

Is the Antichrist Revealed Before the Tribulation?

This is a valid and possibly timely question. The following booklet attempts to answer this question by describing and clarifying the events that Scripture states will surround and lead up to the Antichrist. It details the “career” of the Antichrist, his changing persona throughout, and the circumstances in which he will be revealed.

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Forward

Numerous books and articles have been written about the Antichrist. The best of these writings are those that stick to the texts of Scripture *alone* and do not make further assumptions. There are only a few passages that refer to the Antichrist making it quite tempting to go beyond what those texts in fact state. Doing this should be carefully avoided. On the other hand, we *do* want to understand the incredible significance of these texts and how they relate to one another. God's Word is not only complete, but it is also sufficient in providing what we need to know about this subject.

There is much controversy about the events that surround the end-times. If what you read in this booklet is different from what you have always been taught, please keep reading and then test it according to Scripture. The intent is not to disparage any formerly held view, rather bring to light certain truths of Scripture that could be extremely pertinent to this day and age. If you have only assumed certain conclusions regarding the end of the age and the Antichrist, please reconsider those assumptions. Read the texts of Scripture, read the content of the booklet, and see that they consistently line up with each other. Wrestling with these texts and, more importantly, how they relate to other texts is worth it. Initially, we will lay some groundwork by looking at Daniel 7, 8, 9, & 11. From that, we will look at parallel passages in Matthew 24, Revelation 13, 17 and 2 Thessalonians 2.

Section One – Old Testament Groundwork

Book of Daniel

We are far enough removed from Hitler's Germany that we can only imagine what the nation hoped for in their leader. Looking back, what they "saw" in Hitler's words is not what they received. What they were promised is not what was delivered. Hitler was able to "schmoose" them down his path with apparent ease. However, he carried quite a big stick behind the scenes. Don't worry, though, because the world has learned its lesson, right? No, according to the Bible, the *masses* of the world will be lead astray, yet again, by a world leader for one last time!

According to Scripture, the world will be "given" one final antichrist. This Antichrist is mentioned in Genesis 3:15, and possibly alluded to in other Old Testament references. It is not until the Book of Daniel that the Antichrist's character and tactics are *specifically* talked about. He is called: the little horn, the beast, the prince and the king. (Understand that Daniel is prophetic in nature and employs symbols to relate truth.)

1. The little horn - Daniel 7:8, 11, 19-26
2. The small horn - Daniel 8:9-19, 23-26
3. The prince - Daniel 9:26-27
4. The king - Daniel 11:36-45

1. The Character of Antichrist (i.e. the little horn) Prophesied

Daniel 7:8, 11, 19-26 NASB

8 While I was contemplating the horns, behold, another horn, a little one, came up among them, and three of the first horns were pulled out by the roots before it; and behold, this horn possessed eyes like the eyes of a man and a mouth uttering great boasts.

11 Then I kept looking because of the sound of the boastful words which the horn was speaking; I kept looking until the beast was slain, and its body was destroyed and given to the burning fire.

19 Then I desired to know the exact meaning of the fourth beast, which was different from all the others, exceedingly dreadful, with its teeth of iron and its claws of bronze, and which devoured, crushed and trampled down the remainder with its feet,

20 and the meaning of the ten horns that were on its head and the other horn which came up, and before which three of them fell, namely, that horn which had eyes and a mouth uttering great boasts and which was larger in appearance than its associates.

21 I kept looking, and that horn was waging war with the saints and overpowering them

22 until the Ancient of Days came and judgment was passed in favor of the saints of the Highest One, and the time arrived when the saints took possession of the kingdom.

23 Thus he said: 'The fourth beast will be a fourth kingdom on the earth, which will be different from all the other kingdoms and will devour the whole earth and tread it down and crush it.

24 As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings will arise; and another will arise after them, and he will be different from the previous ones and will subdue three kings.

