

# The Book of Daniel

## Week 10: Chapters 11:36-45 & 12

### Chapter 11:

#### **Verses 36-45:**

In verses 36-38, what are some of the negative characteristics of the evil king?

He does as he wills, he exalts himself, he speaks against God, he doesn't even respect false gods, he glorifies the work of his own hands, he honors the valuables of earth, requests the help of a foreign god, and divides the land.

Despite his arrogance, what in verse 36 lets us know that his powers ultimately have limits?

"Till the indignation is accomplished". Once the deed is done, the authority is no more.

In verses 40-45 we're told of the final military campaign between the north and south. When does this campaign take place and where does it start?

After the king in the south attacks, the north retaliates and the war will come to the glorious land, resulting in the death of many, but there are some that will be spared.

What ultimately happens that ends the campaign of the king in the north?

He hears news of things happening to the north and east and goes to either turn or destroy many, but will eventually die alone.

*Note: These prophetic verses are sometimes why people think the fight for the "Holy Land" is still an important fight, as the battle between the north and south seems to continue until the end of days.*

While it seems straight-forward reading through this section, further study actually raises the question: who is this king? It seems like it's a continuation of the previous verses, and therefore would be Antiochus IV, but all of a sudden, after dozens of perfectly accurate prophecies, the timeline no longer lines up with Antiochus IV's life.

Also, the king identified in verse 36 is simple "the king". Nowhere else in Daniel is a king simply called "the king". Look at every reference before this in chapter 11. As repetitive as it seems, Daniel ALWAYS adds on "of the north" or "of the south". He never simply calls either just "the king".

Finally, chapter 11 seems to end the section. It turns from focusing on the kings of the south and north and begins talking about God's people and then ends with "until the end of time". It sort of closes out that historic period before moving onto verse 36.

So who is this king? Well there is something elsewhere in Daniel that gives us a clue. Where else in Daniel do we see someone speaking "astonishing things against the God of gods"?

Daniel 7. The fourth beast's largest single horn has similar characteristics to what we read in 36-38. And if we remember, the fourth kingdom is the last one before the mountain crushes the statue. So even though verses 1-35 are about the Hellenistic period (Greece), verses 36-45 can't possibly be talking about the war if this is indeed the horn of the fourth beast.

Like we read in verse 35, the son of man is now telling Daniel about what will happen when God's people finally get to the time of the end. And what's interesting about the fourth beast simply being called a "beast" and not described like another animal is that we actually see the same language used later in scripture, in Revelation.

In Revelation 13, John sees a "beast" which unlike the other beast (dragon) John saw doesn't resemble a single animal. It, like the beast in Daniel 7, has 10 horns and does great and terrible things. (blaspheming God)

If the beast in Revelation 13 and Daniel 7 are the same beast (because they're both referred to in the same way and both during "the end of times", and if the beast in chapter 7 is referenced as "the king" in chapter 11 (because the same action and authority occurs with both), then the king in chapter 11 is the end of times beast in Revelation 13, which is typically identified as the Antichrist.

To further the legitimacy of this claim, compare Daniel 11:39a and Revelation 13:11-12. The first beast seeks help from a second beast (or a foreign god) in order to get the people of the land to worship and honor him.

So despite sounding like a continuation of verses 1-35, verses 36 and following actually seem to take a quick turn from "present prophecies" to "future prophecies".

In case you're wondering why, then, they're both in the same chapter and why 36-45 isn't part of chapter 12 with the rest of the end times prophecies, well that's simple. In Hebrew, there are no chapters or paragraphs, just verses. Paragraphs and chapters were added later help readers understand where topics changed and make reading the Bible much more efficient.

What most likely happened is that early scholars thought that verses 36-45 were talking about the same thing as 1-35 and put them together, making them one chapter. When later scholars determined they were actually referencing different prophecies, it was too late to change chapters that had been circulated for hundreds of years already.

But 36-45 introduces the reader to the Antichrist, a "king" among demonic "princes" who works in the last days to draw people away from God before the son of man returns and puts an end to him. The fact that it's a demonic king and not simply a human one explains why he seems to be so much greater than all the other prophetic kings and why he's bold enough to stand in opposition to God for at least a short while.

That being the case, let's continue the story in chapter 12.

## **Chapter 12:**

### **Verses 1-4:**

During this time of great trouble that the Antichrist brings at the end, who comes to help God's people and who do they help? What happens shortly after he comes?

Michael, chief of angels, will come to aid God's people and everyone whose name is written in the book of life will be delivered. Then there will be a resurrection, some to life and some to contempt.

After Daniel is given this prophecy of the resurrection and eternal life, he is told to shut up the words and seal the book. Note that this DOESN'T mean the book isn't supposed to be opened to read from there on. It means that nothing more will be added to it, or "this is the end of the prophecy/vision". Therefore Daniel is being told nothing else will be explained. People will study the Bible and figure out many things about the prophecies, but the son of man himself will reveal no more, at least not to/through Daniel.

But don't take my word on the interpretation, look what happens next.

### **Verses 5-13:**

With the prophetic vision ending, Daniel finds himself once more at a stream, with someone on both banks and someone above the waters once more. One of the men on the banks asked the man above the waters how long would all the prophecies last. What was the answer the man gave and what was the interpretation?

A time, times, and half a time. There was no interpretation given. Because the book was sealed, Daniel learned no more about the prophecies than he knew before.

If he couldn't know the time, then perhaps he could know the outcome of the end of the prophecies. What does the man above the water tell Daniel about that?

Again, really nothing. He says "go on your way" and that some will remain faithful and others won't. He gives a set amount of days that again are prophetic but this time not even we who are thousands of years later can figure out the timeline, because it's still ahead of us.

Despite not giving Daniel and more clear answers, what DOES the man above the water tell Daniel that gives him comfort?

You shall rest and stand in your allotted place at the end of days. Daniel will be among the righteous saved because of his faith.

That's the end of the book. Unlike most of what we've read, it's left open, but ends with hope.

## **Conclusion:**

Unlike chapters 1-7, which is a chiasm focused around the power of God to humble the proud and the immediate hope for God's people, 8-12 are a string of prophecies centered around the upcoming hardships of God's people and the future and final salvation.

Therein lies the duality of Daniel: The first half, written in Aramaic, is supposed to bring people to faith, and the second half, written in Hebrew, is supposed to tell already faithful people what is yet to come.

The first half of Daniel is easy for us to read, as we can easily make connections between problems that faithful Christians run into and how God is working for their good.

The second half of Daniel is harder to read, but gives just as much hope when you put the work in. By looking at these complex strings of prophecies, we're able to start putting into perspective the absolute control God has over creation. It's more than just reaching in and changing a thing or two when things go wrong (like the fiery furnace or lions' den), but showing a control constantly and very personally weaved throughout the entirety of human history.

Daniel helps Christians understand that even if God chooses to not help solve our problems directly, he is ALWAYS at work for our good. Sometimes it's like Daniel 1-7, but it's always like 8-12.