

# The Rise of Antichrist and Armageddon

by Denis Lyle

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*Denis Lyle's sermon explores the biblical prophecy of the Antichrist's rise and the events leading to Armageddon.*

**Scripture:** 2 Thessalonians 2:3

**Topics:** "End Times", "Antichrist"

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## Description

Denis Lyle preaches about the rise of the Antichrist and Armageddon as described in Daniel 11:36-45. The sermon delves into the characteristics and actions of the Antichrist, highlighting his power, pride, proclamation, perversion, and purpose. It emphasizes the prophetic nature of the passage, detailing the conflict that will arise with invasions from the South and North, the Antichrist's conquests, and the ultimate condemnation and defeat of the Antichrist by Jesus Christ at Armageddon.

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## Transcript

Daniel 11:36-45 THE RISE OF ANTICHRIST AND ARMAGEDDON The following letter to the editor appeared in TIME magazine concerning a certain diplomatic figure of a few years ago. "A man who does not make value judgements could be dangerous. A man who does not ask who is right may operate with a blank and pitiless conscience. If the same man happens to be amassing even greater power and popularity watch out world. A brilliant mind, a passionate ego and an imagination unfettered by any moral absolutes concoct the ultimate delusion, your saviour has come fall down and worship him". (April 22 1974) There seems to be little doubt that there is a growing interest in this evil world ruler, whom the Bible calls the antichrist. (1 Jn 2:18) The film or movie entitled "THE OMEN", presents an imaginary account of how Antichrist will be introduced into the world.

Times review of the movie stated, "the movie stretches a prophecy about the return of the prince of the darkness taken from Revelation to fit certain events of our time... the creation of Israel and the European Economic Community of all things, then argues persuasively that if Satan were to return in disguise he would logically want to be a member of a rich political family so that he could position himself for maximum mischief making." Now this film "THE OMEN", has been such a success at the box office that sequels have been planned with the leading character (Antichrist) pictured as a 12 year old, a young man, and a western leader who guides his people to Armageddon.

My, this is what the modern world is doing this ...! Its looking for a man, a kind of superman, who will be able to master much of the complexity of world religions, global politics and the universal market. Now the

Scriptures make it clear that such an ominous figure will appear on the world scene. Indeed his character, career, and fate are clearly described to Daniel by the angel. Now keep in mind that the prediction of the future in Daniel (Ch 11) is tied to the prophecy of the seventy weeks in Daniel (Ch 9) The first thirty five verses in (Ch 11) describes the fate of Israel in their first sixty nine weeks of her prophetic history and then (11:36-45) tell us of Israels sufferings under Antichrist in her seventieth week!

Think of this! One hundred and thirty five prophecies in the first thirty five verses of this chapter have been fulfilled with amazing accuracy, and there is every reason to believe that the remaining prophecies of this chapter will have the same precise literal fulfilment in the future. Now this chapter can be divided into two. In this chapter there is History (11:1-35) and here of course there is Prophecy (11:36-45) in other words in (11:1-35) we look backward to something which is now historic and then in (11:36-45) we look forward to something which is now prophetic.

Donald Campbell, professor of Bible exposition at Dallas Theological Seminary has said concerning these verses, "what is past is prologue". In other words, the climax of this chapter is now reached, and it is clearly seen that the suffering of the Jews under Antiochus Epiphanes (175... 164 BC) was a foreshadowing of their deeper afflictions under the sinister figure now described, the Antichrist. You see, between (11:35) and (11:36) we leap across centuries of persecutors to the final persecutor of Israel: the Antichrist.

He will preside over the final form of the Roman Empire during the final chapter of God's chastisement of Israel. And the Antichrist will be all the evil power of Ahasuerus, Alexander, Antiochus the Great, and Antiochus Epiphanes combined into one person. He will be a counterfeit Christ who will make a treaty with Israel.(9:27) But in the middle of the seven year Tribulation period he will break the treaty, desecrate the Temple, forbid the practice of Judaism, blaspheme God, and precipitate the holocaust of Armageddon, that will end with the return of Jesus Christ.

