with the Commander of the host; and it removed the regular sacrifice from Him, and the place of His sanctuary was thrown down."
1. Sinclair Ferguson – “It should not surprise us that there will be continual expressions of the characteristics of the little horn that will reach their apex in the appearances of the little horn in the last days as described in Daniel’s conclusion.”
 2. Paul says of this final man of sin
2 Thessalonians 2:4 NAU - "who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God."
7. Tonight I want to share some other characteristics of not only Antiochus Epiphanes, but of the one he foreshadowed, the final Antichrist.
- A. In **Verse 16** Gabriel is commanded to give Daniel the understanding of the vision: "Gabriel, give this *man* an understanding of the vision."
 - a. Daniel is given no dates, no names.
 - b. Likewise with the final man of lawlessness. We have no indication as to when he will arise or who he will be.
- B. In **Verses 23-25**, however, we are given several of his characteristics.
- I. He will be of particularly shrewd wickedness –
V.23 - " Insolent and skilled in intrigue"
- A. He will be particularly fierce
 1. The word for “insolent” literally points to a fierce face. The KJV translates it a "fierce countenance." The NIV refers to him as a "a fierce-looking king"
 2. There are some characteristics that identify people. Some people have a charismatic personality – people naturally gravitate towards such personality. Some people show themselves gracious and merciful.
 3. This person will carry a persona that exudes fear. He will lack conscience—the epitome of evil. Apparently Antiochus was such a person slaughtering thousands. He was known for his bizarre behavior and many of his contemporaries called him *Epimanes* instead of *Epiphanes*
 4. The final antichrist will bring such torment upon Christians.

- B. He will be particularly skilled in working out his evil schemes - "skilled in intrigue"
1. This points to an intellectual ability to work out evil schemes
KJV - "understanding dark sentences"
NKJ - "Who understands sinister schemes."
 2. He will have the ability to put into play sinister schemes and evil plans calling evil good and good evil.
Daniel 8:25 NAU - " through his shrewdness He will cause deceit to succeed by his influence"
Daniel 8:12 NAU - " it will fling truth to the ground and perform *its will* and prosper."
 3. In order to consolidate his power Antiochus sided with the Hellenized Jews by outlawing Judaism and then persecuted all who did not conform.
2 Maccabees 6 -
"two women who were arrested for having circumcised their children were publicly paraded about the city with their babies hanging at their breasts and then thrown down from the top of the city wall. Others, who had assembled in nearby caves to observe the sabbath in secret, were betrayed to Philip and all burned to death."
 4. The final antichrist will also be skilled in the working out of his evil schemes. Again, we have no other specific details.
- C. The thing we need to understand is the spirit of antichrist is continually present.
2 Thessalonians 2:7 NAU - "For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work"
1. It is the spirit of this present age
Ephesians 2:2 NAU - " in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience."
 2. This wickedness is at work within the heart of every lost man. It's at work in the lives of our children. Except for the restraining grace of God the wickedness of this age would quickly destroy the Church and banish the Gospel. The binding of Satan in **Revelation 20** is God's wonderful blessing upon the Church and upon His elect people.

II. His power will be mighty – Verse 24

- A. Antiochus was a terrible destroyer
Daniel 8:24 NAU - "he will destroy to an extraordinary degree"
1. In **2 Maccabees 5** we read:
"Raging like a wild animal, he set out from Egypt and took Jerusalem by storm. He ordered his soldiers to cut down without mercy those whom they met and to slay those who took refuge in their houses. There was a massacre of young and old, a killing of women and children, a slaughter of virgins and infants. In the space of three days, eighty thousand were lost, forty thousand meeting a violent death, and the same number being sold into slavery."

2. His power was not his own
V.24 – “His power will be mighty, but not by his *own* power”
- a. Such is the case with all wicked men
Ephesians 2:2 NAU - "in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience."
 - b. Satan is behind the schemes of this world
Ephesians 6:11 NAU - "Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil." μεθοδεία – we get our English word method or methodology. It refers to Satan’s mode of operation.
 - c. Satan has influence over this world’s opinions, aims, goals, values. He influences this world’s ethics, education, politics, philosophy, sociology and economics. He is behind the great culture shift of our generation.
- B. The final great representation of antichrist will also rule by a power not his own
2 Thessalonians 2:9 NAU - " the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders,"

