

“The spirit of antichrist” (Daniel 8)

Verses to Remember: “And through his shrewdness He will cause deceit to succeed by his influence; And he will magnify himself in his heart, And he will destroy many while they are at ease. He will even oppose the Prince of princes, But he will be broken without human agency” (Daniel 8:25).

The prophetic history of Daniel 8

- Daniel 8 gives further details on the prophecies of the second and third kingdoms from Daniel chapters 2 and 7. It focuses on a ‘little a’ antichrist Antiochus IV (“Epiphanes”) who was to come from the third kingdom, the Greek kingdom. This ‘little a’ antichrist is a picture of the final Antichrist who will come forth from the fourth kingdom, the kingdom of Rome/New Rome.

What is the spirit of antichrist? (And how can we respond?)

1. Opposition to God (vv. 11, 25)

- Antiochus IV called himself Epiphanes, meaning “god manifest.”
- There is repetition in this chapter (vv. 4, 8, 11), and in the book of Daniel as a whole (chs 4, 5), of kings magnifying themselves and then being brought down.
- The spirit of antichrist tries to usurp the worship that is due God alone.
- We are to oppose antichrist and never bow before him.
- We are to bring glory to God and bow before him always.

2. Opposition to God’s people (vv. 10, 24, 25)

- The spirit of antichrist goes after God’s people. We are to pray for, encourage, and support each other. We need each other in the midst of “Babylon.” Antiochus wanted to Hellenize the Jews of Jerusalem. Many had already Hellenized themselves because it was enticing to live like the Greeks around them. We need to encourage each other not to get caught up in the ways of the world around us. Those who did not Hellenize themselves, Antiochus tried to do it by force. When the world tries to force us to bow to it and turn away from God, we need to be there to support each other and encourage each other to hold firm to our faith.
- We are to hold firm and be still and know that God is God and that any tribulation we go through is temporary (In this case, 1,150 days).

3. Opposition to God’s truth (vv. 12, 25)

- The spirit of antichrist is deception. Antichrist is empowered by Satan (cf. v. 24) who is the father of lies. Satan especially hates the truth of Scripture that leads us to God and salvation.
- Antiochus tried to destroy the written Word of God. Today, many try to undermine the Bible. Some seek to outlaw it, while others mock it and try to dismiss it as myth. We are to hold firmly to God’s truth as individuals and as a church.