My, is this not what the latter part of (Dan Ch 11) is all about I've called it The Rise of Antichrist and Armageddon and I have divided out study into three! (1) THE COMING OF THE ANTICHRIST The sharp break in the flow of history that occurs at (11:36) is introduced in (11:35) "even to the time of the end". Up to this point (Ch 11) deals with what to us is past history. From (11:36) onwards reveals events that are yet future. Now some Bible commentators disagree with this. They believe verses (11:36-45) refer to Antiochus Epiphanes, not the Antichrist.

The reason They refuse to accept that the Bible predicts future events, so they are forced to explain those verses as past history. Now I believe that there are several reasons why a king yet future is spoken of in these closing verses of (Ch 11) There is: (a) THE ESCHATOLOGICAL TERM: " The time of the end". (11:35) Look at (11:40) Now this is a term that points forward to the last days of this present age. We have already seen that the scope of this prophecy was to include "the latter days", (10:14)And the prophecies of (Ch 11 & 12) define these " latter days", to be the history of Israel in the seventy weeks of her prophetic programme, with special emphasis on her sufferings under Antiochus Epiphanes, in the Inter-testamental period and under Antichrist in the Tribulation period.

So there is (a) (b) THE HISTORICAL RECORD: You see, we can substantiate the historical accuracy of the prophecy in (Ch 11) right up to (11:35) After that we have no historical data to explain (11:36-45) Also, there is no indication that the events recorded in those verses were fulfilled during the life of Antiochus Epiphanes. So we have (a) (b) (c) THE PROPHETICAL SCOPE: For the scope of this prophecy goes

beyond the Persian and Greek eras. In Daniel (10:14) the messenger angel tells Daniel, "I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days". (10:14) My, there is something else here that tells me that the king that is spoken of in these closing verses is yet future!

For consider: (d) THE FINAL JUDGEMENT: For (11:36) says that the king "shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished". Now when the term " indignation", is used in the Bible in a prophetic context, it is used almost synonymously with the Tribulation period... the final outpouring of Gods wrath in the last days. Look at (12:1) "And at that time... "What time The time when the Antichrist will be in full fling. At this time, of this persons rule, there will be the Great Tribulation.

My, is this not all future Surely Daniel is speaking here of a future king. There is something else that substantiates that! There is: (e) THE ACTUAL CONTEXT: All previous three prophecies in the book of Daniel speak of the Antichrist. (Ch 7: 8: 9) It makes sense that the final prophecy in Daniel would follow the same pattern. So it is our conviction that this king who is spoken of in (11:36-45) is the final world ruler. He is "the little horn", of (Ch 7) He is the "coming Prince", of (Ch 9) My, as far as the book of Daniel is concerned we are introduced in detail to one man the archenemy of Israel, and the persecutor of Gods people.

Daniel shows how the conflict of the ages will be brought to a close.. on the one hand in a blasphemous King who seeks to annihilate Israel, and on the other hand in the Son of Man who defends and supports Gods people. So there is the Coming of the Antichrist. He is yet to come, for (11:36-45) are prophecy. (1) (2) THE CHARACTER OF THE ANTICHRIST This person is identified by several descriptive titles in the Bible. He is called the "little horn", (7:8) "the king of fierce countenance", (8:23) "the prince that shall come", (9:26) "the man of sin... the son of perdition", a Hebraism meaning he is doomed to destruction (2 Thes 2:3) and he is called "a beast". (Rev 13:1) But look at his character as it is given to Daniel here by the angel!

The angel first of all talks about: (a) HIS POWER: Look at (11:36) The Antichrist will act in self will. He will make his decisions as an absolute sovereign and with self-centred motives. Because he will be empowered by Satan (Rev 13:4) he will give the world the baptism of hell. Because he will have demonic co-operation he will be able to establish world monarchy. My, he will have credibility because he will be able to do miraculous signs and wonders that deceive people. Under his rule the Western World will become the protector of Israel against those who desire to control it..

