

Suffering... No one likes suffering...but isn't it amazing how God uses it to grow us! God has always used suffering to grow His people. And He knows all about it. After all, He watched His Son suffer beyond human comprehension on a cross so that we might have eternal life. The Apostle Peter writes:

1 Peter 5:10

¹⁰ And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you.

Yes, God helps us in our suffering. James, the half-brother of Jesus said these words:

James 1:2-4

² Count it all joy, my brothers,^[b] when you meet trials of various kinds, ³ for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. ⁴ And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

Church family, suffering is a tool used by God for purging, for purification, for the perfecting of our faith. Yes, God knows all about suffering and He's not afraid to allow it or use it for His people. This was true for the nation of Israel and for the people of Daniel's day. The prophet Daniel was himself suffering. He was suffering as we watched his people refuse to go back home to Israel to rebuild, and those who did...got intimidated and stopped working. Daniel was grieved...suffering in his soul for his people...praying for God's mercy on them and praying to understand the visions he had been given.

And finally, an angel shows up...Gabriel...after fighting with a demon for three weeks...finally with the help of Michael, the archangel, Gabriel was able to get through to Daniel to give him the understanding and meaning of what he had been seeing...events that would lead all the way to the end of time. Kings...empires...rivalries...death, destruction, pain...and the people of God were not immune from this pain and suffering...much of it brought upon themselves by their own disobedience...and that suffering was described where we left off last week in chapter 11, verse 35. Today, part 2, “The Rise of Rebellion: The Antichrist.” Look at verse 35 with me.

Daniel 11:35

³⁵ and some of the wise shall stumble, so that they may be refined, purified, and made white, until the time of the end, for it still awaits the appointed time.

The “wise who stumbled” are the people of God and we, too, can get caught up in suffering for the decisions nations and leaders of nations make. Keep in mind, this revelation to Daniel is focused on the nation of Israel... Israel. Amazing... world events still revolve around the nation of Israel and Church, they always will. You will remember, back in Daniel chp 2, the dream of Nebuchadnezzar...



and the statue...depicting the flow of the Gentile nations that would ultimately lead up to the final kingdom...the kingdom of the Rock, Jesus Christ, the one who would come and destroy all other kingdoms, as He sets up His reign as King of Kings and Lord of Lords! But until then...there will be Gentile nations who will oppress and cause the nation of Israel to suffer, (just as we continue to see today). We saw last week these nations and their leaders. Gabriel revealed to Daniel what we've called the five "A" kings of Daniel 11. See them again...

The Five "A" Kings of Daniel 11

1. Ahasuerus (Xerxes)
 2. Alexander
 3. Antiochus III (the Great of Syria)
 4. Antiochus Epiphanes
 5. Antichrist
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Today, we come to #5, the Antichrist, as we pick up in verse 36.

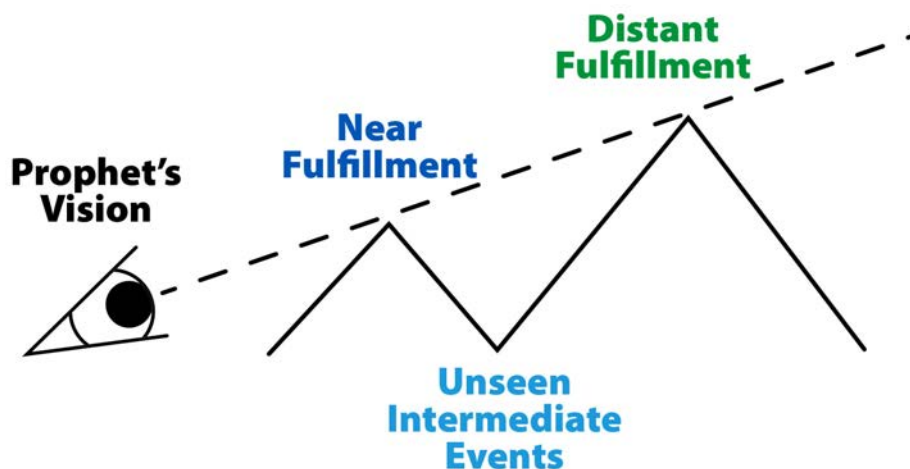
Daniel 11:36

³⁶ "And the king shall do as he wills. He shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak astonishing things against the God of gods. He shall prosper till the indignation is accomplished; for what is decreed shall be done."

Now, there's a lot to unpack in this verse and I always tell you where there are debates or differing opinions on certain verses...and it's here, at this transition point from verse 35 to verse 36 that we have another one of those debates. I think I can sum-up best by sharing what the editors of the ESV Study Bible have to say:

"Toward the conclusion of the prophecy, the vision seems to shift focus and address a situation that transcends the persecution under Antiochus IV [Epiphanes], and thus the remainder of the chapter is often taught to deal with the 'Antichrist.' Though Antiochus was powerful, he was able to do as he wills only up to a point, since the power of the Romans was far greater than his." ESV Study Bible Editors/Contributors

I believe that's a good summation and once again I was reminded of this. Remember this chart...

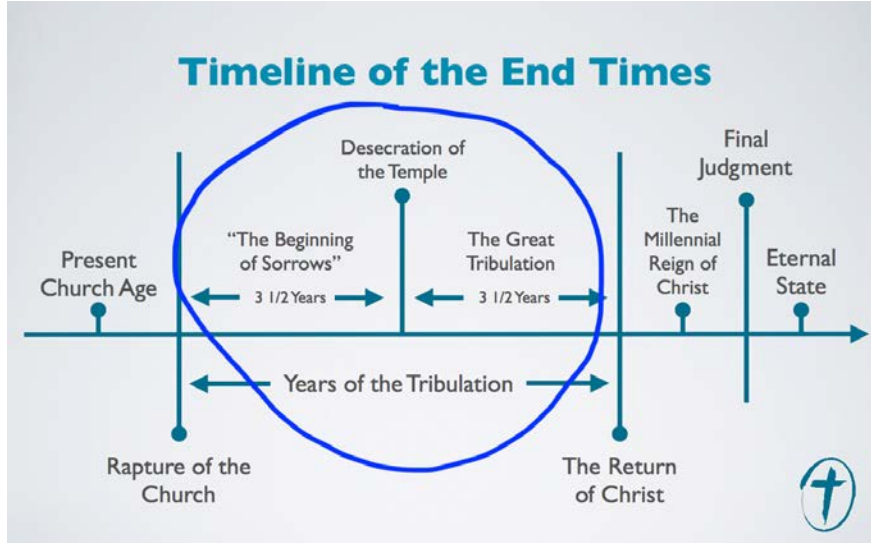


The prophet would be given a prophecy/vision from God and they couldn't necessarily see all that prophecy entailed. There could be a near fulfillment, like Antiochus Epiphanes and then a distant fulfillment, like the Antichrist...and Unseen Intermediate Events, (like our church age). So, I believe as we approach verse 36, we're actually leaping across centuries of time to: "the time of the end," as verse 35 says. And therefore, in my mind, verse 36 is about the next king...one yet to come...the counterfeit Christ, the Antichrist. Look at verse 36 again:

Daniel 11:36

³⁶ “And the king shall do as he wills. He shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak astonishing things against the God of gods. He shall prosper till the indignation is accomplished; for what is decreed shall be done.”

Now, scholars tell us that last sentence: “He shall prosper till the indignation is accomplished...” means the final outpouring of God's wrath, which we know as the “last days.” In fact, the Hebrew term “indignation” is synonymous with the term “tribulation.” And that’s when the Antichrist comes on the scene...during what is often called (in eschatological terms), the Tribulation Period. Again, I’ll show you this chart. Notice the blue circle.

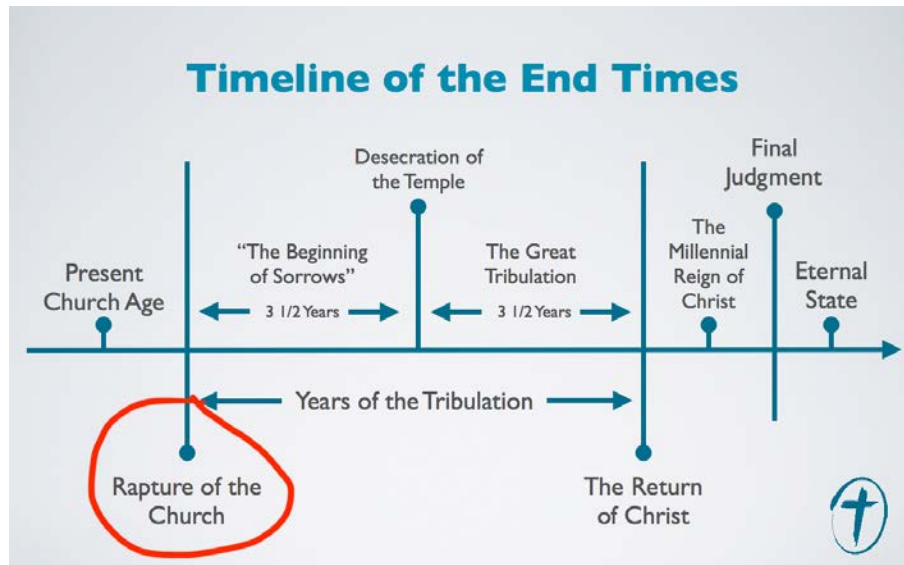


You see, it’s during the 7 years of Tribulation, which is Daniel’s 70th week, that the Antichrist will show up on the world scene, as the “little horn” that suddenly pops up, (seemingly out of nowhere), to power. Something else that I want to quickly point out is where we’ll be next week, but I want you to see it now as another indication, (in my mind), that we’re speaking of the End Times and NOT during the time of Antiochus Epiphanes. Look at the first part of vs .1 of ch. 12:

Daniel 12:1a

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.”

This “time of trouble” is described by scholars as “The Time of Jacob’s Trouble,” (again I believe that’s Daniel’s 70th week that we’ve previously studied). “Jacob’s Trouble,” or the Tribulation Period is another “season of purging and refining and suffering” for the nation of Israel. And Church, I’m convinced we, the church, have been raptured off the earth before this season of time and God’s focus will once again be on Israel. See the chart...see the red circle.



I believe the Rapture, the snatching off the earth of the Church, will happen before the Tribulation Period. And this is why I believe when we come to chapter 11, verse 36...we are sweeping across thousands of years of history to the final world ruler: the Antichrist.

Now, we first talked about the Antichrist when we talked about the "little horn" of that terrible fourth beast that Daniel saw in his vision of chapter 7...and what we're seeing here in chapter 11 mimics those descriptions of the Antichrist. Here's a summary of what we've seen about the Antichrist:

- **He's going to do as he wills**
- **Exalt himself above every god**
- **Speak against the God of gods**
- **He's going to prosper until he's destroyed**

Now remember, the Antichrist shows up initially as a man of peace. He's going to sign a peace treaty with Israel and he will bring order to the world as he becomes the protector of Israel and settles everyone down after a massive "global disappearance" that's caused tremendous panic and disruption. But 3 ½ years into the Tribulation period...he's going to turn on Israel and the world.

Daniel 11:37

37 He shall pay no attention to the gods of his fathers, or to the one beloved by women. He shall not pay attention to any other god, for he shall magnify himself above all.

Did you catch the part about "paying no attention to the one beloved by women?" Some say perhaps the Antichrist is a homosexual. That wouldn't surprise me. Remember, this man will be controlled by Satan and Satan has been trying to pervert the natural order of male and female love from the beginning. He is the author of confusion when it comes to sexuality. He uses the LGBTQAI+ agenda as his way of seeking sympathizers to his cause. That cause? CONFUSION...pain...turmoil and heartache. Today, so many people seek to find their identity in their sexuality...and yet, in heaven we're not going to be sexual creatures at all. Sexual intimacy and procreation are for this earth and this time...not for eternity. No...we're made in the image of God...we're spirit-beings...not sexual beings. Remember that. No, I'm not willing to hang my hat on the fact that the Antichrist will be a homosexual...but, it's certainly possible.

