

# SECRETS OF PROPHECY

WHO IS THE ANTICHRIST? (PART 1)



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For hundreds of years, the religious world has been fascinated and fearful of the Antichrist. This mystical figure is seen as a representative of the devil – a political and religious leader associated with evil and deception.

Antichrist characters feature in movies, books and video games. From horror thrillers to religious films – the Antichrist is a source of intrigue and mystery.

Speculation relating to the identity of the Antichrist has resulted in a wide range of candidates. Some of the early contenders were the persecuting Roman Emperors, in particular, Nero and Diocletian, who killed countless Christians and certainly opposed the worship of Jesus Christ.

Many Christians believe the Antichrist will be a political figure at the end of time. This political and military genius will establish a one world government and rule the world. His headquarters will be in Jerusalem where he will demand worship and obedience.

The Muslims have their own views regarding an Antichrist. This person



(or Dajjal) is an evil power who appears to promote love and truth, but through deceptive powers actually promotes death and evil.

Nostradamus made a number of prophecies about the Antichrist. He actually predicted three Antichrists. His followers believed Napoleon

was the first Antichrist and Hitler was the second. The third, (associated with the mystical name “Mabus”) is yet to come.

With such a wide range of views how can we accurately identify the Antichrist? Is the Antichrist an individual or an alliance of evil? Will the Antichrist appear in the future or is he alive today? What role will the Antichrist play in the final events of world history and how can you be certain to avoid the sinister plans of this deceptive power?

In this two part series we will delve into the “secrets of prophecy” and allow the Scriptures to clearly identify the Antichrist of Bible prophecy.

## Q1 WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT THE ANTICHRIST?

2 John 1:7 *For many deceivers have gone out into the world who do not confess Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an \_\_\_\_\_*



The term “antichrist” is only mentioned in four passages of the Bible – all in the letters of John. In each case, the term is used to portray a false teacher or deceptive power that corrupts the faith within the church.

An “antichrist” literally means “instead of Christ” or “in the place of Christ”. John said there were “many antichrists” within the early church (1 John 2:18) and these antichrists all had a misconception about Jesus Christ.

An “anti-christ” literally means “instead of Christ” or “in the place of Christ”.



The original “Antichrist” is the devil himself. It was Lucifer who first wanted to take the place of Christ (Isaiah 14:12-14) and it is he who continually opposes and misrepresents Him.

### The Antichrist of Prophecy:

Within Bible prophecy there is one specific “Antichrist” who is described in great detail. This power would rise after the time of the early church and have a dramatic impact on the history of the world.



Q2

## WHAT IS THE NAME OF THE ANTICHRIST THAT WOULD ARISE AFTER THE TIME OF THE EARLY CHURCH?

2 Thessalonians 2:1-4 *Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ is revealed, the son of perdition (v3)*

Within the early church some people believed and taught that Jesus would return in their day. The apostle Paul refuted this concept. He predicted that before Jesus returned, the church would experience a major spiritual fall. This “falling away” would reveal the “man of sin”. This great Antichrist would exalt himself and be involved in breaking or disregarding the law of God.

It is interesting to note that the Antichrist of prophecy would arise within the church. In a similar way, Jesus referred to His disciple Judas as the “son of perdition” (John 17:12). Judas was a leader “in the church”

who wanted power more than he wanted Christ. Most people think the Antichrist will be a secular political leader. But the Bible is clear. The Antichrist will come from the world of religion.

Most of the prophecies relating to the Antichrist are featured in the books of Daniel and Revelation.

In these prophecies a variety of symbols are used to describe the characteristics and activities of the Antichrist. In the book of Daniel, the Antichrist power is symbolised as a “little horn” (Daniel 7). In the book of Revelation, the same power is described as the “first beast” (Revelation 13) and “Babylon” (Revelation 17). In each case the identifying marks are very similar – indicating the same power presented from slightly different angles.

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The focus of this study will be an investigation of Daniel 7. This chapter is vital because it outlines the empires of history and identifies very specific characteristics of the Antichrist. It also lays the foundation for future descriptions of the Antichrist in the book of Revelation. Please read Daniel 7 (there are 28 verses) and notice especially the descriptions and characteristics of the “little horn”.

