

**CULTURE SHOCK**  
**The End and the Beginning**  
**Daniel 11 and 12**

Today is our 11<sup>th</sup> and final week in the book of Daniel. We could have spent much longer in this amazing book. I hope that many of you will return to it again and again to mine its depths. I urge you to do so, because the Word of God is never depleted by our study; our studies only reveal its ever-greater reach. Today, I want us to look at the final two chapters of Daniel. Admittedly, this will be much more than we could ever truly unpack in detail in one message. **Therefore, I want to focus on what I believe is the primary PURPOSE and the primary THEME of all prophecy.**

In order to prepare you for that purpose and theme, I want to give you some key insights about the first half of Daniel chapter 11. This is a chapter that describes in minute detail kings, events, and key battles that would not become reality until centuries later, and that seem relatively unimportant from a worldwide perspective. **These prophecies are only important in light of how they affected the nation of Israel in the time between Daniel's day and the coming of the Messiah. That was, in fact, the point. Remember, the nation of Israel is a crucial key to our ability to understand prophecy, and the first verses of chapter 11 keep God's people front and center in the unfolding facts of history.** When you lay the words of **Daniel 11:1-35** alongside the history books that record the prominent kings and key battles of later Persian and Greek empires (as they relate to the nation of Israel), you will be stunned at the accuracy of the prophet. Bible scholar **John Walvoord** said this about **Daniel 11:1-35** in his book: **Daniel - The Key to Prophetic Revelation:** "The amazingly detailed prophecies of the first 35 verses of this chapter contain approximately 135 prophetic statements that are now ALL FULFILLED! These verses constitute an impressive introduction to the events that are yet future, beginning in verse 36."

Think of it! **In just 35 verses, Daniel made about 135 specific prophecies that have ALL been VERIFIED by the historical record since his time, concluding with a detailed description of some of the actions of Antiochus Epiphines, the forerunner of the Anti-Christ.** That is truly amazing! **Knowing this also forces us to seriously examine the prophecies of Daniel that are YET to be fulfilled, and which still prominently feature God's plans for the NOW REBORN nation of Israel.** God is still using Daniel to shake earth and heaven. If you would like to study the book of Daniel on your own to better understand its historical accuracy, then I would recommend the book I just mentioned by John F. Walvoord. I would also recommend the great two-volume commentary set on the bible entitled **The Bible Knowledge Commentary, by John Walvoord and Roy Zuck.** This set will actually serve you well in your study of the ENTIRE Bible!

**All of the verses from Daniel 11:1-35 have been fulfilled, and I have briefly explained some of those fulfillments in an expanded manuscript of this message that is**

available on our website and our app for those who want to study it on their own. I urge you to check it out!

**[Expanded addition to manuscript begins here.** For even more detailed information, go to the sources mentioned above!]

In short, the first 35 verses of Daniel 11 relate the rise of four prominent Persian kings after the time of Darius the Mede, and then the rise of various other Greek rulers after the time of Alexander the Great. **Daniel 11:2-4 NLT**

2 "Now then, I will reveal the truth to you. Three more Persian kings will reign, to be succeeded by a fourth, far richer than the others. He will use his wealth to stir up everyone to fight against the kingdom of Greece. 3 "Then a mighty king will rise to power who will rule with great authority and accomplish everything he sets out to do. 4 But at the height of his power, his kingdom will be broken apart and divided into four parts. It will not be ruled by the king's descendants, nor will the kingdom hold the authority it once had. For his empire will be uprooted and given to others.

These Persian kings are **Cambyzes** (529-522 B.C.), **Pseudo-Smerdis** (522-521 B.C.), **Darius I Hystaspes** (521-486 B.C.), and **Xerxes I** (486-465 B.C.). **Xerxes** is the one called **Ahasuerus** in the **book of Esther**. He was the final king that was richer than all of the others and that rose up to fight against Greece. His attempt to broaden his kingdom over Greek lands created a great hatred within the Greek Kingdom for the Persians. This motivated Alexander the Great to come against the Persians and conquer them early in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century. After Alexander the Great died, his kingdom was divided into four regions that were ruled by four dynasties that were not from Alexander's progeny. **Daniel 11:5-20** details the rise of kings who ruled the South (Ptolemies in Egypt) and the North (Seleucids in Syria) during the years from 363 B.C. to 163 B.C. The final king that is mentioned is the one that we looked at two weeks ago, **Antiochus Epiphines – the forerunner of the Anti-Christ!** His evil reign is described in **Daniel 11:21-35 NLT** [Note: The black lettered words set inside of brackets are my own explanations about the verses in blue.]