Russia, the East, the Arab nations, and a coalition of African nations. (9:27) During the Antichrist's reign there will be other rulers, but he will be supreme over all. Revelation (Ch 17) mentions ten other kings, who will be puppet kings under the Antichrist. He will be aided by a false prophet who will do his bidding, and his influence in the world will be so great that he will cause all mankind to bear his mark to function in society. (Rev 13:16-17) My, he will exercise tremendous power because he will be inspired and empowered by the devil himself.

This will be Satan's Superman. But notice not only (a) (b) HIS PRIDE: " And he shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every god... "(11:36) Now Antiochus Epiphanes was proud, but he never magnified himself above every god. He religiously worshipped the gods of the Greeks and tried to force the Jews to do the same. But the Antichrist will be atheistic... setting himself above every god. Do you recall what Paul says about this person in (2 Thes 2:4) My, there have many egoists in history, but the one who will sit in the Temple claiming to be God will be the greatest of all.

He will be the epitome of pride. The Antichrist will exalt himself above all that is worshipped... whether deities, shrines, images, or altars. He will initially tolerate religion, but at a given time he will destroy the false church... identified as the great harlot in (Rev Ch 17) He will let the Jewish people worship in their Temple until the middle of the Tribulation, but then he will desecrate it committing the "abomination of desolation", after the pattern of Antiochus Epiphanes, and slaughtering many Jewish people. (Zech 13:8) The Antichrist will exalt himself!

What a contrast he is to the authentic Christ, the Lord Jesus who "made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant". (Phil 2:7) Does it not beg the question, are you like the antichrist Or are you like the authentic Christ Are you willing to take the form of a servant and wash one anothers feet (Jn 13:14) My, how often we want to be like those two brethren who wanted to sit on the right and the left hand of the kingdom. (Matt 20:20) Not willing to take the low seat, not willing to stoop to obscure and unnoticed tasks.

Yet Christ humbled Himself... and God highly exalted Him. Do you realise that the way up is down The Lord Jesus said, "And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased, and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted". (Matt 23:12) My, are you beginning to see what Satans Superman will be like (a) (b) (c) HIS PROCLAMATION: " He shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods... "(11:36) Do you know how you can always identify the Antichrist By his mouth! He will be a blasphemer without equal.

This is amplified in the book of Revelation where it is said of the beast, " And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, and His tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven". (Rev 13:6) He will scream out unbelievable blasphemies against God... insults noone else could ever think of, or would dare say if they could. And God will allow him to prosper. God will give full rope during the tribulation. (11:36) But even during that period, the Lord will still be in control.

Even when Antichrist rules, God will still be in control and will permit this evil person to thrive for only a limited period of time. Seven years according to (9:27) Now maybe you're asking, "Well, why will God allow the Antichrist to reign" Because its part of the process that God is using to purify Israel. (11:35) You see, his blasphemy and oppression will finally lead the nation of Israel to recognise Jesus Christ as its Messiah and turn to Him. What a character he's going to be.

Can you see (a) (b) (c) Can you see: (d) HIS PERVERSION: Look at (11:37) My, the Antichrist will be perverted in at least 3 ways! 1. He will have no respect for TRADITION: " The God of his fathers,"... can be translated "the gods of his fathers..." He will break tradition. He will have no regard for history or any respect for the past. Its as if the world did not exist before he came on the scene. My, do you remember what Paul said about the last days "Men shall be... without natural affection...

"(2 Tim 3:3) Families will fall apart because people will no longer care about their family members. There will be no respect for parents, heritage, or family tradition. People normally respect the beliefs of their ancestors, Antichrist will not. 1. 2. He will have no respect for LOVE: " Nor the desire of women..."(11:36) This could mean one of at least 3 things. It could mean that: \* He won't care for the Messiah: "the desire of women", being interpreted as the hope of Jewish women to give birth to the Messiah.