### **A Vision of Four Beasts (verses 1-7)**



### Q3 WHAT DID DANIEL SEE COMING UP FROM A WIND SWEPT SEA?

Daniel 7:2,3 *Daniel spoke, saying, "I saw in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the Great Sea. And \_\_\_\_\_ great \_\_\_\_\_ came up from the sea, each different from the other"*

While in vision Daniel saw four great animals coming up from the sea. Each of these "beasts" were different animals with unique characteristics.

### Q4 IN BIBLE PROPHECY WHAT DO THE FOLLOWING SYMBOLS REPRESENT?

#### The winds

Jeremiah 49:36,37 *"Against Elam I will bring the four winds ... I will bring disaster upon them, My fierce anger", says the LORD; "And I will send the \_\_\_\_\_ after them until I have consumed them."*

Winds are a symbol of strife, destruction and war. A wind swept sea is one where there is plenty of unrest and commotion.

#### The sea

Revelation 17:15 *Then he said to me, "The waters which you saw ... are \_\_\_\_\_, multitudes, nations and tongues"*

The sea represents an area of vast population, a place where there are



many people from a wide background of nationalities. Even today we refer to such a group as a “sea of faces”. The beasts in Daniel’s vision were coming up from a very populated area of the globe.

**A beast**

Daniel 7:17 *Those great beasts, which are four, are four*

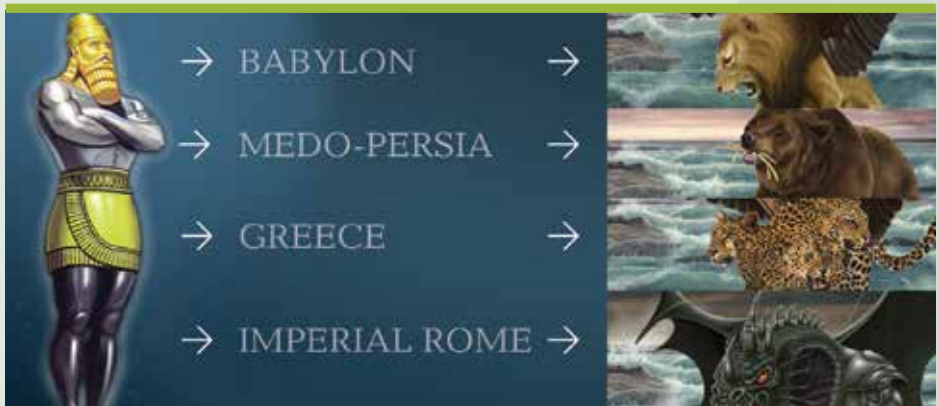
Daniel 7:23 ... *The fourth beast shall be a fourth \_\_\_\_\_ on earth*

A beast is a symbol for a kingdom or political power. The use of an animal to represent a nation is still used today. For instance the “eagle” represents the United States. The “kangaroo” represents Australia. A “beast” is not necessarily a negative symbol – it simply means an animal that has characteristics that represent a nation.

In Daniel 7 we find four great nations or political powers all different from one another, rising up from populated areas of the world where there has been a history of war and destruction.

By comparing the prophecy of Daniel 2 (the great image) with this prophecy of Daniel 7, it is evident that Daniel is seeing the same succession of world empires. Both prophecies are aligned perfectly. However the prophecy of Daniel 7 provides greater detail and a number of additional interesting facts. In Daniel 2 metals are used to symbolise the nations while in Daniel 7 “beasts” or animals are used.

*A beast is a symbol for a kingdom or political power.*





To illustrate the link between the two prophecies, the fourth beast of Daniel 7 has “iron teeth” and is called the “fourth kingdom” (Daniel 7:7,23). The power represented by iron in Daniel 2 is also called the “fourth kingdom” (Daniel 2:40). The four kingdoms represented in both Daniel 2 and Daniel 7 are:

- Babylon
- Medo-Persia
- Greece
- Rome

**Q5**

### WHAT BEAST IS USED TO SYMBOLISE THE FIRST KINGDOM, BABYLON?

Daniel 7:4 *The first was like a \_\_\_\_\_, and had eagle’s wings*



The king of beasts is a perfect symbol for the proud and powerful Babylon and an ideal parallel to the “head of gold” in Daniel 2. The prophet Jeremiah also described the King of Babylon as being “like a lion” (Jeremiah 50:43,44).

