

Series: Message From the Major Prophets

A KING OF FIERCE COUNTANCE

DANIEL 8

Text: Daniel 8:23

Daniel 8:23

²³ *And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up.*

Introduction:

This evening we will focus on an individual known as a fierce king. This individual is also known in Scripture as the Antichrist.

Some 40 billion people have lived on the earth since Adam was created in the Garden of Eden. Since that time, the world has witnessed the advent of many talented, intelligent and powerful people.

But, there is one coming that will stand head and shoulders above the rest of humanity. He will be powerful, deceitful, intelligent, brutal, ruthless and efficient.

He will represent the pinnacle of all that man can achieve apart from God.

He will be a satanically empowered man and he will wreak havoc in this world.

Note:

1. THE ARRIVAL OF THE ANTICHRIST

In the end times, a fierce king will stand up. What are the signs of his appearing? Can men know when this man will appear? The answer to that question is both "Yes" and "No".

No man knows exactly who the Antichrist is, or exactly when he will appear, but the Bible does tell us that there are certain signs that accompany his appearance.

Note:

A. The Condition of the World

When this man makes his entrance, the world will be in a terrible moral condition. This is evidenced by two passages that make reference to the end times.

Luke 17:26-27

²⁶ And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. ²⁷ They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all.

2 Timothy 3:1-5

¹ *This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.* ² *For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,* ³ *Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,* ⁴ *Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;* ⁵ *Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.*

It is easy to see that our world is preparing for the appearance of the Antichrist.

Note not only “The Condition of the World” but also:

B. The Corruption of Religion

2 Thessalonians 2:3

³ *Let no man 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;*

The Antichrist will appear during a time of a religious apostasy, or "a falling away".

This refers to a time when organized, visible religion will depart from the doctrines of the Word of God.

Since the New Testament was written for and about believers, it makes sense to conclude that this falling away will occur in churches and denominations that call themselves Christian.

Illustration:

I hope everyone understands that just because a church or denomination calls itself Christian, does not make it Christian! In reality, the days in which we live are marked by a rapid departure from the foundational truths of Christianity. There was a time when, if a man said he was a Christian, you pretty much knew what he believed. There might have been a few doctrinal differences, but for the most part, this person believed in the virgin birth of Christ, the substitutionary death and resurrection of Christ, the return of Christ, and that the Bible is the Word of God. In other words, a Christian was a person who was in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and accepted all that the Bible teaches concerning Him and His work. It's a different world now!

We are living in the midst of a "great falling away!" Cults are growing by leaps and bounds while genuine Christianity consistently finds itself under the gun from society, government and organized religion.

When denominations have to take votes on whether to marry homosexuals, or to allow homosexuals to be ordained, something is wrong! There are things that are nailed down so firmly in the Word of God that there should never be a question about them. Yet, we are seeing every major doctrine under attack. We see churches and denominations turning away from the truth with alarming speed. We are in the midst of apostasy!

If the world is ready and religion is ready, what hinders the Antichrist from appearing at any moment and what keeps the Tribulation from starting? There is one event that must take place before the Antichrist can be revealed and before the Tribulation Period can commence.

C. The Completion of the Church

2 Thessalonians 2:6-7

⁶ *And now ye know what **withholdeth** that he might be revealed in his time. ⁷ For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now **letteth** will let, until he be taken out of the way.*

These verses teach us the truth that the church must be removed before the Antichrist can be revealed. Verse 6 tells us that there is something that "withholdeth". Verse 7 says that there is One Who "letteth". The two words are translated from the same

Greek word and both mean "to hinder". The Bible tells us in verse 7 that the spirit of Antichrist is already at work. That is why we can see the evidence all around us.

Still, there are two forces that hinder him from stepping onto the stage and making his presence known. What are those two hindrances? The Church and the Holy Spirit! The work of the Spirit in convicting and judging the hearts of men is a tremendous retraining force in the world.

John 16:8-11

⁸ And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: ⁹ Of sin, because they believe not on me; ¹⁰ Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; ¹¹ Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

The Spirit's work in filling the Church to stand against the tide of evil is also a great hindrance to the work of the spirit of Antichrist. One day, both of these forces will be removed!

When?

At the Rapture!

Note:

There are some who would tell us that the church will go through the first 3 ½ years of the Tribulation. To believe this view, you have to believe that many of the Lord's prophecies to Israel also apply to the church. The fact of the matter is, if you interpret the Bible literally, you have to believe that the church leaves this world before the Tribulation Period.

Note not only “The Arrival of the Antichrist” but also:

2. THE ATTRIBUTES OF THE ANTICHRIST (vs. 23)

Daniel 8:23

²³ And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up.

This verse gives us some insight into some of the attributes of this individual but we see attributes elsewhere.

Note:

A. He Will Be a Man of Popularity

Revelation 6:2

² *And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and **a crown was given unto him**: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.*

The world will embrace him as a godsend. No doubt this man will arrive on the scene with a workable formula for world peace.

He will have a viable explanation for the disappearance of the Christians.

He will embody all the world has ever looked for in a leader.

