

## **Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time***

### **The Reign of Rebellion, Part 2**

Scripture: Daniel 11:36-45

Code: 27-29

Tonight, we come again to the eleventh chapter of Daniel. My heart is just thrilled again tonight at your faithfulness in being with us and at wonderful full congregation, it just blesses me. I thank God for you all and for the hunger you have in your hearts to know His blessed Word.

Daniel chapter 11, verses 36 to 45. This particular passage has been much studied by students of prophecy, theologians, Bible expositors, Bible teachers, pastors. There are many things in it that could send us off into long-range, longtime, long-term studies, but we're going to try to get it in an encapsulized form tonight and allow the Spirit of God to apply it to us.

Just by way of introduction so that you have the setting for the text, you're very much aware of the fact that the Middle East has again become the center stage of world history. It seems as though throughout most of my lifetime, certainly my adult lifetime, the focus of the world has predominantly been on the land of Israel. And again today we see the Middle East as the major issue facing the world. It is the source of oil so desperately needed by the free world and the communist world. And so everybody wants their fingers in the pie. It is the source of many natural resources. It is a strategic land from which one could progress to the west, to the south, to the east, even to the north, a focal point for the whole globe.

Now as you study biblical prophecy, you find out that as you move into the end time Israel is going to be in league with and under the control of the west. The Bible tells us that the west will rise again, that is the west of Russia, the west of Israel which means Europe. And it will rise again in the form of the revised Roman Empire, as we've seen already in Daniel's prophecy.

And as you come into the end times of prophecy, this ten-nation confederacy will be dominated and ruled by the Antichrist. And he will make a pact with Israel so that Israel will be protected by this western confederacy.

Now in this section of Daniel's prophecy, he gives us the scenario for this final holocaust. It's really remarkable, it's incredible, it's astounding, it's amazing, it's miraculous that God should delineate piece by piece, blow by blow the unfolding of this final great holocaust. And that you and I of all of the Christians of all time and of all of the Old Testament saints should be alive in the day when we can see all of these things on the horizon. What an incredible time to be alive.

Now remember that the last revelation given to Daniel of the several that he has received occurs in chapters 10, 11 and 12. All three of these chapters are one revelation. Chapter 10 is the introduction to the revelation. Chapter 11 is the revelation on into the first three verses of chapter 12. And then the end of chapter 12 is an aftermath, or a postlude, or an appendix. So you have an introduction in 10, basically the revelation in 11 and the aftermath in 12.

Keep in mind, also, that this revelation is related to the nation Israel. The earlier revelations, the first ones that Daniel received, were related primarily to the Gentile nations and how the flow of their history would go, whereas the last ones that we've been looking at in Daniel's prophecy relate to the nation of Israel. And particularly, Daniel has been focusing on the fact that God has planned to chasten His people Israel, that because of their sinfulness they were taken into Babylonian captivity. That was not the end of their chastening; that was the beginning. They were chastened for 70 years. Daniel kind of thought it would be over at the end of 70 years, God said no, that's only the beginning. And God sent this angel in chapter 10, 11 and 12 to unfold to Daniel that the chastening of the children of Israel, the people of God, would go on and on and on until the end time, the time of Antichrist. So serious was their sinfulness, so obstinate are their continued rejections that their chastening goes on and on and on and on and on. Gentile oppression of Israel will last until the Kingdom of Messiah. The angel says to Daniel, "Daniel, millennia will go by and the land will be overrun, it will be oppressed, it will be devastated, it will be plundered." And that is exactly the case.

In fact, I remember the first time that I went to the land of Israel, I remarked at how barren it was even on the hillsides. And I was instructed rather rapidly that that was not natural to the place. The place naturally, one guide told us, should look like a mountainous area in the western United States in the Rockies, or in the lower mountains of the Sierra Nevadas, just literally covered with trees of a pine nature. But they had been so denuded because the city would always be denuded in its rebuilding. And every time it was wiped out, they'd strip its land barren of the trees to rebuild it again. And it has been overrun and oppressed and plundered throughout the centuries.