25 *He will speak out against the Most High and wear down the saints of the Highest One, and he will intend to make alterations in times and in law; and they will be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time.*

26 *But the court will sit for judgment, and his dominion will be taken away, annihilated and destroyed forever.'*

Verses 19-26 are about a vision that Daniel, a prophet of God, has of “four beasts.” Those four beasts represent four world empires that will unfold. History tells us that those four empires are Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome. This fourth beast is the Roman Empire. The final world kingdom will extend from this Roman Empire (we will see this in Revelation 17) and will be ruled by the “ten horns” representing rulers. (We will see *how* these “ten horns” rule in Revelation 13.) Among the ten horns will arise *another* who controls them. This will be the Antichrist (or the “little horn”).

Verses 8, 20, & 24 explain the Antichrist and his initial character. “*The eyes of a man:*” he will be an individual and personable. “*The mouth which utters great boasts:*” the words out of his mouth are bold with great plans and purposes. His demeanor is capable of attracting vast amounts of people. Ultimately, his persona will capture the attention of the masses. They will gladly support and promote his game plan. This is rebellion against God’s Anointed King, Jesus Christ. “*Pulled out by the roots before it*” indicates that he is powerful and possibly ruthless. He is so powerful that he will eventually supplant three of the “ten horns,” leaving seven horns. His countenance will give him ultimate power of this World Kingdom, the prominent and dominant over the horns. Thus, he will be the grandest change-agent in the history of the world.

According to verse 25, the Antichrist changes the times and the laws. People will initially see him as a great leader and love his “boasts.” But, as we just learned, his true persona is ruthless. His “boasts” may not be recognized as “deadly.” Will people understand that God is using the Antichrist to lead the rebellious to their eternal destiny? C.F. Keil states:

1. **“‘Times and laws’ are the foundations and main conditions, emanating from God, of the life and actions of men in the world. The sin of the king in *placing himself with God* (emphasis mine), therefore, ..., ‘consists in this, that in these ordinances he does not regard the fundamental conditions given by God, but so changes the laws of human life that he puts his own pleasure in the place of the divine arrangements.’”**

1. Keil & Delitzsch, Commentary on the O.T., Vol. 9, Hendrickson Publishers, p. 650-651.

C.F. Keil interprets the Antichrist’s (king) actions in his role as change-agent as placing himself *with* God. Why does Keil say it like that? Did he mis-interpret Daniel 7:25? *No, he did not.* So, how can he assume this “technique?” C.F. Keil continues:

2. **“...he shall speak against the Most High. אָנִי means, properly, against or at the side of,...It denotes that he would use language by which he would set God aside, regard and give himself out as God; cf. 2 Thess. 2:4. Making himself like God, he will destroy the saints of God.”**

2. Keil & Delitzsch, Vol. 9, p. 650

Leon Wood writes in the same vein:

3. **"Against the Most High: The little horn's differences continue. The word for 'against' is literally 'at the side of' (letsad), indicating that the little horn will seek to raise himself as high as God and make pronouncements accordingly, which implies making them contrary to what God would make (cf. 11:36, 37; and 2 Thessalonians 2:4)**

3. Leon Wood, A Commentary on Daniel, Zondervan, 1973, p. 201.

Carefully note what these commentaries state. The Antichrist sets God “aside” by conveying himself *as* God. In the Greek language, “anti” (in the word “antichrist”) can mean “*against*,” or as a Greek prefix, it can mean “*in the place of, in the stead of.*” Thus, the Antichrist puts himself “in the place of” God. He accomplishes this by his speech: “boasting great things” (vs 20). These “great things” are not so great to true believers because he is “displacing” God! He dares to “come along side” God’s laws only to displace them with his *own* laws. Daniel 11 reveals that having “displaced” the God of the Bible with himself is blasphemous to the God of the Bible! Please note that sequence. In *this* passage, the Antichrist is *not* verbally bad-mouthing God. Rather, via his speech, he is “displacing” God with his own agenda and his own person. **His claims are ultimately “against” God by cunningly speaking “in the place of” God!** He boasts of “great” things, he does “great” things by *displacing* God in cultures. It is not until later (we will see this in Daniel 11) that the underlying persona of the Antichrist becomes known among the world.

Daniel 7:25 also points out that the Antichrist does two things to the saints. First, he “wears out” the saints. How does he do this? True saints are fighting *for* God and thus battling against the Antichrist. This is emotionally and spiritually draining. