

## MARCH OF EMPIRE - LECTURES ON THE BOOK OF DANIEL

*by Floyd Hitchcock*

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### CHAPTER 20

#### The Antichrist of the Old Testament – Antiochus Epiphanes

#### LESSON TEXT – – Daniel 11:36-45

*Paul's Comment on the Times and Seasons -- Blind Leaders of the Blind -- Why Antiochus Epiphanes Was Called the Antichrist of the Old Testament -- Four Different Groups of Nations Will Arise During the Closing Days of This Age -- Antichrist Will Arise Also -- Antichrist Will Deify Himself and Will Prosper in His Wickedness -- He Will Honor the God of Forces -- The People of the World Are Being Prepared to Accept and Worship Such a God -- Antichrist Will Trespass Upon the Land of Palestine and Will Divide the Land for Gain -- The Antichrist Will Suffer Opposition from the East and from the North -- Egypt Will Fall Under the Power of the Antichrist But Edom and Moab Will Escape -- Antichrist Will Also Occupy Palestine -- Current Events Are Very Interesting in the Light of Bible Prophecy*

As a preface to this lesson I want to call your attention to the words of the Apostle Paul, where he said, "**But of the times and the season, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep, sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.**"

#### WE SHOULD BE THANKFUL

Certainly, my friends, these are days when we have blind leaders of the blind, and we know that both of them will fall into the ditch. We who are Christians, however, can be glad and thankful that we are not children of darkness but children of light. We should be thankful for the Word of GOD, which is the source of what light we have, concerning present and future

conditions that are to come upon the world. Regardless of what men think or say, we can be glad, that we have **"a more sure word of prophecy whereunto (we) do well (to) take heed as unto a light that shineth in a dark place."**

Many of the things mentioned in the Book of Daniel are already a matter of prophetic history. Other events, however, recorded in the Book are prophetic, and refer to the future.

### **SOME THINGS TO REMEMBER**

Our last lesson was based upon Daniel 11:21-45. In this passage we pointed out that verses 21-35 refer historically to Antiochus Epiphanes, who is sometimes called the Antichrist of the Old Testament. He is so called because of his extreme wickedness and his great hatred and terrible persecution of the Jews.

We also pointed out that, a great space of time is indicated between verses 35 and 36 of this important chapter. Verses 36 to 45 leap over, as it were, to the very end of the present dispensation, to the time of the coming tribulation, and give to us a detailed description of the person and works of the coming Antichrist.

After GOD had given to Daniel a vision of the march of Empire during the times of the Gentiles, and had made known to him the character of the Fourth Kingdom, or last world empire of the Gentile age, Daniel wanted to know more about this last world empire and the king who would be its ruler. In answer to Daniel's inquiry regarding these things, GOD sent His revealing angel, who made known to him those things which we are now studying in these last chapters of the Book.

### **HOW THE NATIONS WILL BE GROUPED IN THE END TIMES**

In our last message we pointed out that in the End-time of the present dispensation, the nations of the world will become divided into four different groups, representing the four points of the compass. These four different groups of nations, we discovered will be a Mediterranean group of nations headed up by the revived Roman Empire, (and the King of the North, representing a northern confederacy of nations, headed up no doubt by Russia.) And the King of the South headed up by Egypt or England representing countries which lie to the South of Palestine, and the Kings of the East, which will no doubt be a group of nations in the Orient, headed up under the leadership of Japan.

It is not difficult to see that these groups of nations as set forth in the Scriptures are rapidly being formed as definite zones of political and military and religious influence. In other words, the world stage is rapidly being set for the enactment of those final things with which the times of the Gentiles will come to a close.

### **A WILLFUL KING WILL ARISE**

Now, with these thoughts in mind, we are ready to take up the study of our lesson text, which will be found in Daniel 11:36-45. We read this passage in our last lesson, but we did not have

time to enlarge upon it except in a very general way. Therefore, we shall read a few verses at a time and discuss the material in this portion of the chapter as we go along.

In Daniel 11:36 it says, **"And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done."**

We have already pointed out that the one referred to here as the willful king is none other than the coming Antichrist, who, of course, will oppose the true CHRIST in every way possible.