Now as we have been looking at the unfolding of this prophecy, we've been hearing that message from the angel. Now you remember that in the first 35 verses of chapter 11, which by the way we will not go over again. You can be sure. That was a long one. But the first 35 verses detail for us the oppression of the people of God and the land of Israel under the Persian and Greek eras. And we saw last time how absolutely accurate that prophecy was. The flow of that period, you'll remember, was marked by a series of key monarchs, a series of key kings who oppressed the land and the people. The first one was in verse 2, Ahasuerus, or Xerxes, the great Persian king who dominated the land of Palestine and other Persian kings who did as well.

The second major king was Alexander in verses 3 through 9. Alexander and those who followed him, the great world conquering Greek, who founded the Seleucid dynasty and the Ptolemaic dynasty, the

Seleucids to the north, the Ptolemies to the south and between the two of them, they literally dominated and oppressed that land for hundreds of years.

Then the third king was Antiochus the Great, in verses 10 through 20, the great Seleucid king who had the lasting control. The first Seleucid and Ptolemy kings kind of kicked it back and forth and then Antiochus went in, Antiochus the Great, and kind of had a lasting control over Israel.

Then in verse 21 we met the last of the first four kings, Antiochus Epiphanes, the next in the Seleucid line who ruled Palestine. And he it was who was a vile person, it says in verse 21, a vile person. He oppressed, he desecrated, he slaughtered, he devastated the Jews, their people, their temple, their worship, all of these things.

So, all through the Persian period, the angel says to Daniel, all through the Greek period, the people will continue to be oppressed. Why? Verse 35 is where we stopped last time and that's the key. "To purge and to make them white, even to the time of the end." The whole purpose of all of this was the purging of the people of Israel. It was their spiritual purification. It is to refine them. God has always used suffering to do that. Even in the New Testament, Peter writes that the Lord make you perfect after you have suffered a while. James writes, the trial of your faith works patience and patience has its perfect work. The purging, the purification of suffering, till the time of the end.

So, the angel says, "Daniel, you're confused because the 70 years are up and only 40,000 went back, the rest have stayed embedded in Babylon and they're not even interested in God. And the ones who went back can't rebuild the city, they're a weak people. And you're saying to yourself, "I thought it was over." And the angel says it isn't over. It will go on until the end time. And then he takes him through the Persian period and through the Greek period and says this is all for the purging and the making white, or the cleansing of God's people till the time of the end.

Now, as we approach verse 36, we leap across centuries to the final king, Antichrist. And we meet him in verses 36 to 45. We've seen the Persian era, the Greek era, and now we see the final form of the Roman era. The final chapter of the chastening of the people of Israel. And this amazing figure will be all the evil power of Ahasuerus, Alexander, Antiochus the Great, Antiochus Epiphanes combined and more. He is the counterfeit Christ who makes a treaty or a covenant or a league or a pact with Israel He promises to protect. He aligns Israel with the west. And then in the middle of the seven-year Tribulation, he breaks that pact, he desecrates their temple, he desecrates their religion, he blasphemes their God and precipitates the holocaust of Armageddon which is ended in the return of Jesus Christ.

Now beginning in verse 36, there's a sharp break. It is introduced to us at the end of verse 35. "Even to the time of the end," that's the key phrase. This is going to go on till the time of the end. Up to this point, the prophecy has dealt with history past. Now we come to a different scene, history future, the

time of the end.

Now some Bible commentators, and you who get into the depths of these things will be interested in this, but some Bible commentators want to apply this to some historical point. They want to apply the rest of the chapter to Antiochus Epiphanes, or some other personality, primarily Antiochus Epiphanes is selected. But they don't want to allow for prophecy in the future so they want to tie it all to some past event. But that just doesn't work very well.

Let me suggest several reasons. First of all, in verse 35, the time of the end is an eschatological term. It deals with last things. In verse 40 it begins, "And at the time of the end." And both of those uses indicate a future last-days point. Secondly, the scope of the prophecy is beyond just the Persian and Greek area. The angel said this in chapter 10 verse 14. "Now I am come to make you understand what shall befall your people in the latter days." So, from the very beginning, the prophecy was said to stretch much further than just Persian-Greek times.

Further, we can follow with minute absolutely accurate detail all of the prophecy up to verse 35. But after that, we have no historical data that can at all relate to what happens from verse 36 to 45. Certainly not in the life of Antiochus Epiphanes.

Notice also in verse 36, it says near the end of the verse, all of this is going to prosper till the indignation be accomplished. Now the indignation which is to be fully accomplished simply means the final outpouring of God's wrath and that demands the last days. In fact, the indignation is almost a synonymous term with the Tribulation.

Further, the description of the ruler in this passage absolutely detail by detail parallels other Scripture accounts of Antichrist. Also, chapter 12 verse 1 tells us that at that time shall Michael stand up and they'll be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time. In other words, there is coming a time that will be worse than any other time in the history of man. And verse 2, it will be followed by the resurrection. Now that has to be the last time.

Furthermore, the last three revelations in the book of Daniel have closed with a word about the Antichrist. It is fitting that this one follow that same pattern. I just wanted you to know that there are reasons why we interpret this in relation to the Antichrist. And so, we sweep across thousands of years of history to the final world ruler. Three things to see about him tonight: his character, his conflict, his condemnation. If you read this, you may have been confused by it. But it really isn't that difficult. Let's flow through and see what it says.

First, his character...what will he be like? And we've seen this already several times in Daniel and Daniel builds upon the past. "The king," just calls him the king, "shall do according to his will and he shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every god and shall speak marvelous things against the

God of gods and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished, for that which is determined shall be done."

Now, most Bible students have called him in this verse "the willful king," the king who shall do according to his will. This particular figure comes under several titles in the Bible. In Daniel 7 he is called "the little horn." In Daniel 8 he is called "the king of fierce countenance," which has to do with his face, old fierce-face. In chapter 9...in chapter 9 he is called "the prince that shall come." In 2 Thessalonians 2 he is called "the man of sin," and "the son of perdition," which is a Hebraism meaning he is doomed to destruction. In Revelation 13 he is called "the beast."

Now all of these have reference to the same personality. And here he is called "the king who does according to his will," or "the willful king." Now the angel gives us several facts that indicate his character.

First of all, his character is marked by prerogative--prerogative. In other words, he exercises the ultimate prerogative. He makes all decisions. He does according to his will. He is an absolute sovereign. He is an absolute dictator. He will rule alone. He will rule with utter selfishness, utter self-will. He will rule in a self-centered and self-energized approach and behind the scenes moving it all along is Satan himself. One writer said he will come to the world with the baptism of hell. He will have full demon cooperation. He will establish an absolute world monarchy and his credentials for pulling it off will be his ability to do signs and wonders and powerful miracles to deceive people. He literally rules the world.

And in his ruling the world becomes the protector of Israel because everybody wants Israel--Russia, the east, the Arab world, apparently even the south, a coalition of Africa--and the west becomes its protector.

It is true that there are other rulers. Revelation 17 says there are ten kings, but they are puppet kings under this one. Revelation 13 says he has a cohort called "the false prophet," but the false prophet just simply does his bidding. It says...you say to yourself, "Well, what about the kings of the south that attack him? What about the king of the north that attacks him? What about the king of the east that attacks him?" Oh yes, there will be a fomenting revolution against his sovereignty, but that's only after his sovereignty is established. So he has prerogative. He makes all the decisions. He rules the world. Every man on the globe in order to function in human society, according to Revelation 13, will have to take his mark, the mark of the beast.

Secondly, he's characterized not only by prerogative, but by pride. He shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every god. Now Antiochus Epiphanes was proud. He was an ego-maniac. But he never magnified himself above every god. In fact, he very religiously worshiped the gods of the Greeks and he even tried to force the Jews to do the same. But the Antichrist will be absolutely atheistic,

irreligious, setting himself above every god.

