

Session 11 The Antichrist: His Role in the End-Times

I. THE ANTICHRIST AND THE TRIBULATION: THE CHURCH'S GREATEST HOUR

- A. The two End-Time prophetic themes most emphasized in the Scripture are Jesus' return to establish His worldwide Millennial Kingdom and the Antichrist's counterfeit evil worldwide empire. This shows us how important these two themes are to God and thus, to the Church.
- B. The Church will be on earth during the Great Tribulation. It is the context in which God will bring the Church to our greatest victory, purity and evangelism as we walk in the glory of God.
⁷ *For the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready. (Rev. 19:7)*
²⁷ *He might present her...a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle... (Eph. 5:27)*
² *I saw...those who have the victory over the Beast...standing on the sea of glass... (Rev. 15:2)*
- C. The Great Tribulation will also be a time when many fall away from the faith because they will be unprepared. They will lack understanding and perseverance (2 Thes. 2:3; 1 Tim. 4:1-2).
²¹ *Then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. 22 Unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved (physically preserved); for the elect's sakes those days will be shortened. (Mt. 24:21-22)*
¹ *The Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith... (1 Tim. 4:1)*
- D. Approximately fifty million people died in six years during World War II (1939-45). This is unprecedented in history, yet this will be far surpassed during the Tribulation (Rev. 6:8; 9:15).
⁸ *Power was given to them over a fourth of the earth to kill with sword... (Rev. 6:8)*
¹⁵ *The four angels... were released to kill a third of mankind. (Rev. 9:15)*

II. UNDERSTANDING THE SCRIPTURAL TERM "ANTICHRIST"

- A. The word antichrist comes from combining two Greek words. The first Greek word "**anti**" is a preposition which can mean either "**to substitute**" (to be in place of) or "**in opposition of**" (to be against). The second Greek word is "**christos**" (Christ) which means the "**anointed one**".
- B. When put together, they form a new word, "antichrist" which describes people or religious systems that act as a "counterfeit of" (substitute) and in "opposition to" Jesus, God's anointed One. Jesus spoke of false christs (anointed ones) coming (Mt. 24:24; Mk. 13:22).
- C. In Scripture, there are two applications of the antichrist. First, it refers to people with a false anointing called the "spirit of the antichrist" that works in every generation to rally and influence people against Jesus. Second, it refers to a literal man in the End-Times called "THE" Antichrist.

- D. All four specific references to the antichrist are by the Apostle John (1 Jn. 2:18, 22; 4:3; 2 Jn. 7).
¹⁸ ***The Antichrist is coming even now many antichrists have come... (1 Jn. 2:18)***
³ ***Every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. This is the spirit of the Antichrist which... is now already in the world. (1 Jn. 4:3)***
²² ***He is Antichrist who denies the Father and the Son. (1 John 2:22)***
- E. John referred to many antichrists (1 Jn. 2:18; 2 Jn. 7) who have operated throughout history. Examples of those considered to be antichrists by Church history include the Roman Emperors, Popes and other political leaders, especially Antiochus Epiphanes (175–164 BC), the Syrian king (Seleucid dynasty) who persecuted Israel in the days of Judas Maccabaeus (Dan. 11:20-45). Other figures often quoted are Nero (54-68 A.D.) due to his persecution of the Church or Titus Vespasian who led the Roman armies to destroy Jerusalem in 70 AD.
- F. Some see the fulfillment of what the Scripture says about the Antichrist in the lives of past religious or political leaders. They limit their understanding of the Antichrist as referring only to the spirit of the antichrist. They do not believe he will be a literal worldwide leader. John wrote of the Antichrist coming after the death of Antiochus (200 years) and Nero (25 years).
- G. The most significant historical manifestation of the spirit of the antichrist in modern times was in the leadership of Adolf Hitler in Germany (1933-45) and in World War II (1939-45). What Hitler did gives us insight into the magnitude of terror and evil that the Antichrist will accomplish.