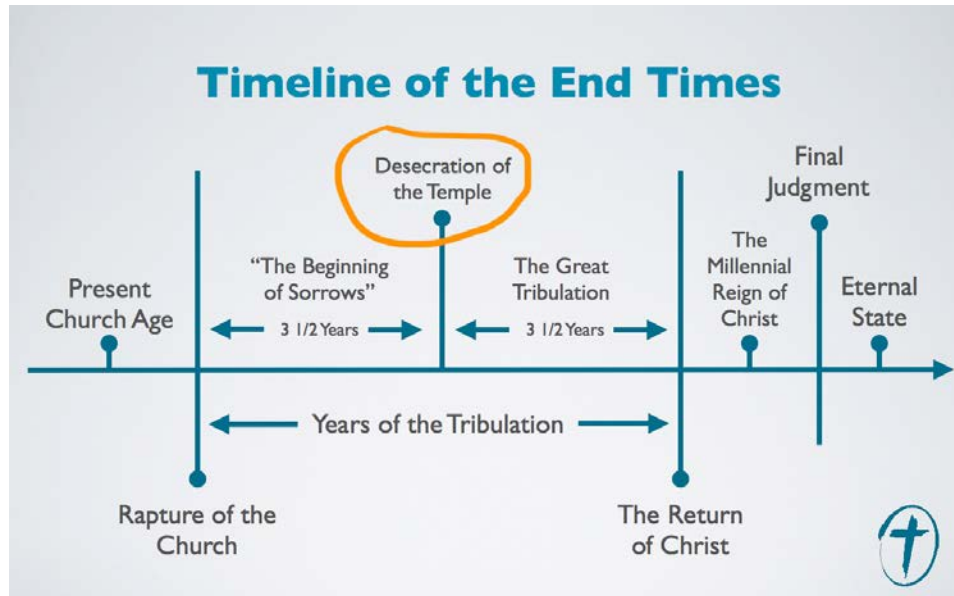
We also read: "He pays no attention to the god of his fathers..." In essence, this may indicate that he is an atheist...he pays no attention to any gods...which again, makes total sense...since he'll be controlled by Satan... Satan can only worship himself and ultimately Satan will take great satisfaction in receiving worship when the Antichrist desecrates the Temple, (the rebuilt Temple in

Jerusalem...which will be overseen by the Antichrist...in his peacemaking vain), but 3 ½ years into the Tribulation period, the Antichrist will set up an image of himself and magnify himself above all others, demanding worship. That's...

2 Thessalonians 2:3-4

³ Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness^[a] is revealed, the son of destruction,^[a] ⁴ who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God.

See the orange circle in our chart...



3 ½ years into the Tribulation, the Antichrist will break his covenant with Israel and go into the Temple and desecrate it, by setting up an image of himself and say, "Worship me and me alone!" And let me show you what he will worship...where he places his trust...

Daniel 11:38-39

³⁸ He shall honor the god of fortresses instead of these. A god whom his fathers did not know he shall honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and costly gifts. ³⁹ He shall deal with the strongest fortresses with the help of a foreign god. Those who acknowledge him he shall load with honor. He shall make them rulers over many and shall divide the land for a price.^[a]

What are the "gods of fortresses." What is that? Well, what are fortresses? They're used for military purposes and that's why most scholars believe it's military power and he'll spend big-time on it! In essence, military power will be a "god" to him, (that reminds me of most of the demented men of history...like Hitler, Stalin, Osama Bin Ladin and Saddam Hussein), they worship military power. And did you catch in verse 39 what the Antichrist will do for those who support his endeavors? He'll lavish upon them great honor, prestige and power. These people will literally help him run the world.

At this point, the question comes to mind: How do millions of people believe in this guy so quickly? How do they become dupped so easily? You could ask it this way: How do tyrants become powerful? How did Hitler rise to power...Stalin, Lenin, Pol Pot, Mussolini, Bin Laden, Saddam Hussein? How will the Antichrist take control and rise to power?

Listen carefully...whether it's tyrants from the past or the future tyrant, the Antichrist...their power is given to them. They believe things that sound true...but are actually lies. And even after their shown to be lies, they won't believe it. They're blind. Reminds me of Satan's work in the Garden of Eden with Adam and Eve. He got them to question God. "Did God say?" he asked. He created doubt and

fear. Tyrants take over because the people they govern ultimately give them the power...the people place the leader in their position of power WILLINGLY. You say, "How? Why?" One word: **Fear**...fear of loss... Fear of financial loss, fear of loss of health, or loss of life... FEAR because there's an emergency. The people look around and see chaos or turmoil and they look for someone to save them! "Save us!" they cry out. I know it sounds odd...but most people prefer a "Nanny State." Someone to take care of them.