**Q6**

### WHAT ANIMAL IS USED TO REPRESENT THE SECOND KINGDOM, MEDO-PERSIA?

Daniel 7:5 *And suddenly another beast, a second, like a \_\_\_\_\_. It was*



*raised up on one side, and had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth ...*



The coalition government of the Medes and Persians was “lopsided” because the Persians were a much stronger entity than the Medes. The bear had three ribs in its mouth which indicates it had eaten other beasts. The three major powers conquered by Medo-Persia were Babylon, Lydia and Egypt.

**Q7**

**WHAT ANIMAL IS USED TO REPRESENT THE THIRD KINGDOM, GREECE?**





Daniel 7:6 *After this I looked, and there was another, like a \_\_\_\_\_, which had on its back four wings of a bird. The beast also had four heads, and dominion was given to it*

A leopard with four wings represents a very fast and attacking empire. Notice this leopard had four heads. After the death of Alexander, the Greek empire was divided between four of his generals, the heads of his empire. These four generals were: Ptolemy, Seleucus, Cassander and Lysimachus.

Q8

**THE FOURTH KINGDOM, PAGAN ROME, IS SYMBOLISED BY A POWERFUL CREATURE WITH IRON TEETH AND TEN HORNS (V7). WHAT DO THE TEN HORNS REPRESENT?**

Daniel 7:24 *The ten horns are ten \_\_\_\_\_ who shall arise from this kingdom*



Just as the iron legs of Rome divided into the iron and clay feet and ten toes of Daniel 2, now we find Daniel seeing ten horns arising out of the power of Rome. A “horn” is another symbol of a kingdom (Daniel 7: 24, 8:22). The ten horns are the ten powers that rose from the divided Roman Empire. These nations are what we see today as Western Europe.

**The Little Horn (v8-28)****Q9** WHAT DID DANIEL SEE COMING UP OUT OF THE TEN HORNS?

Daniel 7:8 *I was considering the horns, and there was another horn, a \_\_\_\_\_ one, coming up among them, before whom three of the first horns were plucked out by the roots ...*



The little horn and the judgment is the focus for the rest of the chapter. It is this power that provides the additional information to the Daniel 2 prophecy. Here we will see the character and power of the little horn, the great Antichrist of prophecy.

**Q10** WHAT ARE THE CHARACTERISTICS THAT CLEARLY IDENTIFY THE ANTICHRIST POWER OF THE LITTLE HORN?**Clue 1 - It arises from Western Europe**

The little horn was seen in amongst the ten horns “coming up from them” – rising out of the head of the fourth beast.

*... the ten horns represent the division of the Roman empire into the nations of Western Europe; the little horn would arise from somewhere within that region.*



(Daniel 7:8). This information provides us with the geographical location of the rise of the little horn. Since the ten horns represent the division of the Roman empire into the nations of Western Europe, the little horn would arise from somewhere within that region.

### **Clue 2 – It is a “little” kingdom**

This political power has the unique characteristic of being a “little horn” (Daniel 7:8). Here we have a small nation that will accomplish large things.

### **Clue 3 – It arises after the ten tribes of Europe were established**

The little horn Antichrist not only comes out of the ten horns but also comes to power after the ten horns were established: “and another shall arise after them” (Daniel 7:24). The ten horns were finally established in 476AD, so we are looking for a power which gained its political clout after this date.

### **Clue 4 – It overcomes three political powers as it rises to prominence**

The Bible says that three of the original ten horns were “plucked out by the roots” (Daniel 7:8). The little horn would overcome three of the tribes of Europe on its way to dominance. Three of the original kingdoms had been removed by 538AD. This kingdom would come to power sometime around 538AD.

### **Clue 5 – It is different from the other ten powers**

The ten tribes of Western Europe were all secular political powers. The “little horn” was unique – there was something different about this power.

**Clue 6 – It would have a man at its head who speaks for it**

Although this power is a political entity, it would have “eyes like the eyes of a man” (Daniel 7:8). A man would be the focus of this power and would be the absolute spokesperson (Daniel 7:8).

**Clue 7 – It would speak blasphemies against God**

This power delves into religion; speaking “pompous words against the Most High” (Daniel 7:25).

**Clue 8 – It would persecute God’s people**

The “little horn” power would “persecute the saints of the Most High” (Daniel 7:25). We are looking for a power who is responsible for the deaths of faithful Christians.