Paul makes this same point in 2 Thessalonians 2, he says: "He will oppose and exalt himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped, so that he as God sits in the temple of God showing himself that he is God." Now there are egotists and there are egotists...but the guy who sits in the temple telling himself he's God is the egotist of all egotists. And by the way, you notice it says "He shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every god." Paul says he opposes all gods and all forms of worship. And Paul uses a participle, he is the opposer, or he is the adversary, the very name of Satan is ascribed to him. And that links him with the one behind him. He is the exalter of himself. Again, in 2 Thessalonians Paul uses a participle. He is the one who exalts himself. And that same verb is used twice in 2 Corinthians 12 where it says "exalted above measure." He exalts himself and he opposes all other form of religion, all that is called God, all that is worshiped, all deities, all shrines, all images, all altars, everything takes a second place to him.

Oh for a while, the Bible tells us, he'll tolerate religion. And then all of a sudden, he'll just consume it all. He devours, doesn't he? The false church in Revelation 17 when the Bible says he consumes the whore, the harlot, the false church. he lets Israel exist in their temple and then all of a sudden in the middle of the Tribulation, he devastates the place, commits the abomination of desolation all over again and desecrates the temple and the holy people and starts to slaughter them. And before he's done, two out of every three Jews will die. So he gets to the place where he then sets himself up as the God of gods, right in the temple, and speaks great things.

And that leads us to the third thing. He's not only proud, he is profane. It says, "He shall speak astonishing things against the God of gods." He is a blasphemer without equal. And in Revelation chapter 13, we find the same thing. He will blaspheme in ways that are without precedent. I'm thinking of a couple of verses there, I think it's verse 5 and 6, "It was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies and he opened his mouth to blaspheme against God, to blaspheme His Name and His tabernacle and them that dwell in heaven." He is the very mouth of hell. He opens his mouth and hell talks. He is profane. He even tries to change God's moral laws, Daniel 7:25 says. He even tries to change the standards that God has set. And by the way, when it says he shall speak marvelous or astonishing things, that is a very interesting Hebrew participle that means he will speak that are unbelievable. In other words, there is a uniqueness. He will be more blasphemous than anyone else. His blasphemy will be unique to himself, he will go so far. He will blaspheme God in a degree of insolence and a degree of self-exaltation beyond what anybody's ever done.

I suppose we could ask the question at this point: why does God let him do it? Why does God tolerate it? And the answer is, because it is part of the purging process of purifying God's people Israel. And by the way, God only lets it go for a short time. It says in Revelation 13, only for 42 months can he really carry this off. Only for three and a half years, just half of the Tribulation. And it says it in verse 36, too. He'll do it but he'll prosper only until the indignation be accomplished, just until the final

unfolding of the wrath of God is finished. God puts a time limit. And the reason again, I say, that God allows this and permits such oppression of the Jews is that it is this, people, listen to me, it is this ultimate incredible blasphemy and oppression of the Antichrist that finally brings Israel to the proper attitude where they will recognize Jesus Christ as their Messiah and turn to Him. And the Bible shows us that nothing short of this will do that.

Verse 37, not only does he exercise prerogative, pride, profanity, but verse 37 tells us he's perverted. He is perverted. And the angel shows us three things which normally men hold dear, which are just normal natural responses to human behavior, but not him. He is perverted in the very basics of human behavior.

First of all, he does not regard the gods...that should be plural...the gods of his fathers. And the reason we know it's plural gods because the singular is used twice in the next few words. And so in using the plural, he is referring about...referring as opposed to one God to many gods.

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

He doesn't even regard the traditional religion, the traditional worship of his fathers. Now watch this. "He has no proper perspective of family." You remember when Paul said in the last days men will not have natural affection? And he uses a Greek term which has to do with family love. In other words, in the last days the family will break down, the family will fall apart, people will no longer care about their families. They'll have no respect for the parents, no respect for their heritage, no respect for the traditions of their fathers, no respect for the beliefs that have been handed down. That's this kind of man. He has no respect at all, no natural affection, no family love for those who are his ancestors.

Men normally have an affinity for and a respect for the gods of their parents, their ancestors. Some sense of respect. Not him. He doesn't have normal family love.