III. THE ANTICHRIST AS A LITERAL MAN

- A. The Antichrist is the final world ruler in this age. He will make war against God in oppressing Israel and the Church (Rev. 11:7; 12:7, 17; 13:4, 7; 17:14; 19:11, 19; Dan. 7:21; 9:26).
¹⁹ ***The beast, the kings of the earth...gathered to make war against Him... (Rev. 19:19)***
¹⁴ ***These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them. (Rev. 17:14)***
- B. The title of the Antichrist as the End-Time world leader is used only once in Scripture (1 Jn. 2:18). However, Scripture describes him in other ways, calling him the little horn (Dan. 7:8); a king (Dan. 8:23; 11:36); one who makes desolate (Dan. 9:27) and the worthless shepherd (Zech. 11:16-17).
- C. The Antichrist's most prominent name in Scripture is the Beast. He will reason like a wild beast and will be the most cruel man in history. It will be impossible to negotiate with him for mercy. He is called the Beast 36 times in Revelation (Rev. 11:7; 13:1; 14:9; 16:2; 17:3; 19:20; 20:10).
- D. In 2 Thes. 2, Paul used three titles for the Antichrist calling him the Man of sin (v. 3), the Son of Perdition (v. 3) and the Lawless one (v. 8). He will sin to the fullest capacity possible for man.

- E. The most descriptive passages on the Antichrist in the NT are 2 Thess 2, Rev. 13 and Rev. 17. In the OT, they are Dan. 7-12 (Dan. 7:8, 18-27; 8:9-12, 23-26; 9:26-27; 11:20-45).
- F. The Antichrist will be fully human yet fully demonized. He will be a counterfeit to Jesus who is fully human and fully God. Satan will give him his authority (Rev. 13:2). He will supernaturally ascend from the bottomless pit as Jesus descended from heaven.
- ² ***The dragon (Satan) gave him his power, his throne, and great authority. (Rev. 13:2)***
- ⁷ ***The Beast (Antichrist) that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make war... (Rev. 11:7)***
- ⁸ ***The Beast...will ascend out of the bottomless pit and go to perdition. (Rev. 17:8)***
- G. The Antichrist will claim to be God and will demand that the whole earth worship him as he seeks to be the King of kings over all nations. He will have authority and worshippers in all nations yet will not totally dominate all as seen by those who continually war against him (Dan. 11:40-45).
- ³ ***All the world marveled and followed the beast. (Rev. 13:3)***
- ⁸ ***All who dwell on the earth will worship him... (Rev. 13:8)***
- H. The counterfeit trinity consists of Satan, Antichrist and the False Prophet (Rev. 13:1-2, 11). The Dragon (*Satan*) empowers the first beast (*Antichrist*) and the second beast (*False Prophet*).
- I. The Antichrist's political reign will last for at least seven years (Dan. 9:27). He will first bring world peace then in his final 3½ years, he will turn on Israel and all who refuse to worship him.
- J. The Antichrist's worldwide empire will include 4 main components: political authority to make set policy and laws to kill his resisters (Rev. 13:1-2, 15; 17:16); military force (Rev. 13:4, 7); economic control in the nations to establish monopolies and oppress nations (Rev. 13:2, 15-17) and religious control to establish a worldwide satanic worship movement (Rev. 13:4, 8-14).
- K. The Antichrist's primary activities will include making political covenants with Israel and Middle East nations, setting up the abomination of desolation (an image of himself in the Jerusalem Temple) that helps him raise up a worldwide worship movement and to establish a worldwide economic network (based on 666). He will fiercely persecute Israel and the Church (Dan. 7:21, 25; 8:24; 11:33-35; 12:7, 10; Rev. 6:9-11; 9:21; 11:7; 13:7, 15; 16:5-7; 17:6; 18:24; 19:2).
- L. The Antichrist's 10-nation confederation will provide him with the largest political, military and economic alliances giving him the greatest power base of any man or empire in history. He will have the largest army, the largest political and religious network and the most money of any in history and he will be the greatest criminal in history. The 10-nation confederation (Dan. 2:40-44; 7:7; Rev. 17:12) will possibly headquarter in the European Union (revived Roman Empire).
- ²⁴ ***His power shall be mighty...he shall destroy the mighty... (Dan. 8:24)***

