

Session 9

The Antichrist

– Part 1 –

A. Introduction

1. Rev. 13 is primarily about the rise of the Antichrist during the final 3½ years of human history. It gives us a detailed description of who he is, his goal and agenda during the Great Tribulation, and his strategy.
2. Rev. 13 gives us the most complete picture of the Antichrist in the NT, while Dan. 8:23–26 and Dan. 11:29–45 give us the most complete picture of the Antichrist in the OT.
3. The Antichrist is a real and literal person in flesh and blood.
 - a. The word “*antichrist*” comes from combining two Greek words, “anti” and “Christos”.
 - i. “Anti” is a preposition which can mean either “to substitute (i.e. to be in place of) or “in opposition of” (i.e. to be against);
 - ii. “Christos” (i.e., Christ) 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” or “in opposition to” Jesus, God’s Anointed One.
 - c. In scripture, there are two applications of the term “antichrist”:
 - i. It can be applied to people with a false anointing called the “*spirit of the antichrist*” that works in every generation to rally and influence people against Jesus (2 Thes. 2:7; 1 Jn. 2:18; 4:3);
 - ii. Beyond it just being a spirit, it also refers to a literal man in the End Times — *THE Antichrist* (Dan. 8; 11; 2 Thes. 2:8–9; 1 Jn. 2:22; Rev. 13).
 - d. John referred to many antichrists who have operated throughout history, and also wrote of *the* Antichrist who is to come (1 Jn. 2:18; 2 Jn. 7).
 - i. Antiochus IV Epiphanes and the emperor Nero (who died about 200 and 25 years respectively before John’s epistles) definitely bore the spirit of the antichrist during the time they were alive.

- e. Some may see the fulfilment of what Scripture says about the Antichrist in the lives of past religious or political leaders or limit their understanding of the Antichrist as referring only to the spirit of the antichrist. They do not believe he would be a literal worldwide leader.
 - f. We must not limit our understanding of “antichrist” to just being a spirit because the Bible teaches that there will be an emergence of a literal End-Time worldwide leader known as the Antichrist (1 Jn. 2:18).
 - g. Paul taught that the emergence of this man as a world leader will be a major prophetic sign during the End Times (2 Thes. 2:1–3).
4. The Antichrist will be the final world ruler in this age. He will make war against God by oppressing Israel and the Church (Rev. 11:7; 12:7, 17; 13:4; 17:14; Rev. 19:19; Dan. 7:21; 9:26).
- a. The Antichrist will claim to be God and will demand that the whole earth worship him as he seeks to be 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 will continually war against him (Dan. 11:40–45; Rev. 13:3, 8).
 - b. During these seven years, the Antichrist will establish a peace treaty in the first 3½ years. In the middle, he will break the peace treaty and turn on Israel and all who refuse to worship him (Dan. 9:27).
 - i. Dan. 9:27 – *“Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering...”*
 - c. The Antichrist will be the most powerful world leader in the history of mankind. His worldwide empire will include four main spheres:
 - i. Political authority: to set policy and enact laws to kill all who resist him (Rev. 13:1–2, 15; 17:16);
 - ii. Military force (Rev. 13:4, 7);
 - iii. Economic system to establish a worldwide monopoly and oppress nations (Rev. 13:2, 15–17);
 - iv. Religious control that will allow him to establish a worldwide satanic worship movement (Rev. 13:4, 8–14).

B. Why We Must Understand What Scripture Says About the Antichrist

1. The Bible makes it clear that God wants us to develop an understanding of this man. Daniel prophesied that the wise would understand in the End Times. Understanding will be an issue of life and death (Dan. 12:10).
 - a. It will give us correct expectations, so we are adequately braced for what is to come, to prepare 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, those who understand will refuse to take the Mark of the Beast, or to participate in the prosperous economic and religious enterprise of the Harlot-Babylon.
 - c. Those with understanding will be filled with peace instead of being fearful or offended towards God. They will have confidence that God is fully in control of the End-Time crisis and that He is never surprised (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. Our prayers will change history, and lead many to salvation and protection (Joel 2:12–18).
 - 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 (1 Thes. 5:2–3).
 - f. We must have understanding about the Antichrist, so we are not deceived into worshipping him (Rev. 14:9–11).
2. The Bible provides many details about the Antichrist
 - a. The Antichrist is the second-most mentioned person in the Bible pertaining to End-Time prophecy and the rise of the Antichrist is the second-most emphasised event pertaining to the End Times.
 - b. The two most emphasized End-Time prophetic themes in 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, should also be for the church.