Secondly, this is very interesting. "Neither does he regard the desire of women." Now this is a very difficult one to interpret. It could mean that he's a homosexual. That could be very possibly the meaning. He has no normal desire for women. He has no capacity to love a woman. He has no interest in loving a woman.

Some people think it means that he...that he has none of the gentleness, none of the graciousness, nor does he appreciate any of it that women bring to society and give to their children. Some other commentators have felt that it means that he doesn't care for the Messiah, that the desire of woman is kind of a title that the Jewish mothers use to speak of Messiah. In other words, the ultimate desire of a Jewish woman would be to give birth to the Messiah. But I really believe that interpretation is

foreign to the context here. Why should we introduce into this some Jewish element? 'We cannot distinguish Antichrist because he has no desire for the Messiah, a lot of people don't have that.

I think what it's saying is he has no capacity for normal affection for a family. He has no capacity for normal affection for a wife, a mother, a sister. He's perverted.

And thirdly, he doesn't regard any God. You don't have to travel very far around this world to find out that most people believe in God, some kind of God. You just watch them when they get into trouble and see if they don't. All across the globe men invent religion...everywhere, because they believe in the super-natural. This man does not. He is utterly irreligious. That's a perversion of normal human response. He has no family love, he has no love for women, he has no love for God of any kind. He is perverted.

The world is ready for that kind of leader. It wouldn't bother anybody today that a man didn't have a normal relationship to a family. Fifty years ago, they wouldn't look at him. It wouldn't bother anybody today if the man happened to be perverted in his sexual life. I read a textbook that's used in the Glendale Public School system to teach sex education. They present homosexuality as an alternative...everybody's different. We all have different noses and different kind of ears and everybody likes different kind of flavors of ice cream. Everybody's different. The world's ready for that kind of thing.

And God isn't important in our society. We'd take an atheist, someone who didn't believe, especially if he pretended to be religious. We're ready for this.

So, he's characterized by prerogative, pride, profanity and perversion. Fifth, by power. He will have power. He will magnify himself above everything, the end of verse 37. How can he do this? How can he pull it off? Verse 38, "But in his estate," or literally Hebrew, "in its place," what's place? Normal human desires for family and women and God, in its place "He will honor the God of fortresses." That Hebrew word is used six times in this chapter: verse 1, verse 7, verse 10, verse 19, verse 31 and verse 39. And every time it means a strong place, a fort, a strong place. And it has to do with military power.

In place of normal affection, he will place a perverted worship of military power, he'll worship power. Chapter 7 verse 23 of Daniel, it says that when he comes he will devour the whole earth, this fourth and final form of the Roman Empire, devour the whole earth, tread it down and break it in pieces. Boy, he is going to have power. That's why he can magnify himself above all because he's going to have military power. Unquestionably he'll have the intimidation of nuclear weapons and whatever else may be in vogue at that time, germ warfare, or whatever. He will honor the God of forces, even a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honor with gold and silver and precious stones and desirable items.

In other words, everything that was valuable his fathers would give to their deities. Everything that was valuable, they would lay at the feet of their gods. They would give their gold, their silver, their precious stones, their desirable things, precious items to their gods. But he takes all of his silver, all of his gold, all of the precious stones, all of the desirable things to build a war machine. A god whom his fathers knew not shall he honor, and it is the God of fortresses. And war is expensive, isn't it? It may be that he captures the riches of the world to buy his war machine.

Verse 39, "Thus shall he do in the strongest fortresses with a foreign god." And the foreign god is the god of war, the war machine. "He'll attack the strongest fortresses whom he will acknowledge and increase with glory and cause him to rule over many and divide the land for gain." This is very interesting. Let me read you the literal translation. "Those who recognize him, he will highly honor and cause them to rule over many, allotting land as a reward."

He's going to take the earth and then in order to make sure he gets to hold on to it, everybody who honors him he'll apportion out a large portion of the land. He'll divide it's spoil. He'll give two things: positions of leadership and possessions of land. He'll cause them to rule, verse 39, and divide the land for their reward.