I believe the Antichrist is going to rise to power on the heels of the Rapture... Millions and millions of people disappearing...creating chaos and tumult in the financial markets...panic and disruptions in all walks of life. People are going to be scared out of their minds...and this little horn...will rise to power with his charisma and supreme intellect and amazing business and military acumen...he'll calm everyone down and show the world that he has the ability to bring peace by making that peace treaty with Israel and bringing peace to the middle east. Everyone will look at that one act and say, "Yep, he's the man we need to listen to."

You say, "What's your point?" My point is, he will rise to power on the heels of an emergency...a global emergency. And we've seen one of those. Covid. Four years ago. And we all watched a global emergency unfold. A legitimate emergency. Something that we'd never seen before. So, we listened to our leaders. They gathered on TV every day...they were the experts and we did what we were told. So, we shut everything down...remember "15 days to slow the spread?" Problem is: it went way beyond that, didn't it?

Over time, the powers that be began to arbitrarily determine what businesses or groups were ESSENTIAL. We needed groceries...so the truckers were essential...we needed healthcare, so our wonderful doctors and nurses were essential, along with our brave police officers and firefighters, and emergency workers. But we KEPT CLOSED the churches and schools. What a devastating effect that had on our culture. But the bars were deemed essential and strip clubs and marijuana dispensaries...but not the churches and not the schools.

And then we had a vaccine. Now what I'm getting ready to say doesn't come from an Anti-VAX standpoint. I'm talking about an emergency and what we were told by our leaders and how what we were told...we can look back on now...four years later and see a lot of lies. Because we all know now that it really wasn't a vaccine...because vaccines stop "static/defined" diseases like polio, measles and chicken pox...no...if we're honest...the "SHOT" wasn't a vaccine...but was labeled as such and we were told if you get the vaccine...you will not get Covid or be able to spread Covid...and if you care about your neighbor or your grandma, you'll get the shot. And for those who didn't...well, many lost their jobs, got kicked out of college, and oh...what about those wonderful doctors and nurses...they went from heroes to zeroes if they didn't get the shot. They were vilified.

After that, we were told by the politicians and the CDC and Dr. Fauci and the mainstream media that Covid was being spread by the unvaccinated. And people turned on each other. Families turned on each other and fear reigned! People didn't celebrate Thanksgiving or Christmas in 2020 together, and sadly, tragically, loved ones died ALONE in rest homes and hospital rooms.

Now again, please hear me...it doesn't matter to me whether you got the shot or not...that's not my point...my point is what we were told and how people take advantage of emergencies and strip people of their freedoms and take power. During Covid, we all made the best decisions that we could, during unprecedented times and we did so with the best information we had and believing and trusting our leaders...but, we learned something...that's my point. We learned that people in power can use that power to manipulate...using the emergency to bring fear...so as to dominate.

And bad people, will be bad people and they'll try it again if they can. And if you say anything against them, you will be de-platformed, labeled a conspiracy theorist, spreader of misinformation. Listen carefully, the liberal elites are always looking for another emergency!

Church what I've described is how tyrants gain power. They do so because the populace is willing to give up their freedoms in exchange for security...security in regards to money and security in regards to health. You see, Hitler convinced the Germans that the Jews carried diseases and infections and were lower species of humans who needed to be rounded up and expunged from their society, and eventually, almost everyone in Germany agreed. Even the Lutheran Church.

You see, Tranny takes hold in a society and culture slowly but surely. It's a slow fade. And most often it begins with the kids. What? Church, you do understand, our kids across America are being groomed for tyranny...fascism/Socialism. Look at our college campuses and all of these Palestinian protests. Grade school children are being told to value one another by their skin color and to feel bad if they don't have a certain skin color. They're being groomed and fed lies about sexuality...being told it's fluid, not binary... They're being told in the schools in California as young as 8 and 9 years old, "We'll help you get the drugs you need...(puberty blockers) to change your sexual identity, even without your parent's knowledge. We'll help you." It's so insidious!

Oh, these liberal elites scream for social justice, all the while vilifying Christians who say life begins at conception, marriage, according to Scripture, is to be between one man and one woman for life and it is God who made boys and girls...male and female and it's not wrong for us to want men to be kept out of our girl's locker rooms, so they won't take over their sports. But be careful if you say this too loudly, maybe one day, they'll want to round us up and haul us off.