3. The Antichrist will be fully human and fully demonised. He will be a counterfeit to Jesus who is fully human and fully God. Satan will give him his authority, and he will supernaturally ascend from the bottomless pit as Jesus descended from heaven (Rev. 13:2; 17:8).

4. The Antichrist's reign will last for 3½ years after he breaks the peace treaty that he has established. There are six primary things that he will do before the Second Coming of Jesus.
 - a. He will make a political covenant with Israel, the Middle Eastern nations, and the rest of the world for seven years (Dan. 9:27).
 - i. This will usher in 3½ years of counterfeit world peace and safety (1 Thes. 5:1–3);
 - ii. He will also raise up the Harlot-Babylon (Rev. 17:3).

 - b. He will break the peace treaty after 3½ years which will begin the Great Tribulation (Dan. 9:27; Rev. 6:1–2).

 - c. He will set up the Abomination of Desolation, which is a series of events that will take place (Dan. 8:11–13; 9:27; Matt. 24:15; Mk. 13:14).

 - d. He will establish a worldwide worship movement for Satan and for himself, the “beast” (Rev. 13:4, 14–15).

 - e. He will establish a worldwide Mark-of-the-Beast economic system (Rev. 13:16–18).

 - f. He will fiercely persecute and seek to annihilate Israel and the Church (Dan. 7:21; 8:24; 11:33–35; 12:7, 10; Rev. 6:9–11; 9:21; 13:7, 15; 16:5–7; 17:6; 18:24; 19:2).

5. God is the One who raises up the Antichrist. (There will be further elaboration on this in a subsequent session.)
 - a. Scripture points to God as the One who will raise up the Antichrist. While Satan fully participates, it is ultimately only by God's decree that the Antichrist will be given a reign of terror for 3½ years on the earth. The Antichrist will be granted these 3½ years of reign by God (Matt. 28:18; Rom. 13:1–2; Zech. 11:16–17; Dan. 7:25–27; Rev. 13:7, 15).

C. Characteristics of the Antichrist

1. He will be the most brilliant, most powerful, and most evil political leader in all of human history. The Bible describes seven aspects of his brilliance:
 - a. *A military genius* — a man of war (Rev. 6:2; 13:2, 16; Dan. 8:24–25; 11:38–39);
 - b. *An oratorical genius* — his speech will convince and move masses (Dan. 8:23; 11:32, 36);
 - c. *A political genius* — he will form alliances, and many will swear allegiance to him (Rev. 13:8, 12; 17:11–12; 2 Thes. 2:4; Dan. 7:23);
 - d. *An economic genius* (Dan. 8:25; 11:26, 43; Rev. 13:16–17);
 - e. *A religious genius* — well-versed in religious doctrines (2 Thes. 2:4; Rev. 13:4, 8, 12);
 - f. *An intellectual genius* (Dan. 7:35; 8:23);
 - g. *An occultic genius* — he will understand the spirit realm (Dan. 8:24; 11:39; Rev. 13).

2. The Antichrist is given nine different titles in the Bible that describe his nature, origin, and character.
 - a. *The Antichrist* — One who opposes Jesus as Messiah (1 Jn. 2:18, 22; 4:3; 2 Jn. 7);
 - b. *The Beast* — This is his most prominent name in Scripture and is mentioned 36 times in the book of Revelation (Rev. 11, 13 – 14, 16 – 17, 19 – 20);
 - c. *A Little horn* — A political and military leader who will be small and insignificant initially, whom no one will take seriously at first (Dan. 7:11, 20);
 - d. *A king* — A prophet and a world leader (Dan. 8:23; 11:36);
 - e. *A Worthless shepherd* — One who has no regard for his people and is a dictator with his own agenda (Zech. 11:16–17);
 - f. *Gog of Magog* — It describes the origin and root of the Antichrist (Ezek. 38:2–3; 39:1);

- g. *The man of sin* — He will sin to the greatest capacity that is possible for any man and will cause the world to reach the fullness of iniquity (2 Thes. 2:3);
- h. *The son of perdition* — He is destined to be condemned to the lake of fire (2 Thes. 2:3);
- i. *The lawless one* — He will have no respect nor regard for the law of God and will lead nations to rebel against God (Ps. 2:1–3; 2 Thes. 2:8).