

The Fourth Beast: The Antichrist Stage

Daniel 7:8, 20-22, 24b-26, 8:19, 23-25, 9:27 and 11:36-39

DIG: When will the antichrist rise to power? Who is the real power behind his rapid ascent? When and how will the Jews realize he is out to destroy them? What happens to the antichrist at the end of the Great Tribulation?

The antichrist stage will last for three and a half years, from the middle to the end of the Great Tribulation. Just as the fourth empire is **different** from the other three empires, so the antichrist, the **little horn** (Daniel 7:8a), will be **different** from the other ten horns. **After them another king will arise, different from the earlier ones.** As he rises to power he will kill three kings (7:24b). The other seven simply submit to his authority. Therefore, the antichrist will be the last Gentile ruler of the Times of the Gentiles (see my commentary on **The Life of Christ J1 - Jerusalem Will Be Trampled On by the Gentiles Until the Times of the Gentiles are Fulfilled**).

In his **first vision**, Daniel saw that the antichrist would **speak out against the Most High and oppress His saints and try to change the times of the Jewish festivals as Jeroboam did in First Kings 12:26-33.** And he also tries to **change the Torah.** He will **make a strong covenant with the Jewish leaders for a time, times and half a time, or the second three and a half years during the seven years of the Great Tribulation (Daniel 7:25b, 9:27 CJB, 12:7; Revelation 11:2-3, 12:6, 14, 13:5).** But after the three and a half years, judgment will sit against him and his power will be taken away and completely destroyed forever (Daniel 7:26). With each succeeding vision, Daniel gives us more information about him.

Daniel continued by saying: **While I was thinking about the ten horns, there before me was another horn, a little one, which came up among them.** This is the eleventh horn. **And three of the first horns were uprooted before it.** This left seven of the original ten horns. This horn looked more imposing than the other ten horns and had eyes like the eyes of a man, emphasizing intelligence, and a mouth that spoke boastfully (Daniel 7:8 and 20). In fact, this horn waged war against the saints and was defeating them, until

the Ancient of Days, or God the Father, came and pronounced judgment in the favor of the saints of the Most High, and as a result, the time came when they possessed the Kingdom (7:21-22).

In Daniel's **second vision**, the angel Gabriel told him: I am going to tell you what will happen later in the time of wrath, because the vision concerns The Appointed Time of the End, which is another name for the Great Tribulation (Daniel 8:19). Antiochus Epiphanes (Daniel 8:9-14) became a foreshadowing of the antichrist. What Antiochus did in history, the antichrist will do in prophecy. He was the little horn that grew out of the four prominent horns of the Greek Empire. Not even the rightful heir to the throne, Antiochus murdered his brother to gain control. He gained control of Palestine and would oppress God's people in their own land. He would put many Jews to death because they resisted his attempts to force them to become Grecian in their thinking and ways (First Maccabees 1:29-61 and 52-61). By slaughtering the Jews and forcing changes in the Torah, he constituted a great transgression in the sight of God.³⁸

In his **second vision** Daniel prophesied that in the latter part of the Times of the Gentiles, when rebels have become completely wicked, a stern-faced king or the Antichrist, a master of intrigue, will arise. He will become very strong politically and militarily, but he will not rise by his own power because his power will be satanic. He will cause astounding devastation and will succeed in destroying mighty men, or Jewish leaders, and the holy people, or the Jewish people left on the earth after the Rapture (Daniel 8:23-24). He will use deceit to prosper, and he will consider himself superior. He will claim to be God Himself. That is exactly what the apostle Paul said would happen. He said: Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God, or is worshiped, so that he sets an image of himself up in God's temple, proclaiming to be God (Second Thessalonians 2:3-4). When the Jewish people feel secure, he will destroy many and take his stand against the Prince of princes, Jesus Christ.

In his **third vision**, Daniel, with Antiochus Epiphanes as the type, continues to give us more information about the antichrist. Here he deals with the nature of the antichrist and his rise to power. The antichrist will do as he pleases. He will exalt and magnify himself above every god. In fact, half way through the Great Tribulation, he will set up the image of himself in the Holy of Holies to be worshiped (Matthew 24:15; Revelation 13:3-9). He

will say unheard-of things against the God of gods, which is exactly what Antiochus Epiphanes did (Daniel 7:25). He will be successful until the Time of Wrath, or the seven-year Great Tribulation is completed, for what God has determined must take place.

The second three and a half years will be a worldwide holocaust against the Jews. The persecution will be so severe that the antichrist will succeed in murdering two-thirds of the Jewish population of that time. He will do as he pleases. He will show no regard for the pagan gods of his fathers or have little place for such graces as mercy, gentleness or kindness, normally desired by women, nor will he regard any god, but will exalt himself above everyone, even God Himself. But this does not mean that he will be an atheist. Instead of them, he will honor a god of fortresses, in which might makes right. This will be a god unknown to his fathers, he will honor Satan with gold and silver, with precious stones and costly gifts. He will attack the mightiest fortresses with the help of the Devil. Because he honors Satan, he will be given supernatural satanic ability to take over the world (Daniel 11:36-39a; Second Thessalonians 2:8-10; Revelation 13:1-8). Those who acknowledge him, and confess him as God, will be rewarded for their loyalty. He will make them rulers over many people and will distribute the land at a price. The land he does conquer will be divided and given to those who worship him (Daniel 11:39b). His rise to power comes supernaturally through the power of Satan, who will use the antichrist to try to destroy all the Jews once and for all.

At the end of the Great Tribulation, however, he will be destroyed, but not by human power, the Ancient of Days will come and pronounce judgment in favor of the saints of the Most High (Daniel 7:22a, 8:25). Although Antiochus Epiphanes died by human hands, the antichrist will not. God will destroy him during the Campaign of Armageddon (Daniel 7:9-11, 26; Second Thessalonians 2:8). Once the four Gentile Kingdoms run their course, there will be a fifth Kingdom. But this one will be different. It will be a Jewish Kingdom called the messianic Kingdom, and at that time the saints of the Most High will possess it (Daniel 7:22b).