Tyrants manipulate with "group think." The Ruling Class Elites of our day control all of the institutions of our day. They want this country to be godless and devoid of anything Christian...they want open borders to allow thousands upon thousands of people in this country that already so burden our social programs that we have tent cities in every major city in America. We're seeing a Nanny State being created before our eyes... and that's how tyrants take over.

Church, there are people in power today who want to rule us from the womb to the tomb...and they'd prefer it if we never made it out of the womb. Don't be deceived by their DEI propaganda: "My body, my choice," CRT, LGBTQ, the alphabet soup of lies that goes against God's divine design. Don't fall for it. Paul warned Timothy:

1 Timothy 4:1

¹ Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons.

The apostle John warned as well:

1 John 2:18

¹⁸ Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come. Therefore we know that it is the last hour.

Beware. Beware. We need to pray church...our country needs prayer! I invite you to the National Day of Prayer Service this Thursday at the Cross at the FaithFest properties at 12-noon. It will be a 30-minute service and I'll be praying along with others! Come join us! Well, eventually people on the earth are going to get fed up with the tyrant...Antichrist. He's going to face some battles. Verse 40.

Daniel 11:40

⁴⁰ “At the time of the end, the king of the south shall attack^[a] him, but the king of the north shall rush upon him like a whirlwind, with chariots and horsemen, and with many ships. And he shall come into countries and shall overflow and pass through.

Up until now...all the world powers had coalesced under the Antichrist, but that will change after he sets up the image of himself in the Temple and call for everyone to worship him and to take his “mark” in order to buy, sell or trade. An army from the south and one from the north said: “Enough,” and they march against him. Now remember, they’re coming at the Antichrist as he has set up shop in Jerusalem.

Now church, it struck me and it’s interesting...holding a massive global empire together is not even possible for Hell itself. Even hell won’t cooperate with itself, and the Antichrist’s hellish systems begin to fall apart. There’s an insurrection. And it appears this “king of the south” is some sort of confederation of African nations, possibly led by Egypt.

But that’s not all...another king... a “king of the north” is coming too. And many believe this could be a description of what the prophet Ezekiel describes in Ezekiel 38-39 as the invasion from Russia with their ally, Persia, which we know as modern-day Iran... This prophecy of Ezekiel is known as the prophecy of “Gog and Magog.” I’m not willing to be too specific at this point. But the point is...the Antichrist is going to have trouble coming against him from the north and the south. Verse 41.

Daniel 11:41

⁴¹ He shall come into the glorious land. And tens of thousands shall fall, but these shall be delivered out of his hand: Edom and Moab and the main part of the Ammonites.

The “glorious land” is the land of Israel, but the Antichrist...as strong as he is...will not be able to overthrow the Arab peoples represented by Edom and Moab, (who are the descendants of Ishmael), but he will finally crush Egypt and he’ll convince Egypt’s neighbors...the Libyans and Cushites (that’s Ethiopia) to follow him. Verses 42-43.

Daniel 11:42-43

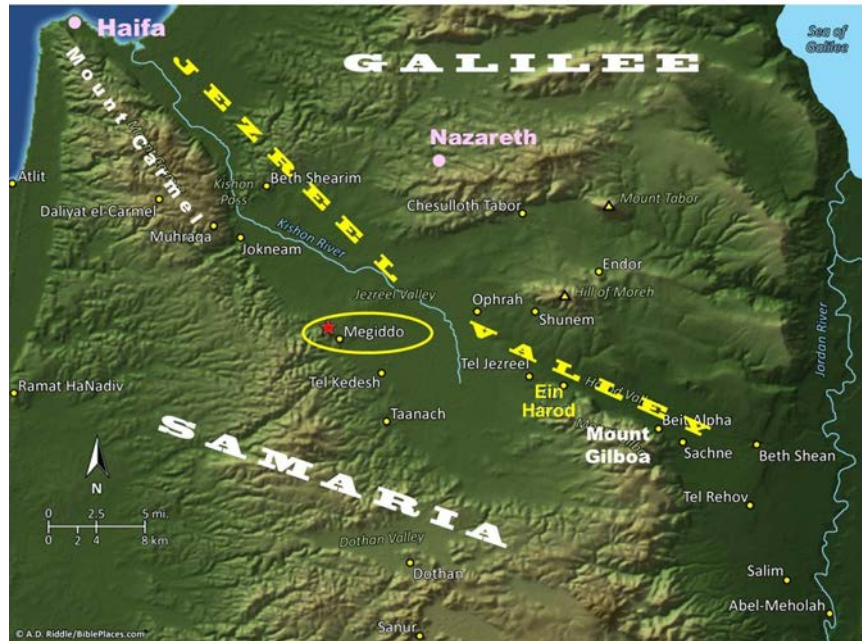
⁴² He shall stretch out his hand against the countries, and the land of Egypt shall not escape. ⁴³ He shall become ruler of the treasures of gold and of silver, and all the precious things of Egypt, and the Libyans and the Cushites shall follow in his train.