*We are looking for a power who is responsible for the deaths of faithful Christians.*



**Clue 9 – It would be in power for 1,260 years**

This power rules for “a time and times and half a time” (Daniel 7:25). By comparing Daniel 7:25 with Revelation 12:6,14 it is clear that this time prophecy is another way of saying 1,260 days. A “time” is one year, “times” is two years” and “half a time” is six months or as the Amplified Bible translates it, “three and-one-half years”. Based on the 30-day calendar used by the Ancient Scriptures, three and-a-half years is 1,260 days.



In Bible prophecy, a day is a symbolic code for a literal year (Ezekiel 4:6). Thus 1,260 days represents 1,260 literal years. Seven times in the books of Daniel and Revelation the same time period is given, using different phrases, to represent the length of rule for this Antichrist power.

### Clue 10 – This power would attempt to change times and the law

In one of the most intriguing clues of all, the “little horn” would “intend to change times and law” (Daniel 7:25). In our search for the identity of the Antichrist we need to discover which power would attempt to alter times in connection with the law.

In the next study guide, you will have the opportunity to investigate the facts and clearly identify the Antichrist. You will see the impact this power has had on the world and look at some practical tips on how to respond to upcoming deceptions.



### Three Points to Remember:

- An “antichrist” is a person or entity that opposes or attempts to take the place of Jesus Christ
- The Antichrist of prophecy is called the “man of sin”

- Daniel 7 provides at least ten clear clues to identify the Antichrist of prophecy

### Story:

*Daniel was a pastor who had just been assigned to a new church in Tennessee. Daniel's identical twin brother, Paul, could also preach quite well. Daniel decided to provide a graphic illustration on the subject of "counterfeits" so he asked his brother to preach the sermon next week. In the sermon Paul stated that many would be deceived by the Antichrist in the last days. Halfway through the presentation Paul asked his congregation if they believed he was their pastor, Daniel. They all put up their hands and started to laugh. To their utter shock Pastor Daniel then emerged from a side entry and stood by his twin brother. Unwittingly, the church was fooled.*

*What lessons can you learn from this story?*

... the most intriguing clue of all, the "little horn" would "intend to change times and law"



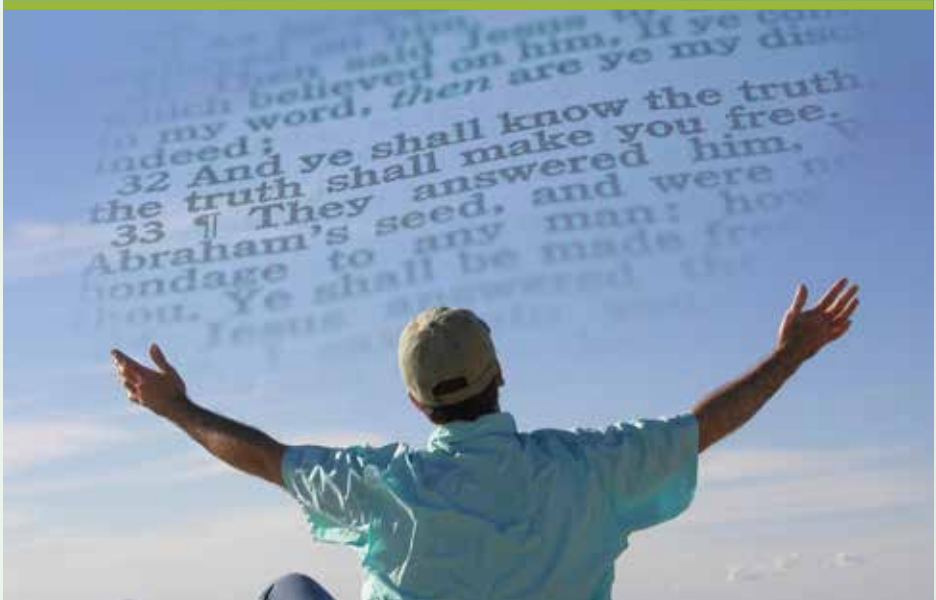
### Relational questions:

1. What is the overall attitude that underlies an "antichrist"?
2. In what ways do some Christians demonstrate an antichrist attitude today?
3. What do you think is the attitude of the true Christ and how can you demonstrate that in your life?



**Your response:**

Are you willing to accept God's truth, even if it means you will need to make changes in your life? \_\_\_\_\_



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