- III. He will be consumed by his own pride
Daniel 8:11 NAU - " It even magnified *itself* to be equal with the Commander of the host"
Daniel 8:25 NAU - "he will magnify *himself* in his heart"
- A. Antiochus was filled with pride
 1. He was the first Seleucid king to use divine epithets on coins
 “Epiphanes” – “Illustrious God” or “Manifest God”
 After the defeat of Egypt he coined, “Bringer of Victory”
 2. He would allow nothing or no one to stand in his way
 - B. Titus was also filled with pride
 1. For his victory in destroying Jerusalem he was awarded a triumph in which he was robed in purple that identified him as near-divine and rode through the streets of Rome on a four-horse chariot with a procession of his Jewish captives and great display of the treasures taken from the Temple.
 2. Some of the treasures from the Temple were used to fund the building of the Roman Coliseum.
 - C. The final antichrist will also be consumed with this same pride
2 Thessalonians 2:4 NAU - "who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God."
 1. Such is the nature of all who turn from God
 2. Pride was Satan’s great downfall. Being filled with all evil the final antichrist will greatly manifest the terrible curse of pride.

IV. He will seek to destroy God's people

A. This was true of Antiochus

Daniel 8:24 NAU - "He will destroy mighty men and the holy people."

1. "Holy people" is speaking of the Jews
Remember, this is a vision given to Daniel to reveal what was to happen to the Jews.
2. Again, Antiochus killed thousands.
3. Worse, thousands apostatized from Judaism under pressure from Antiochus.

1 Maccabees 1

"In those days there came forth out of Israel transgressors of the law, who persuaded many, saying, Let us go and make a covenant with the Gentiles that are round about us . . . And they made themselves uncircumcised, and forsook the holy covenant, and joined themselves to the Gentiles, and sold themselves to do evil . . . And many of Israel consented to his worship, and sacrificed to his idols."

B. Thousands fell away from the truth with the suffering of 70 AD.

Mark 13:9 NAU - "But be on your guard; for they will deliver you to *the* courts, and you will be flogged in *the* synagogues, and you will stand before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them."

Mark 13:12-13 NAU - "Brother will betray brother to death, and a father *his* child; and children will rise up against parents and have them put to death. ¹³ "You will be hated by all because of My name, but the one who endures to the end, he will be saved."

Matthew 24:12 NAU - "Because lawlessness is increased, most people's love will grow cold."

But these things will also exist until the end.

C. The final antichrist will also be a destroyer

1. Satan is referred to as a murderer
John 8:44 NAS - "You are of *your* father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *nature*; for he is a liar, and the father of lies."
2. Satan has the great goal of destroying the work of Christ
After he is loosed from his prison he will wreak havoc upon God's people
3. This will be a terrible time and many will fall away. Paul is saying that just like there was a great falling away before the first coming of Christ, there will also be before the second coming.
2 Thessalonians 2:3 NAU - " Let no one in any way deceive you, for *it will not come* unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction,"
2 Thessalonians 2:10-12 NAU - " they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. ¹¹ For this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false, ¹² in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness."

Conclusion:

1. God's people must always beware of these things.
William Hendriksen – "History, in a sense, repeats itself. Better: prophesy attains multiple fulfillment. The underlying thought is ever the same. God's city and sanctuary are desecrated, whether by Antiochus Epiphanes and his sacrilegious offerings, by Roman armies with their idolatrous standards; or finally by the antichrist himself."
2. The greatest desecration of God's holy temple is the assault upon God's holy people. The Church of Christ has been and always will be the suffering Church. The spirit of lawlessness is already around us.
3. The pressures upon the church will only increase until finally Satan is loosed from his prison and the final great assault upon the church will occur. Many will fall away.
4. All of us should ask ourselves, am I a follower of Christ? Have I given my life over to Him? If following Him demands from me everything I value upon this earth am I willing? If following Him demands great suffering am I willing?
5. But we can rejoice with all of God's people.
 - A. Antiochus was crushed by the King of kings. His life was cut short by the hand of the Almighty.
Daniel 8:25 NAU - "He will even oppose the Prince of princes, But he will be broken without human agency."
 - B. The final antichrist will also be crushed.
2 Thessalonians 2:8 NAU - " Then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming;"
6. The victory of Christ is assured and we will be vindicated in our suffering. Our own victory is assured.