At this point, the Antichrist is in control of the majority of the wealth of the world. But more trouble is coming. There are those who will rise in rebellion against the Antichrist...this time from the East and North.

Daniel 11:44

⁴⁴ But news from the east and the north shall alarm him, and he shall go out with great fury to destroy and devote many to destruction.

This news that the Antichrist hears...this army from the north, which again...is likely a confederation of Russia and Iran and another army coming from the East...which I’m convinced is China...because Revelation 16, tells us there will be an army from the East that will march to Israel on the dried-up riverbed of the Euphrates River, and many scholars believe that is the army described in Revelation 9:16...an army of 200 million soldiers. And they’ll make their way to a place called Megiddo, also known as the Jezreel Valley. See the map



it's between Galilee and Samaria and it's huge. 20 miles wide and 40 miles long and it's where the battle of Armageddon will be waged.

Here's some pictures I took in 2007. Here's the first picture:



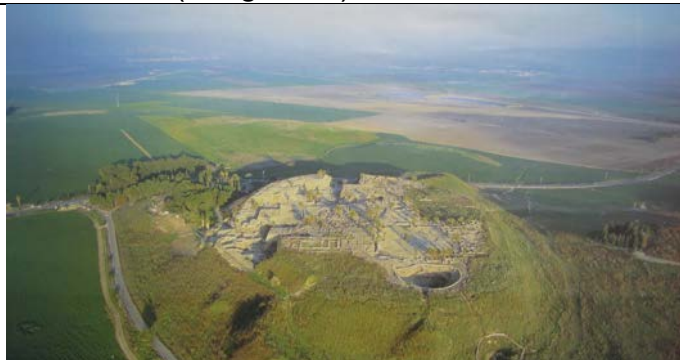
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and then a little more to the rt:



Here's an aerial view with Mt Carmel (foreground)...



Church, this is where it all ends... Those nations will come against the Antichrist, but in the end, it's not the Antichrist they'll be fighting...they'll see Jesus coming back in the eastern sky and He'll take them all out...the Antichrist and all of these pagan armies.



But before that happens...the Antichrist will believe that he can't be defeated...

Daniel 11:45

45 And he shall pitch his palatial tents between the sea and the glorious holy mountain. Yet he shall come to his end, with none to help him.

That sea is the Mediterranean Sea and Jerusalem is the glorious mountain. The Antichrist will believe he's unstoppable, but he'll be destroyed. **What a chapter...chapter 11 of Daniel...** A sweeping of history from the time of Daniel to the End of Time as we know it...the purging and the suffering will be complete.

Do you believe all of this? You say, "I appreciate what you're saying...but I just don't know that I can believe this." Well, I guess you're like the man Bible Scholar Dr. E. Schuyler English told about years ago, who lived in the 1940's on Long Island, NY, (true story), and he bought an expensive barometer. When he got it, he unpacked it and saw the needle was stuck pointing to the section that said: HURRICANE. Puzzled...he shook and shook it and finally decided it was broken. He took it back to the store in New York where he had purchased it, along with a scathing letter of protest for selling defective barometers. The next morning, he was awakened by ferocious winds and torrential rains. Guess what...a hurricane! The barometer was right.

Now listen and we're done...this barometer's needle (the Bible) is right! A hurricane is coming!

Yes, people throughout time have cried out: SAVE US!! SAVE US!! SAVE US!! The government won't do it...because they can't...the politicians won't do it, because they can't...but they'll say they can...and sadly, many of them want to take the place of God. No! Only Jesus can save you, because He paid your sin debt and rose from the dead to prove He is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords! A hurricane is coming...the barometer is warning you! Get ready! Trust Jesus and be saved today!