It could mean that when Antichrist comes on the scene that he has absolutely no respect or regard for the Messiah... the one desired by Hebrew women. \* He will lack the gentleness and graciousness characteristic of women. \* He will be a homosexual because he will lack the normal capacity to love a woman. My, whatever view you take, one thing is certain the Antichrist will have no respect for love. But

look again: 1: 2: 3. He will have no respect for RELIGION: " Nor regard any god...

"(11:37) My, he will be completely irreligious! Now does our world not seem to be getting ready for this kind of leader Many today are not bothered by a man in leadership, who doesn't have normal family relationships, though fifty years ago no one would have considered him. Few now seem bothered if a man has a perverted sexual life... homosexuality is often presented merely as an alternative lifestyle. Belief in God is not thought to be important in our society. Do you see what is happening The stage is being set for this perverted person who is yet to come!

The angel finally tells Daniel about: (e) HIS PURPOSE: " But in his estate... "(11:38-39) What is the purpose of the Antichrist To gain military power! The Antichrist will worship "the god of fortresses", in place of having the normal human affections for family, women, and God. The Hebrew word translated "forces, or fortresses", is used six other times in Daniel. (11:111:7, 10, 19, 31, 39) In each instance it refers to a strong place or fort, and always deals with military power.

Daniel (Ch 7:23) says the final form of the Roman Empire under the Antichrist "shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down and break it in pieces". This man will have incredible military power at his disposal, indeed he will offer his precious metals to acquire a war machine, "a god whom his fathers knew not". (11:38) And with this war machine he will conduct military campaigns against the most strongly defended nations! Now lets pause for a moment and reflect on this King who is yet to come.

Look at his POWER: "and the kings shall do according to his will... "(11:36) then listen to the words of the Saviour in Gethsemane, " nevertheless not as I will but as Thou wilt". (Matt 26:39) Look at his PRIDE: "he shall exalt himself... "(11:36) then look at the Lord Jesus as He rises from supper, takes a towel and washes the disciples feet. (Jn 13:5) Look at his Proclamation: " and shall speak marvellous things... "(11:36) and then listen to Christ's enemies, "Never man spake like this man". (Jn 7:46) Look at his PERVERSION: (11:37) and then watch my Saviour as He went down to Nazareth and was subject unto them. (Lk 2:51) Look at the Antichrists PURPOSE: as he acquires and utilises military might, then hear the Saviour say, "My kingdom is not of this world, if my kingdom were of this world then would my servants fight". (Jn 18:36) My, what a refreshing contrast is the authentic Christ from the Antichrist, and its our wonderful Saviour that we are to be like!

So here is the heavenly messenger talking to Daniel, about the (1) (2) and then about: (3) THE CONFLICT OF THE ANTICHRIST Now keep in mind the background. According to (Ch 7) the Antichrist is the head of the revived Roman Empire. According to (Ch 9) he makes a covenant with Israel at the beginning of the Tribulation. He guarantee's Israels security. He will also allow Israel certain freedoms while he honours his treaty of protection with them. But that will change! For look at (11:40) and notice: (a) THE CHALLENGE TO HIM: 1.

There will be an Invasion from the SOUTH: (11:40) A revolution against the Antichrist will erupt. Holding a global empire together is an impossible task and even hell won't be able to do it. The empire the Antichrist obtained peacefully by solving some problems in the Middle East will begin to fall apart. "The king of the South", possibly Egypt and her allies will bring an army out of Africa in an attempt to control the strategic Middle East. 1. 2. There will be an Invasion from the NORTH: Look at (11:40) You see, the Antichrist will be in control of the Middle East, so these two attacks will be against him.