21 "The next to come to power will be a despicable man who is not in line for royal succession. He will slip in when least expected and take over the kingdom by flattery and intrigue. [He pretends to be the protector of his murdered brother's child – the true heir to the throne – while in fact he hatches a plot to murder that heir and then has the one who carried out the plot murdered in order to look innocent of all charges!] 22 Before him great armies will be swept away, including a covenant prince. [A godly High Priest named Onias] 23 With deceitful promises, he will make various alliances. He will become strong despite having only a handful of followers. 24 Without warning [That is, he attacked those who were not his active enemies during peacetime in order to gain the advantage of surprise; much the way Hitler and the Japanese did during WW II.] he will enter the richest areas of the land. Then he will distribute among his followers the plunder and wealth of the rich--something his predecessors had never done. [Antiochus

was a shrewd man who gave bribes and land to those who submitted to him.] He will plot the overthrow of strongholds, but this will last for only a short while. 25 "Then he will stir up his courage and raise a great army against the king of the south. [The Egyptian king Ptolemy Philometor] The king of the south will go to battle with a mighty army, but to no avail, for there will be plots against him. 26 His own household will cause his downfall. His army will be swept away, and many will be killed. 27 Seeking nothing but each other's harm, these kings will plot against each other at the conference table, attempting to deceive each other. But it will make no difference, for the end will come at the appointed time. 28 "The king of the north will then return home with great riches. [But not with the total victory that he wanted; therefore he was angry over the lack of absolute conquest.] On the way he will set himself against the people of the holy covenant, doing much damage before continuing his journey. [This was the first venting of his anger on God's people. He killed thousands of Jews at this time.] 29 "Then at the appointed time he will once again invade the south, but this time the result will be different. 30 For warships from western coastlands [A Roman army from Cyprus] will scare him off, [The Roman Consul humiliated Antiochus by drawing a circle around him in the sand and making him choose NOT to invade Egypt in order to avoid war with Rome!] and he will withdraw and return home. But he will vent his anger against the people of the holy covenant and reward those who forsake the covenant. 31 "His army will take over the Temple fortress, pollute the sanctuary, put a stop to the daily sacrifices, and set up the sacrilegious object that causes desecration. [The result of this period was absolute destruction. Hundreds of thousands of Jews were killed and the temple was violated with pig's blood and the setting up of a statue of Zeus in the Holy of Holies.]

**[Expanded portion of manuscript ends here.]**

However, I want to start this message by focusing on the final four verses that describe the reign of Antiochus Epiphines (Vs. 32-35) to set up what I believe is the primary PURPOSE of all of the prophecies that Daniel is given. They reveal what will happen to the people of God when the spirit of the Anti-Christ is at work. **Daniel 11:32-35 NLT**

32 He will flatter and win over those who have violated the covenant. But the people who know their God will be strong and will resist him. 33 "Wise leaders will give instruction to many, but these teachers will die by fire and sword, or they will be jailed and robbed. 34 During these persecutions, little help will arrive, and many who join them will not be sincere. 35 And some of the wise will fall victim to persecution. In this way, they will be refined and cleansed and made pure until the time of the end, for the appointed time is still to come.

The enemy still works in this same way. His goal is his own glory along with the destruction of God's people! But it never turns out the way he intends. God makes this certain, and he uses prophecy to aid his people in that great struggle. **This is the primary PURPOSE of all prophecy:**

**The purpose of all prophecy is to train us to trust in God and to prepare us to stand against the strategy of our enemy.**

“Those who know their God will be strong and resist him!” Only those who have a genuine relationship with God will be strong enough to resist the temptation to give in to the lies and the false promises of the enemy. And only those who know and love God’s word (like Daniel) will be on the alert for the schemes of the enemy. **Do you KNOW your God? Are you RESISTING the temptation to violate your faith and your Christ-centered values right now?** This is where it begins. Those who only pretend to know God will fall when the enemy tempts them! Satan’s strategies are multi-faceted, but their ultimate goal is always to MANIPULATE us to do his will. He will be successful if we do not ACTIVELY TRUST in God! Satan loves to trick us by promising to fulfill our greatest wishes. He is a master at making it look like our HAPPINESS is his greatest priority! He not only does not intend to accomplish this; he is UNABLE to do so. **Satan always promises what he can never eternally provide!** His rewards are always short-lived and they lead to greater suffering! However, his schemes only work when we first make the choice to COMPROMISE our faith and values in order to follow our fleshly instincts!