So, what he does is obligate those that he conquers to himself and thus sustains their loyalty. This is the one who's going to rule the world. And he's going to apportion it out and it's going to look so good. You cooperate with me and I'll give you the rule of your land. give you some independence, I'll give you the territory. And he'll be sitting on top of the whole pile.

Boy, it's amazing when you think about where communism is trying to take us today to the place where it utterly and totally controls the whole world. And if you think communism is a system of sharing, you're wrong. Communism is the ultimate dictatorship.

So, we see his character. Secondly, his conflict, verse 40. He's doing all right. He's sitting on the pile, ruling the whole show. Probably we're in the first three and a half years of the Tribulation, although it's hard to pinpoint all of these things in Daniel's prophecy. And he's having a great time dominating the world. At this point, he lets the false church coexist. He allows Israel certain freedoms. He protects Israel. He's got the world in his dominion.

Verse 40, then the conflict begins. "And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him, and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind with chariots and with horsemen and with many ships." Stop there.

You know what that is? That's a revolution. Up to now everything's been fine. But holding such a massive global empire together is an impossible task...even hell can't pull it off, even hell won't

cooperate with itself. And the hellish system begins to disintegrate. The Antichrist has come in peaceably. He has perhaps solved problems in the Middle East. He has become the protector of Israel. And then it all begins to fall apart. There's an insurrection. The time of the end, I believe, would be during the Tribulation. And as you move to the middle of the Tribulation it begins to happen.

The king of the south, some African army bigger than just Egypt, but perhaps involving Egypt, a mass moves in. I hasten to add that little by little, piece by piece, bit by bit, with a few exceptions, Africa has been targeted for a total take-over. And they're putting the pieces together and certainly in the end time if they want that particular strategic location of Israel, they're going to get involved in the battle. So this great southern confederacy pushes and the word "push" there is a word that means "to push like a goat," or "to attack."

Verse 40 then says, "And the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind." Now here's a great massive force from the north and they're more powerful than the south.

Look at Ezekiel 38 and Pm just going to give you this very quickly, and we're going to wrap it up. But Ezekiel 38, and I think you'll see this as fascinating how accurate God's prophecy is. Ezekiel 38 tells us about the Russian army that comes, the king of the north. And it tells us several details. Verse 8, it says "After many days, thou shalt be visited," that is Israel, "in the latter years, thou shalt come into the land." Now when the king of the north comes down, Israel will already be in the land.

Verse 11 says, "Not only will you be in the land, but it will be a land of unwalled villages. People who are at rest who dwell safely without walls, or bars or gates." In other words, Israel will be in the land and it will be a time of peace. That's the way it is in the first three and a half

years of the Tribulation. The Antichrist becomes the protector. He makes a pact, Daniel 9 says that, for seven years. And he gives them initially peace. They don't build any walls. They let their defenses down, they're protected by this great world ruler. They're in the land, the time of peace.

Verse 16 tells us that it will be...in the middle of the verse..."It will be in the latter days." All right. In the latter days, when Israel's in the land, in a time of peace, what's going to happen? Back to verse 2 of 38, "Set your face against Gag, the land of Magog, the chief prince of

Meshech and Tubal." It names ancient locations. These are important. These are ancient names of people who lived in northern Mesopotamia and the region of the Caucus(?) mountains which is modern Russia. There's no question about the fact that this is the Russian area.

Look at verse 6. "Corner and all its hordes, the house of Togarmah of the north quarters." Verse 15, "Thou shalt come from thy place out of the north parts." Chapter 39 verse 2, "Will cause thee to come up from the north parts." The Hebrew word here, get this one, is "far north," not near north, far north.

That distinction is made. Far north of Israel is only one thing, Russia. And when Russia comes, she won't come alone. Verse 5, "Persia," what country is Persia? Iran. "Cush," which is the ancient name of Ethiopia, "Put," which seems to be ancient Libya, and what it tells us is these are representatives of an Arab alliance. Some of the Arab nations are going to chafe under the power of the Antichrist and the western alliance, they're going to unite with Russia and they're going to come in against him in the Middle East.