- M. The Antichrist will be helped by the loyal service of the False Prophet with his great miracles and the image of the Beast which will be a statue of the Antichrist that is empowered by demons so that it will talk, breathe, and make laws (Rev. 13:14-16).
- N. Summary of the coming Antichrist as the most powerful evil political leader in history.
1. Military Genius (tactics/strategy) – Rev. 6:2; 13:2,16; Dan. 8:24, 25; 11:38-39
 2. Oratorical Genius (moves masses of people) – Dan. 11:32, 36; 8:23
 3. Political Genius (diplomacy) – Rev. 13:8, 12; 17:11-12; 2 Thes. 2:4; Dan. 7:23
 4. Commercial Genius (prosperity) – Dan. 11:36, 43; Rev. 13:16-17; Dan. 8:9, 24
 5. Religious Genius (doctrines and history) – 2 Thes. 2:4; Rev. 13:4, 8, 12
 6. Intellectual Genius (science, math, technology, languages, etc.) – Dan. 8:23; 7:25
 7. Occult Genius (demonology, miracles, human sacrifice) – Dan. 8:24; 11:39; Rev. 13

IV. GOD RAISES UP THE ANTICHRIST

- A. Scripture makes it clear that God raises up the Antichrist. Yes, Satan fully participates but in the end it is only by God's decree that the Antichrist has a reign of terror for 3½ years on the earth. The Antichrist will be given the same 3½ years as Jesus to show himself to Israel as their Messiah.
- B. Jesus has all power and authority in heaven and over the nations on earth.
- ¹⁸ *Jesus spoke saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth." (Mt. 28:18)*
- ²⁰ *He (the Father)...seated Him (Jesus) at His right hand...²¹ far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. ²² He put all things under His feet. (Eph. 1:20-22)*
- ¹ *There is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. (Rom. 13:1)*
- C. Jesus shall raise up the Antichrist and grant him authority for 3½ years over the nations.
- ¹⁶ *For indeed I will raise up a shepherd (Antichrist) in the land (Israel) who will not care for those who are cut off (killed)...but he will eat the flesh of the fat and tear their hooves in pieces. ¹⁷ Woe to the worthless shepherd...his arm shall completely wither... (Zech. 11:16-17)*
- ⁵ *And he (Antichrist) was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months....⁷ It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation...¹⁵ He was granted power to give breath to the image of the beast... (Rev. 13:5, 7, 15)*
- ²⁵ *He (Antichrist) shall speak pompous words against the Most High, shall persecute the saints of the Most High...then the saints shall be given into his hand for a time and times and half a time (3½ years). ²⁶ The court shall be seated, and they shall take away his dominion...²⁷ Then the kingdom...shall be given to...the saints of the Most High. (Dan. 7:25-27)*

- D. The Devil also gives the Antichrist his power and authority.
² *The dragon (Satan) gave him his power, his throne, and great authority. (Rev. 13:2)*
- E. Satan's two main purposes in giving the Antichrist power is to lead a global worship movement (Rev. 13:4, 8) and to exterminate the Jewish people (Zech. 13:8-9; Rev. 12:12-17) so a believing remnant cannot invite Jesus back to Jerusalem to rule Israel as their King (Mt. 23:37-39).
- F. Pressure in the Great Tribulation will come from four sources. God's wrath (Rev. 15:7) against the Antichrist's kingdom, Satan's rage against the saints (Rev. 12:12), man's sin as seen in evil acts against one another (Rev. 9:21) and convulsions in nature (earthquakes, etc.). The main emphasis of the Tribulation will be God's judgment (tribulation) against the Antichrist's empire as seen in the Book of Revelation (7 seals, 7 trumpets, 7 bowls). It is NOT against the saints. The Antichrist's persecution against God's people is a secondary emphasis of the Tribulation.
⁹ *God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through...Jesus... (1 Thes. 5:9)*