You see, when the real Anti-Christ comes, he will do the very same thing that Satan has always done: Encourage us to doubt God and pursue our own pleasures! **Daniel describes him as an absolute MATERIALIST who cares only about POWER and POSSESSIONS.** He will have no regard for any god save himself, whom he reveals as a “god of fortresses.” He will build his kingdom by MILITARY might, and he will promise rewards of lands and positions of authority to those who follow him. We see this in the yet unfulfilled verses of the last half of Daniel 11.

**Daniel 11:36-39 NLT**

36 "The king will do as he pleases, exalting himself and claiming to be greater than every god, even blaspheming the God of gods. He will succeed, but only until the time of wrath is completed. For what has been determined will surely take place. 37 He will have no respect for the gods of his ancestors, or for the god loved by women, or for any other god, for he will boast that he is greater than them all. 38 Instead of these, he will worship the god of fortresses--a god his ancestors never knew--and lavish on him gold, silver, precious stones, and expensive gifts. 39 Claiming this foreign god's help, he will attack the strongest fortresses. He will honor those who submit to him, appointing them to positions of authority and dividing the land among them as their reward.

This man will be absolutely self-willed. He will be the ultimate embodiment of the concept of “doing whatever you want!” This man will also be POWERFUL, both in deception and deed. He will make faith in an unseen God seem foolish! The great LIE that the Anti-Christ will offer in the last days is that you will not have to worship a God that you cannot SEE; you will be able to worship the one who is providing you with what you want right before your very eyes. This is why his rewards of positions of power and land and gifts will be so important to his reign. Furthermore, in

Revelation, we learn that the Anti-Christ will force all people to take the MARK OF THE BEAST in order to buy or sell basic necessities as well as luxuries! (Revelation 13:16-18) This is why so many will fall to his deceptions and promises. He is a Master Deceiver, who will use INTIMIDATION and THREATS to accomplish his will! He is already using that strategy today. The current notions of TOLERANCE and POLITICAL CORRECTNESS are giving full reign to those who want to mask their INTOLERANCE and MORAL INCORRECTNESS as they persecute those who disagree with them!

**But even when persecution comes, the purpose and plan of God still stands!** You see, God's people are actually purified and made productive (Vs. 35) by their RESPONSE to the intense persecution that the enemy inflicts upon them. This is NOT a new truth. The suffering of God's people on this earth, no matter when it happens, will always result in the refinement and spread of their FAITH. Satan's attempts to bring about our DESTRUCTION serve God's sovereign plan for our CONSTRUCTION! What was true for the followers of God in the O.T. is also true for us as followers of Christ since the time of the New Testament. The disciples were desperately longing for the beginning of the Millennial Reign of Christ on the earth during their lifetime, but it was not yet to be. There were many more years of trouble and sorrow yet to come. Jesus taught that the Tribulation in the End Times is not the ONLY time of tribulation that will exist in the world; it is simply the most intense time of trouble that the world will ever experience! **Steel yourself for suffering!** Simon Peter taught this very principle in 1 Peter when he wrote to believers scattered all over the world. **1 Peter 4:12-13 NLT**

12 Dear friends, don't be surprised at the fiery trials you are going through, as if something strange were happening to you. 13 Instead, be very glad--for these trials make you partners with Christ in his suffering, so that you will have the wonderful joy of seeing his glory when it is revealed to all the world.

This verse hints at the ultimate THEME of all prophecy, but it is also a reminder of the tragic reality of the last days. You see, the 2<sup>nd</sup> return of Christ will be the most awesome moment in all of history . . . for believers. For those who do not know Christ however, it will be the most AWFUL moment in history. Once the Church has been raptured, the Anti-Christ will be revealed to the world. He will make false promises to Israel and will sign a treaty to bring PEACE to the one region of the world that has never known peace: The MIDDLE EAST. He will be a powerful ruler in a revived Roman Empire who will seemingly come out of nowhere, and he will bring about a short-lived ONE WORLD government. At the mid-point of his rule (3 ½ years), he will break his covenant with Israel and will persecute them with a vengeance.

During this time, wars will break out on all sides, as the Anti-Christ's kingdom will come under attack. Armies will come against him from the north and the south, and

then later from the north (again) and the east. These battles will all take place in and around the "Beautiful Land," Israel. **Daniel 11:40-45 NIV**

40 "At the time of the end the king of the South will engage him in battle, and the king of the North will storm out against him with chariots and cavalry and a great fleet of ships. He will invade many countries and sweep through them like a flood. 41 He will also invade the Beautiful Land. Many countries will fall, but Edom, Moab and the leaders of Ammon will be delivered from his hand. 42 He will extend his power over many countries; Egypt will not escape. 43 He will gain control of the treasures of gold and silver and all the riches of Egypt, with the Libyans and Cushites in submission. 44 But reports from the east and the north will alarm him, and he will set out in a great rage to destroy and annihilate many. 45 He will pitch his royal tents between the seas at the beautiful holy mountain. Yet he will come to his end, and no one will help him.