"The king of the North", possibly Syria, Russia and their allies will challenge the protective treaty made by the Antichrist and there will be an invasion of the land of Israel "with chariots and with horsemen, and with

many ships". (11:40) Sometimes the question is asked, "will the invading armies actually use horses in a day of jet aircraft and nuclear power" Perhaps the weapons used here are to be understood in terms of their modern counterparts. But can you see what is happening There will be an invasion from the South, there will be an invasion from the North, but the Antichrist will be victorious for notice: (b) THE CONQUESTS OF HIM: Responding to Israels cry for assistance Antichrist and his forces will invade from the west, and will be victorious over the king of the North and the king of the South.

He will then enter into "the glorious land", and after entering Israel his forces will devastate the Southern territory (11:42) But (11:41) indicates that Edom: Moab: and Ammon (present day Jordan) will escape his terror. Is this because he will be so busy to the south west with the African army Or is this because the south east is of minimal strategic value being mostly desert Whatever Antichrist will quickly pursue the defeated Egyptian army to their land and he will plunder the great treasures of that country.

Libya and Ethiopia will also then be attacked and defeated. By destroying the king of the North and the king of the South, the Antichrist will become the Master of the World. Its at this time that he will truly begin to sense his power. He will destroy the false church and begin to persecute Israel. He will call for the whole world to worship him and abolish all other religions. He will set himself up as God tolerating no other authority and ruling in absolute supremacy. However, he will face renewed conflict.

Reports will reach Antichrist that the king of the North has regrouped for another attack, and that massive armies from the east are marching toward Israel. (Rev 9:13 16:12) My, can you imagine the consternation of the Antichrist and the West when Japanese technology is married to Chinese manpower and mobilised against the west The stage will now be set for the battle of Armageddon John says in the book of Revelation "And He (God) gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon". (Rev 16:16) No doubt the nations of this world will be drawn there for various reasons... to stamp out by united nation the last living Jew on earth, and the last known believer in God, to decide once for all who will control the world.

My, can you see it East against west, west against east, all against God. This eastern army will move toward Israel desiring to gain control over the Middle East and throw off the rule of the Antichrist, but the Antichrist again will be victorious. "And he will go forth with great wrath to destroy and annihilate many." (NASB) My, thats not surprising because he will have Satan on his side helping him. In (11:45) we see: (c) THE CAPITAL FOR HIM: " And he shall plant... mountain". (11:45) Mount Zion lies between the Mediterranean and Dead Seas.

In the Temple of Jerusalem the Antichrist will set up his base of operations and declare himself God. Israel will lie devastated as result of war and persecution. (Zech 13:8) But for the Antichrist, his time has run out, for the Divine clock has been ticking away and now for him there comes the final hour when he shall receive: (d) THE CONDEMNATION DUE HIM: " Yet he shall come to his end and none shall help him." (11:45) Just when he seems invincible, just when he thinks he has won the battle of Armageddon, the Lord Jesus will come, backed by the armies, accompanied by His blood bought bride.

Invincible, omnipotent, sweeping all before Him Christ will descend. The sword will flash forth and the battle of Armageddon will be over in a moment. And as the Saviour descends to Israels rescue they will "look upon Him whom they have pierced". (Zech 12:10) and they will be redeemed. (Rev 19:11 2 Thes 2:8) "And the beast was taken (the Antichrist) and with him the false prophet. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone". (Rev 19:20) My, can I say in closing.

We do not look for Antichrist we're looking for Jesus Christ! He is coming to take believers to Himself before these dark prophecies unfold on planet earth. Are you looking for Him this... Are you looking for "that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13) H. Bonar whose hymns we often sing lived in the light of the Lords Coming. As he drew his curtains at night before he retired he would look out into the starry sky and he would say, "Perhaps tonight Lord, perhaps tonight." Then as he woke in the morning he drew back the curtains and he would exclaim, "Perhaps today, Lord perhaps today". Are you also living in the light of His return?

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