### **WHY CHRIST CAME**

We know that CHRIST came, not to do His own will but to do His Father's will. This is confirmed in John 5:30 and 31 where He said, **"I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just, because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me. If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true."**

### **ANTICHRIST WILL EXALT HIMSELF**

The Antichrist, therefore, when he comes will be distinguished by the fact that instead of doing GOD's will, he shall do according to his own will, and shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every God and shall speak marvelous things against the GOD of gods.

This Antichrist will do this very thing, is confirmed in II Thessalonians 2:3 and 4 where it says, **"Let no many deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God."**

### **THE ANTICHRIST WILL PROSPER**

Another strange thing about the Antichrist is suggested in the 36th verse where it says, that he **"shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that is determined shall be done."**

Here we see that Antichrist when he comes will prosper under the permissive will of GOD until the indignation be accomplished. The indignation mentioned here no doubt refers to the coming time of tribulation, at which time GOD will manifest His indignation in righteous judgments upon both Jews and Gentiles, who have refused to hear and accept and obey the Gospel. Because of man's wicked unbelief and disobedience and rebellion against the Lord, He has determined to punish them with indignation.

### **THE ANTICHRIST WILL DEIFY HIMSELF**

In speaking of the Antichrist in verse 37 of our lesson text it says, **"Neither shall he regard**

**the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all."**

The language used here indicates that the coming Antichrist will be an apostate, from the true religion, which acknowledges GOD as the first great cause and as CREATOR and RULER of all things. He will deny that JESUS CHRIST is the Son of GOD, the Messiah of Israel, and the Saviour of the world; and he will not acknowledge the HOLY SPIRIT of GOD, who is now present in the world, to convict of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.

It says also that he shall not regard the desire of women, nor regard any god, for he shall magnify himself above all. The expression "**desire of women**" as it is used here, no doubt, refers to some of the heathen deities such as the queen of Heaven and Venus, and others which were worshipped, especially by the women. In other words, Antichrist will not regard the idols of the heathen nor will he regard any god. Instead, he will deify himself and demand that the people of the world worship him.

### **THE GOD OF FORCES**

In verses 38 and 39 of our lesson text it says, "**But in his estate shall he honour the God of forces: and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honour with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things. Thus shall he do in the most strong holds with a strange god, whom he shall acknowledge and increase with glory: and he shall cause them to rule over many, and shall divide the land for gain.**"

These words indicate that the coming Antichrist, although he will not worship the true GOD, will be nevertheless a religionist! In other words, he will set up a system or form of religion of the god of forces, and he will demand that they people worship this strange god.

### **AN INTERESTING COMMENT**

On this point the student's commentary on the Holy Scriptures says, "Antichrist will set up the god, of the forces of nature -- a strange god, that is, a god never before known. This suggests his discovery, and use, of some powerful secret of nature with which he will destroy his enemies and their fortresses; and all who will acknowledge this strange god, will he enrich and promote to high positions, and divide amongst them the land of Palestine."

### **THE WORLD IS BEING PREPARED**

Anyone who has any degree of discernment is able to see that the world is being prepared to worship just such a god as this. In these very days in which we live, the principle of force is being substituted for the use of reason. Traditional liberties which men have enjoyed for centuries are being taken away from them today by a small group of dictators, who have adopted the principle of force as a means of accomplishing their ends. Naturally these dictators are utterly godless, and their tendency is to deify themselves and to demand the homage of the people. Therefore, what present dictators are doing in a lesser degree, the coming Antichrist will do completely. He shall honour the GOD of forces and will demand that

all the people of the world do likewise or perish.

## **HE WILL DIVIDE THE LAND OF PALESTINE FOR GAIN**

As a reward for those who worship Him and his so-called god of forces, he will acknowledge and enrich with gold and silver. Furthermore it says, he shall cause them to rule over many and shall divide the land, the land of Palestine, for gain. We should never forget that GOD has given the land of Palestine to the Jewish people, according to the terms and conditions of the Abrahamic and Palestinian covenants. Therefore, it belongs to them and should never be bought and sold in the sense referred to here, or divided among any of them for gain. But that is exactly what the Antichrist will do. He knows how anxious the Jews are to return to their own land. Therefore, he will capitalize upon their desire to do this and will divide the land among them for gain. Thus, he himself will trespass upon the Holy land and he will encourage the Jewish people, to do the same in unbelief by selling the land to them for gain, which is already theirs by right of inheritance. Thus we see that the coming Antichrist will be closely related to the land of Palestine and to the Jewish people.