- It is said that the Antichrist will possess:
- The Leadership of a Washington or a Lincoln
- The Eloquence of a Franklin Roosevelt
- The Charm of a Theodore Roosevelt

- The Charisma of a John F. Kennedy
- The Popularity of a Dwight Eisenhower
- The Political Savvy of a Lyndon Johnson
- The Intellect of a Thomas Jefferson

The world stage is set for the appearance of such a man! He will be popular!

B. He Will Be A Man of Peace

Revelation 6:2

² *And I saw, and behold **a white horse**: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.*

This gives him the appearance of good. It also states that he will have a bow, but no arrows. This indicates that he will no come making war, but will come making peace. This is proven by what Daniel saw in Dan. 9:27:

Daniel 9:27

²⁷ *And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.*

It seems this man will make a 7 year peace treaty with the nation of Israel.

Again, it can be clearly seen that our world is looking for such a leader. The world is tired of war! Economies are in need of help and people want to prosper and dwell in peace and safety. The world will readily embrace a man with a message of peace.

Illustration:

The world will never know peace apart from Jesus Christ! While this world is in turmoil today, the children of God know peace in their hearts.

John 14:27

²⁷ Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

When the Lord returns to this earth, He will usher in a genuine peace that will last. If you are looking for peace, you will find it only in the Saviour!

This individual will not only be popular and a man of peace but also:

C. He Will Be a Man of Prosperity

Daniel 11:43

⁴³ 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.

Revelation 13:16-17

¹⁶ And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: ¹⁷ And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

The Antichrist will eventually control the wealth of the world. He will bring prosperity to those who have lived in poverty.

I am convinced that the Antichrist will bring an end to world hunger.

That he will do away with much of the class distinction that exists in our world.

That most people under his reign will be better off financially than they were before he rose to power.

This is one area of this rule that will bring him lasting success. People like to prosper! Just look at America! Americans will vote for anyone who they think can offer them financial prosperity. A world leader who can

promise and produce prosperity will be a very popular man!

This individual will not only be popular and a man of peace promoting prosperity but also:

D. He Will Be a Man of Power

Revelation 13:7-8

⁷ And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. ⁸ And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

These verses tell us that Antichrist will eventually rule the entire world. Conquerors down through the ages have sought this lofty goal without success. He will achieve it! What men won't recognize, or won't care about is the fact that he receives his power from Satan himself.

Daniel 8:24

²⁴ And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practise, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people.

He will become so large in the eyes of humanity that they will literally worship him as their god.

Note not only the Arrival and Attributes of the Antichrist but also:

3. THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE ANTICHRIST

Daniel 8:24-25

²⁴ And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practise, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people. ²⁵ And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand.

A. He Will Attack the People of God (vs. 25)

The Antichrist will break his covenant with Israel and will attack the people of the Lord. He will try to do what Hitler, Stalin and others failed to do: exterminate the Jew. More than anything, this man will hate everything having to do with God and Jesus Christ. He will lash out at the Jews and try to completely destroy them.

We are seeing this spirit at work in our world today! It is becoming increasingly unpopular to be a Bible

believer. In fact, we are often labeled as being intolerant. We are told that we must tolerate homosexuality and lesbianism. We are told that we must protect the spotted owl while, at the same time, we tolerate the murder of millions of innocent unborn children. We are told that we are bigots when we speak out about the evils of society. We are told that we have no voice in the government. We are told to soften our stance.

B. He Will Attack the Prince of God (vs. 25)

Daniel 8:25

²⁵ And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand.

It appears that anything having to do with godliness, holiness or Christ will be the focus of the attacks of this madman. He will make every effort to stamp out the name of Jesus from the face of the earth!

the devil hates the name of Jesus! He will hate it and he will attempt to discredit it and destroy it until he is cast away in to Hell's flames. Why is it that Jesus, and His doctrines, are the most hated things in the world? If men admit the fact that He is Lord, that He died and

rose again, that He is in fact the Savior; then man must admit that he is a sinner or be doomed to Hell.

C. He Will Attack the Place of God

Daniel 8:25

²⁵ *And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand.*

Daniel 11:36-37

³⁶ *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.*

³⁷ *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.*

Daniel 9:27

²⁷ *And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.*

2 Thessalonians 2:4

⁴ *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.*

Matthew 21:15

¹⁵ *And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the Son of David; they were sore displeased,*

All these verses tell us that the Antichrist will break his seven year covenant with the Jews. That he will attempt to wipe Israel from the map.

We note not only the Arrival, Attributes, and the Abominations of the Antichrist but lastly:

4. THE ANNIHILATION OF THE ANTICHRIST (vs. 25)

Daniel 8:25

²⁵ *And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; **but he shall be broken without hand.***

Note:

A. It Will Be Sudden

B. It Will Be Serious

Revelation 19:20

²⁰ *And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.*

Close:

Jesus is coming and the world is poised to enter a time of trouble like nothing it has ever experienced before. What happens to you all depends on what you do with Jesus Christ.

Where will you be when Satan's Superman takes the world by storm? When Daniel looked into these things, he fainted and became ill. What effect do these words have on your heart today? If the Lord is calling you to come to Him for any reason, you come now.