

## Daniel 11 (Part 2) - John Karmelich

Let me start up by warning everyone this lesson is well, weird! This section of Daniel deals with "The Antichrist". I'm going to avoid the topic of who he might be as no one knows. The bible has a lot to say on what he does and how to recognize him when he shows up. Just as no one knows the date that Jesus will return, we got no idea who "the" antichrist is or when he'll show up. If we knew, I suspect there'd be "Terminators" to try to kill him! God kept that information secret so His plan for the end times will happen on His timing! If you hate this stuff, let me ask a question I couldn't find a great answer to my collection of commentaries: Why does God want all of this to occur? Why so much bible text warning about him? Why can't Jesus just show up one day, assume world rule and that's that? Why must there be all of "him" before Jesus well, takes over? Here's my take on that:

Throughout history, most people rebel against the idea of a god demanding we live as He demands. It's a matter of most people wanting to do what they want without being accountable to Him. In effect God gives them the ultimate "what they want": A leader promising peace and prosperity to everyone so that we live however they'd want to live. My point is the reason God says the world as we know it will end with all the "Revelation bad stuff" is to show the world in effect, here is the ultimate outcome when we choose to live without Him ruling over us! Yes the end times has lots of bad stuff to put it mildly. It is designed to scare us to run to God. It's also designed to teach us in effect, God designed this world and He designed it to be lived "this way", whether we like it or not! If we choose to turn from Him not only does it mean life in hell, but here is what ultimately is going to occur in this world whether we like it or not. The reason all that horrible end time bad stuff will occur is God's way of saying, "Better to choose to live as I desire because the consequences are well, not good!"

With that speech out of my system, the second half of this chapter is one of those places that teaches us a lot about what the antichrist (for a lack of a better term) is like. The good news is when we get to the next and final chapter of this book we get comments about Jesus return. Therefore, think of this lesson as the ultimate bad news before the ultimate good news. It is a big reminder that whether we like it not we were created to serve God and not vice versa! So we might as well know the "rules" which is what the bible is mainly designed for in the first place, to teach us how to live in a way to please God. So if that's true why give us all the antichrist stuff? Why not let it play out? It is to say in effect, this is how the world will end, so we might as well accept it and be part of the winning team! I'm well aware most of us reading this are devout Christians. Another reason to know this stuff is to remind nonbelievers of the dangers of choosing a life without God.

Still most people throughout history and alive today won't have to experience the horrible things about the antichrist. To state the obvious, "He will show up when he shows up!" So again, why study all of it if it won't affect our lives today? For starters it tells whoever will be around when it occurs what life is going to be like and there's still hope in spite of that horrible stuff. I believe the reason God desires we learn about the antichrist isn't so much to fear him being behind "every rock". The bible gives us what God wants us to know so whoever does see this guy, will know it when it happens. So why can't there be a "Terminator" to destroy him when he shows up and that will be that? I suspect because he will be a charismatic leader that many will want as their leader, despite the consequences.

OK then, onto the details of this text. We begin at Verse 36 of Chapter 11. This text begins with sort of a "blur". It begins with describing fairly accurately the life of a king based out of essentially, Syria. He was at war with the king of Egypt and that war went on for centuries after Daniel lived. The key figure is a man named Antiochus Epiphanes IV. His father was historically more famous, but "IV" is in focus

here. Daniel describes well what "1V" did in Israel, but his death doesn't line up with this chapter. It's kind of like a movie that shows one character fading out and another one taking its place! Daniel tells us the horrible things "1V" did. The text then jumps to what the Antichrist will do. It is because "1V" was the closest thing historically to describing the damage the Antichrist will do in Israel.

Let me set the scene. "1V" ruled in Syria and decided to attack Egypt (by traveling through Israel). In Egypt the Roman Navy helped the Egyptians (Cleopatra's grandmother ruled then!) The Roman officer who captured "1V" drew a circle around him and said in effect, "Either go home in peace or die on this spot! This put "1V" in a bad mood and took it out on the Israelites on the way home. He made it illegal to practice Judaism and killed babies who were circumcised! On the temple altar he sacrificed pigs as he knew it ticked off the Jewish people and put in a statue of Zeus there. It led to a successful revolt of the Jewish people and that's the basis of Hanukah. Realize Daniel wrote this about 400 years before all of it took place! History records the death of "1V" and it doesn't match Daniel. Scholars argue Daniel jumps to end time stuff, just as he did with each vision of the last few chapters, so it fits that pattern. If you care, Jesus in effect makes a reference to "1V" when he was predicting Jerusalem's destruction (it was in 70AD). (Matthew 24:15). Also realize Jesus was in Jerusalem for a Hanukah celebration (John 10:22-23). OK then, that's not relative to Daniel here. Back to the story:

The text gives us a few interesting details about "the" antichrist here (that title is only used in 1st John). I can speak with certainty this describes the antichrist, because the next thing that occurs is Jesus is on the scene to literally rule the world from Jerusalem. Consider that Daniel gives a very accurate history of what occurred in the Middle East for the next four hundred years after he lived. Since God knows all things, what he told Daniel was reciting history in advance. He used "1V" as an illustration of what the antichrist will do as "1V" will be a lot like him.

One of the classic questions is will the antichrist be Jewish? I suspect the answer is yes if he's accepted by the Jewish nation but I also suspect like "1V" he will come from somewhere north of there. I'm not positive, but that's what I suspect. Anyway, the text says he will not worship the god of his fathers nor will he love the god adorned by women. Some believe this refers to the Father and Jesus (in that what's adorned by women is a reference to be the mother of the Messiah). Others argue it refers to some other gods. The text says he won't be married, but most scholars argue against homosexuality. The text says he honors the god of war! It sort of reminds of me of Pontius Pilate when Jesus asks him about what is truth and Pilate says, in effect "power is truth". (John 18:38). The point is "1V" is a power hungry guy. Like most world rulers, a lot of people won't accept him. The text says he sets up shop in Israel and we will see a rebellion against him from both the north and the south. The bad guy is going to win a lot of these wars, except of all places he won't conquer what we call Jordan today. What I suspect is that area isn't important to him, as he fights against the south (think African countries) and what's north: That is Syria, Iran or even Russia. Bottom line, lots of war and it ties to the gruesome stuff of Revelation!

OK enough of the war stuff. Yes I get into a lot more details in my lesson but I figure that's enough of "the" antichrist for one lesson. While the bible never names him by name, there are lots of passages in the bible that warn of the damage that he'll do including killing lots of Jewish people! I suspect it'll be even worse than what Hitler did but I'm not going further into that speculation. All I'm saying is this is a really bad guy who will come on the scene right before Jesus shows up. We don't know his name, or the date, but we know this guy wants to be worshipped as God and he'll sit in a rebuilt temple and he'll demand to be worshipped as such. After three and a half years of this stuff is when God says "enough of this" and that's when Jesus returns. I wondered, if Satan knows that is his end? Why does he want to go through all of this? All I figure is he thinks he can "win the game"!

Finally I'd like you to remember something I said some lessons back on why Daniel likes to jump from history prior to Jesus all the way to the end times? I believe it's because the Christian church isn't stated as such in the Old Testament. That's also why I believe that the church will be gone before the bad guy shows up! Yes I believe many will be saved when all of the horrid "Revelation stuff" occurs. OK that's enough bad news for one week. As I warned you this is a weird lesson! In the next one we'll deal with the return of Jesus as the promised Messiah so it gets better!

If interested, there are two other links on this page that link to this text. You're welcome to read that if you'd like. Either way, I'm grateful that you did read this! If you're new here, realize you're welcome to e-mail me. Thanks again, John