## **OPPOSITION FROM TWO QUARTERS**

In verse 40 of our lesson text it says, "**And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over.**"

We have already pointed out that the expression "**king of the south**" historically referred to the king of Egypt, and that prophetically, it refers, no doubt, to some king having political and military influence, in Egypt and countries to the south of Palestine. In this regard it is interesting to note that England rules in Egypt today, and that most of her possessions lie to the south of Palestine.

Whoever the king of the south may be, our lesson text plainly teaches that in the time of the end, the king of the south shall push at the willful king or Antichrist. This will no doubt be the first major threat to the dominion of the Antichrist as the head of the revived Roman Empire.

Then following the attack of the king of the south, we are told that the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind with chariots and horsemen and with many ships.

We have already mentioned that the king of the north will be the head of a great northern confederacy of nations, which will no doubt, according to Ezekiel the 38th chapter be headed by Russia.

As a result of this double threat to his dominion we are also told in the 40th verse that he, i.e., the Antichrist, shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over. In verse 41, it also says, "**He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon.**"

## **CURRENT EVENTS**

These words are very interesting in the light of current events. As we know the Roman Empire is rapidly being revived under the leadership of Mussolini. It is well known that he is determined to make the Mediterranean Sea once more a Roman lake. When Antichrist arises to power as head of the Revived Roman Empire (and mind you, we are not trying to say who the Antichrist will be) as a result of the double threat to his power he will conquer many countries and will enter even into the glorious land, which is Palestine. But we are told that Edom and Moab and the chief of the children of Ammon shall escape out of his hand.

## **WHY EDM AND MOAB WILL BE SPARED**

The reason GOD will not allow the Antichrist to take these small countries bordering on the land of Palestine is because he has reserved them as a place of refuge for the children of Israel when they shall be deceived by the Antichrist and will be driven into the wilderness, as stated in Ezekiel 20:35-38.

## **EGYPT WILL NOT ESCAPE**

Not only will the coming Antichrist take possession of the holy land and do away with the present British mandate over that country, but in verses 42 and 43 it says, "**He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries: and the land of Egypt shall not escape. But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt: and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps.**"

## **TIDINGS OUT OF THE EAST**

In verse 44 of our lesson text it says, "**But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many.**"

Indeed, my friends, the northern confederacy of nations which is now being formed in northern Europe and Asia will some day threaten the dominion of the willful King.

Considering the fact that Japan has already conquered Manchuria and has subjugated large portions of China and has captured Singapore, and is fighting her way into new territory, is evidence of the fact that an eastern coalition of nations is now in process of formation. We do not wonder, therefore, that when the millions of people in the East are brought together under an oriental leadership, that "tidings out of the east as well as out of the north will trouble the willful king or coming Antichrist, who at that time will be seeking for world dominion. The Antichrist will be angry at these threats to his dominion. The Antichrist will be angry at these threats to his dominion from the north, and the east and he will go forth with great fury to destroy and to utterly make away many.

These things show plainly the terrible extent to which the war now raging in Europe and Asia

may lead us. Certainly it seems as if the world stage is set for the enactment and speedy fulfillment of these things.

## **PALESTINE IN THE PROPHETIC PICTURE**

And the last verse of our lesson text says, "**And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.**"

## **IS THE RISE OF ANTICHRIST NEAR AT HAND?**

There is no doubt but what the Antichrist will take advantage of a world wide crisis to elevate himself into power, and to do the very things which are outlined in this wonderful prophetic chapter. In view of these things, therefore, all Christian people should gird up their loins and put on the whole armour of GOD, and be ready to meet their Lord, when He comes in the air to receive His saints unto Himself, as stated in First Thessalonians, the fourth chapter.

Present world conditions and these prophecies recorded in the word of GOD, should compel every Jew to an earnest study of GOD's word so that he may be prepared for the time of Jacob's trouble.

And it behooves the Gentiles to read the word of GOD and to know that GOD is about to execute the judgment written against them as recorded in the word of GOD.

~ end of chapter 20 ~

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