These are WORLD WARS. Satan, the Author of Rebellion, will have to contend with the rebellion of the very people that he seeks to subdue! That is a divine irony! The army from the SOUTH is an AFRICAN and an ARABIAN army. The army from the NORTH is a Russian army (described in [Ezekiel 38-39](#)), and the army from the EAST is described in [Revelation 9:16](#) as being an army of 200 MILLION MEN! That may have been ludicrous 2,000 years ago, but today CHINA boasts of an army just that big! World events are setting us up for these events this very day! Sadly, this period of time will be the worst time of suffering that the world will ever see. It will make the suffering of the victims of the Holocaust under Hitler pale in comparison. Jesus spoke of this time in **Matthew 24:15, 21-22 NLT**

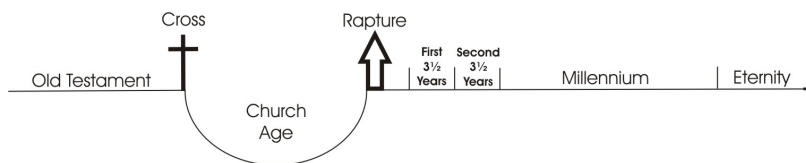
15 "The day is coming when you will see what Daniel the prophet spoke about--the sacrilegious object that causes desecration standing in the Holy Place." (Reader, pay attention!) 21 For there will be greater anguish than at any time since the world began. And it will never be so great again. 22 In fact, unless that time of calamity is shortened, not a single person will survive. But it will be shortened for the sake of God's chosen ones.

These final three years of the Great Tribulation are times of horrible distress and pain for the world, but it will also be a time of deliverance for those who finally choose to trust in God. Daniel makes it clear that God will RESCUE those who come to him in faith, even in the midst of this global chaos. **Daniel 12:1 NLT**

1 "At that time Michael, the archangel who stands guard over your nation, will arise. Then there will be a time of anguish greater than any since nations first came into existence. But at that time every one of your people whose name is written in the book will be rescued.

That is a reference to the SECOND COMING of Christ. The rescue will be the return of Christ in his glory that will break the power of the Anti-Christ ([Daniel 11:45](#)).

**Show End Times Chart:**



The armies that were coming against the Anti-Christ will join with him in order to fight against Christ and his host, but they will all be mightily defeated. John wrote about this final battle in **Revelation 19:19-21 NLT**

19 Then I saw the beast and the kings of the world and their armies gathered together to fight against the one sitting on the horse and his army. 20 And the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who did mighty miracles on behalf of the beast--miracles that deceived all who had accepted the mark of the beast and who worshiped his statue. Both the beast and his false prophet were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur. 21 Their entire army was killed by the sharp sword that came from the mouth of the one riding the white horse. And the vultures all gorged themselves on the dead bodies.

At this point, the Anti-Christ and his god of fortresses will be thrown into the lake of fire! God's sovereign plan will be executed, and justice will be meted out. **This is the END and the BEGINNING, and it will be the moment when the PRIMARY THEME of all prophecy will be realized:**

**The primary theme of all prophecy: The glory and the sovereignty of God!**

God's sovereign plan will be fulfilled in every detail, and God will be GLORIFIED. All glory comes from him and belongs to him! He is WORTHY! That is such an awesome truth for those who follow Christ. **But I want to finish this message by reminding you that we have the opportunity to bring glory to God BEFORE that great day of reckoning by bringing people to the CROSS now!** That is our privilege. **We are called not just to SURVIVE, but also to come with a HOST of other survivors that we have led to Christ by our faith and our witness!** Daniel was reminded of this very thing when he was given this terrible, glorious vision: **Daniel 12:2-3 NLT**

**2 Many of those whose bodies lie dead and buried will rise up, some to everlasting life and some to shame and everlasting disgrace. 3 Those who are wise will shine as bright as the sky, and those who lead many to righteousness will shine like the stars forever.**

I wonder, can you truly be excited about the return of Christ when you have not shared the life-giving message of the Gospel with your family and friends? How can you truly pray for Christ's return when you have not helped to spread the message that will make that day a JOY to the ones that you love? Daniel lived a life that inspired others to KNOW and LOVE the Sovereign God. **On that GREAT DAY that is both the END and the BEGINNING, Daniel will be found with a GREAT HOST of souls**

that are there because of his WITNESS. That is the ULTIMATE CULTURE SHOCK!  
**Will there be anyone with you on that great day?**

Let's pray.