

Nebuchadnezzar and Antichrist

Commentary for March 1, 2011 — How Much of an Archetype?

This month's article is titled "Origin and Goal of Western Civilization" by Dr. Ernest L. Martin. Read my observations in the "[March 2011 Newsletter](#)" because they bear directly on the subject. King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon was the ruler of the entire world in his day (not figuratively but literally), the leading Gentile figure involved in the origin of Western civilization. That civilization is the Babylonian system, which has never functioned as well as it does today, both for expanding trade and controlling people. Therefore it is useful for us to compare the first world ruler with the last world ruler, the antichrist.

Nebuchadnezzar was a terribly wicked human being, a horror worse even than the Assyrians who terrorized the ancient world. His actions from a biblical perspective are recorded in 2 Kings chapters 24 and 25, as well as 2 Chronicles chapter 36, and Jeremiah chapters 27, 28, and 29. Nebuchadnezzar was evil in his methods, but he accomplished good things also. He was a tremendous builder, organizer, and administrator — assisted ably by Daniel and his associates Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. It was God's intention for the Babylonian empire to succeed and accomplish His will.

Nebuchadnezzar's primary concern was for the maintenance of his rule while he was alive. He was informed by Daniel that his empire would be replaced with another inferior empire. Unifying the world under one single ruler, himself, he destroyed the religions and histories and traditions of subjugated peoples and, when necessary, he had entire populations moved from their homelands. This was the fate suffered by the people of the Kingdom of Judah. Yet through miraculous events involving Nebuchadnezzar's experiences and Daniel's guidance, the people, history, and religious books of the Jews were preserved by God's providence. As Jewish author Herman Wouk wrote, Israel and the Jews would hardly be known to world history except for the existence of the Old Testament.¹ We have Daniel to thank for that.

Compared to the first world ruler, Nebuchadnezzar, the antichrist will have the same ruthless genius for control and murder and conquest, but he will accomplish his goal with finesse and even dazzling scientific brilliance. He will bring even more positive good to the world: he will bring peace. He will bring prosperity. He will solve problems that have plagued mankind for millennia. In his article "[Coming: The New World Order](#)," Dr. Martin shows what the rule of the antichrist will be like. It will not be as brutal as you might think (until the end of his rule). He will be highly successful and bring much good to the world. Reread that article after you read "Origin and Goal of Western Civilization."

There is one area of human endeavor that will continue the present powerful trend. This is the worldwide trend of more and more and more information and knowledge being available

¹ *This is My God: The Jewish Way of Life*, 1959 (revised ed. 1973).

almost immediately. While this trend continues, a contrary worldwide trend will also be progressing; more and more power is consolidating in fewer and fewer hands. This undesirable trend will continue until everything is under the control of just one man, the antichrist. While all human power descends to one man, information distribution will be increasingly more and more diverse and available. That includes information about God (Daniel 12:4). Near the end of the antichrist's rule, his control will be at its greatest, and his rule will be legitimized with the façade of being God's truth.

Yes, knowledge is becoming more diverse and increasingly distributed. This includes information about God, Christ, and the Bible, which will seemingly "cover the earth." At present, never before has so much information been so quickly available. This trend will continue so that the Word of God can increasingly cover the world.

Before Christ returns it will seem that **"the earth shall be full of the knowledge of YHWH, as the waters cover the sea"** (Isaiah 11:9). However, this verse in Isaiah refers to the millennium and not the time before Christ returns. This should not surprise us because we are told that the antichrist will falsely portray himself off as the true Christ.

The antichrist will teach the world a great deal about God, assisted by the false prophet of Revelation 16:13, 19:20, 20:10. As you will read from Dr. Martin's article this month, King Nebuchadnezzar tried to inform the people of his empire who the true God was. Near the time of the end of the age the world will listen to the last world ruler, the antichrist. Most of what the antichrist and the false prophet will say about God will be true, with small, deadly lies mixed in. The world will question, but God will send a spirit of deception so that their questioning will be suppressed and they will believe **"the lie"**:

"And then shall that Wicked [one] be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all [1] power and [2] signs and [3] lying wonders, And with [4] all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish;

[Why?] **because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a [the] lie:**

[Why?] **That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."**

• **2 Thessalonians 2:8–12**

Yes, plentiful information about God will be available; **"the truth"** will be available to all throughout the world. God will not merely send a delusion upon the world, He will send **"strong delusion,"** so that most shall **"believe the lie"** about God, the true Christ, and salvation. The antichrist will be a "kinder, gentler" version of Nebuchadnezzar. He will not be as harsh, brutal, or destructive — not until the end of his rule when he shall viciously persecute God's people Israel by means of the tribulation (Matthew 24:21). At that time the antichrist will be just like Nebuchadnezzar, a horror.

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