"With chariots," it says in verse 40 of...back to Daniel 11, "with chariots, horsemen, many ships." Of course, they'll come with a modern counterpart. All of the forces they've got.

"And he," now we're talking back about the Antichrist and we follow that all the way to the end, "And he shall enter into the countries and overflow and pass through." What is that saying? Antichrist wins. One-sixth of them will be left. That's all. To retreat back to the north. This is history, people, it just hasn't happened, but it will.

And then after he overflows, passes through, verse 41, watch this, "Having defeated the king of the south, and defeated the king of the north, the African army and the Russian army and its Arab allies, he enters into the glorious land." What's that? That's Israel...that's Israel. "And many countries shall be overthrown, but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab and the chief of the children of Ammon."

It's so remarkable. Why does the Lord stick that in there? Just because God is so accurate. When Antichrist wins this big battle, he's going to wipe out the Russian army, and I think he's going to have to wonder how it happen because in Ezekiel 38 it seems as though God does it...39. Then he's going to devastate the south and he's actually going to go into the south, verse 42, in the land of Egypt, and that area, and mop up after his victory. But he's not going to do a thing to Edom, Moab and Ammon. You want to know something? Edom, Moab and Ammon is southeast of Israel. Egypt and the African army come from the southwest. He's going to be busy in the southwest and not bother with the southeast. And frankly, folks, Edom, Ammon and Moab put together don't have a whole lot to bother with, a lot of camels and a few Bedouin people running around in the desert. But God just gives you specifics.

He goes to the southwest so he leaves the southeast alone. Verse 42, "He moves in against these countries and Egypt shall not escape." Verse 43, "He shall have power over the treasures of gold and silver, over all the precious things of Egypt and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps." He not only wipes out the southern army, the northern army, but all of those Arabs who got involved with the north as well. You know what? He is the master of the world at this time. He has passed his first great revolutionary test. And now he really begins to feel his oats. Now he really begins to sense the power. It's like sort of a blood-thirsty sense that he gets. And so he moves out. And I believe it's at this time that he really begins to crash against the institutions that exist. I believe it's very likely now

that he consumes the false church and devours the harlot that he begins to move in to Israel. He calls upon the whole world to worship him. He abolishes all false religion. He sets himself up as God. He will tolerate no other kings and no other gods and no other religions. He will rule in absolute supremacy. And all of the allies of Russia are at his steps, or literally in the Hebrew, they're in his train, they're following along behind him.

And you know what precisely happens at this moment? Revelation 6 to 18 begins to take place. And God begins to pour out His wrath. And you know what happens? Seven seals are opened, seven trumpets are blown, seven bowls are poured out. God's wrath on the earth. The whole thing explodes at this point. Get the picture. Verse 43, he's sitting there, he's got it all in control. He has desecrated the temple. He's devoured all religion. He is God.

And then something happens in verse 44. "Tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him." What's going on? What's going on in the north? Well, I believe it's likely that they're going to come back. They're going to regroup.

Verse 44, "He shall go forth with great fury," the Antichrist, "to destroy and utterly sweep away many." You know what happens? He wins again. After all, he has Satan on his side and most of hell is cooperating.

And verse 45, "Then he plants the tabernacle of his palace between the seas," the Mediterranean Sea and the Dead Sea are the seas that would be known to Daniel. "Between the Mediterranean and the Dead Sea in the glorious holy mountain." And what mountain is it between those two seas? It is Zion. The place of the temple, the city of God, he sets up a temple and sets himself up as God and he has won two great victories. And now, I believe, we're nearly at the end of the Tribulation. By this time Israel is devastated. In these battles Israel has been wiped out, two out of every three are dead.