V. WHY WILL GOD RAISE UP THE ANTICHRIST?

- A. The Church needs an adversary to resist as part of the process of becoming wholehearted. The combination of the Antichrist and God's End-Time judgments on his empires provides the optimum context of spiritual resistance and warfare necessary to prepare the Church in glory.
³³ *The people who understand shall instruct many; yet for many days they shall fall (die) by sword and flame, by captivity...³⁵ Some of those of understanding shall fall (die), to refine them, purify them, and make them white, until the time of the end. (Dan. 11:33-35)*
¹⁰ *Many shall be purified, made white, and refined, but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand. (Dan. 12:10)*
- B. The Tribulation provides the optimum context to bring in the Great Harvest (including Israel).
⁹ *A great multitude which no one could number, of all nations...standing before the Throne...¹⁴ These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation... (Rev. 7:9, 14)*
- C. Summary: God will use the Tribulation to purify His Church as a Bride (Eph. 5:27; Rev. 19:7), to usher in a great Ingathering of souls and Israel's salvation (Rom. 11:26; Rev. 7:9-14), to expose false believers within the Church (2 Thes. 2:3-12; 1 Tim. 4:1-2) and to cleanse the earth from sin before the Millennial Kingdom (Isa. 24:1-6; Zech. 13:1-2). For more details see God's 7-fold purpose in allowing the Great Tribulation (part of session 3 in this course).

VI. WHY WE MUST UNDERSTAND WHAT SCRIPTURE SAYS ABOUT THE ANTICHRIST

- A. Daniel prophesied that the wise would understand in the End-Times (Dan. 12:10). They will not be lost at sea in the coming storm but will have a reliable "compass" in the storm. Understanding will be an issue of life and death. It will give us right expectations so we are adequately braced for what is coming and thus prepared to walk in God's glory and to endure great pressures.

- B. Those with understanding will have discernment to know what to avoid or what not to do. For example, they will refuse the “convincing persuasions” to take the mark of the Beast, or to participate in the prosperous economic and religious enterprises of Babylon the Great Harlot.
- C. Those with understanding will be in peace instead of fear and offense towards God. They will have confidence that God is fully in control of the End-Time crisis and is never surprised. We must make decisions in peace. No one can see clearly with the “smoke of fear” in our eyes.
¹⁰ The day of the Lord will come as a thief...both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up...¹⁴ Therefore...be diligent to be found by Him in peace... (2 Pet. 3:10, 14)
- D. Those with understanding of the End-Time Scriptures will intercede in a way that minimizes evil and increases victory in specific areas (Joel 2:12-18). Our prayers will change history and lead many to salvation and protection. Moses’ prayers released and stopped judgment (Exod 7-12).
- E. Those with understanding about the inevitability of the rise of the Antichrist’s reign of terror will urgently cultivate spiritual depth in God now before the time when the pressure fully escalates.
- F. Paul taught that the End-Time destruction will come suddenly taking most people by surprise.
² For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. ³ For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. (1 Thes. 5:2-3)
- G. The Church has a spirit of blindness related to the Antichrist and the coming conflict. Satan works to blind the mind of people (2 Cor. 4:4).
⁹ The coming of the lawless one (Antichrist) is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, ¹⁰ and with all unrighteous deception... (2 Thes. 2:9-10)
- H. We must have understanding about the Antichrist so we are not deceived into worshipping him.
⁹ If anyone worships the Beast (Antichrist) and his image...¹⁰ he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. ¹¹ The smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the Beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name. (Rev. 14:9-11)
- I. The Antichrist, the False Prophet and their armies will surely be defeated by Jesus (Rev. 16:16; 19:11-21; Dan. 7:11-14, 22, 26-27). They will be captured and thrown alive in the Lake of Fire.
¹⁹ I saw the Beast (Antichrist), the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him (Jesus)...²⁰ Then the Beast (Antichrist) was captured, and with him the False Prophet...These two were cast alive into the lake of fire. (Rev. 19:19-20)