Is it over? Is that the way history ends? Look at the end of verse 45, the third point, his condemnation. "Yet," I like that word, don't you? "Yet, he shall come to his end and none shall help him." That's all it says. You want to know how it happens? He comes to his end? tell you how it happens. Just as soon as he is finished with his part of Armageddon and the blood bath in which he's victorious, the Bible says in Revelation 19, Jesus Christ comes out of the sky with a sword going out of His mouth. And the Bible says he will be slain with the sword that comes out of the mouth of Jesus Christ. You see, he's no match when he meets God's true King. He may have been a match for the king of the north, the king of the south and the king of the east, but he's no match for the Lord Jesus Christ.

You know what happens to Israel in all of this? Israel is at the deepest point of sorrow, the deepest point of suffering, the deepest point of humiliation in all of its history and it is at this very point that they look upon Him whom they've pierced and are redeemed. I believe they've already had 144 thousand special Jews giving them the message all through this three and a half years. And finally

they hear it.

I close with this. Three major lessons. By the way, if you want to know what happens after Christ comes, come back next week. That's chapter 12, that's the best part. But listen, three great lessons, now get them. Number one, God controls everything. Is that great? Everything. All of history under the control of God...every detail, every ruler, Ahasuerus, Alexander, Antiochus the Great, Antiochus Epiphanes, everybody in between, Antichrist, all carrying out His will within the framework of His plan. I'll tell you, it's a comforting thing to know that history is His story, that the whole thing is in His hand. I don't even worry about it. An unknown poet wrote, I love these words:

"My Father's ways may twist and turn, my heart may throb and ache, but in my heart I'm glad I know He maketh no mistake.

"My cherished plans may go astray, my hopes may fade away. But still I'll trust my Lord to lead, for He doth know His way.

"Though night be dark and it may seem that day will never break, pin my faith, my all in Him, He maketh no mistake.

"There's so much now I cannot see. My eyesight's far too dim, but come what may, I'll simply trust and leave it all with Him.

"For by and by the mist will lift and plain it all He'll make. Through all the way though dark to me, He maketh no mistake."

The second great lesson, not only that God controls history, and I love this one, but God will purge His people Israel. There's coming a day for Israel. And when these things begin to come to pass, said the Lord in Luke, look up, lift up your heads for your what? Redemption is near.

Third lesson, number one--God controls everything number two--God is going to purge and redeem His people; number three--the world will end in a holocaust but Christ will triumph over that and all will be well forever for the saints of God. Are you thankful?

Robert Lewis Stevenson wrote this story and I close with it.

There was a ship in a violent stormy sea. The ship was driven against the rocks. Any moment it might be dashed to pieces. The passengers in the ship were huddled together in terror, facing inevitable death. In the agony of that moment, one of the men said, "I'm going up to the pilot and I'm going to see the pilot." He made his way up and up and up and finally came to the pilot's house. And there he found the pilot chained to his post, with his hands on the wheel, guiding little by little, turning little by little away from the rocks and out into the deep of an open sea.

Robert Lewis Stevenson wrote that when the pilot saw the intruder and looked at his terror-stricken, white face, the pilot looked at him and smiled. The man turned around, said Stevenson, went back to the deck below and shouted. "All is well, all is well. I saw the pilot's face and he smiled."

And you know that, don't you? You've seen the pilot's face and He smiled. For those of us who know and love the Lord Jesus Christ, there's a blissful forever ahead. I hope you know Him.

Just before we have our prayer, I want to have you examine your heart. I can't preach a message like this and express in words the tremendous sense of awe that I have to know that God has written history before it happens. It's inevitable. At the same time, the tremendous sense that so many people will walk away from this not knowing Christ and end up perishing forever. I just hope that you know Christ. If you don't, right in your heart right now, in the silence of this moment, confess your sin and invite Jesus Christ in. Do that right now.

Knowing what I know about the way history is going to go and about the alternative plan of God, there's no choice but to choose life in Christ. Make that choice now. Don't go away without making the right commitments.

Father, we thank You so much for this wonderful evening. We've shared the wonder of the music and the message of Your Word. Father, help us to be able to hold that balance of knowing the inevitability of disaster in our world and yet fighting for each opportunity to rescue men before it's too late. Draw to the prayer room those that You would desire to come. And we'll thank You in Christ's name. Amen.

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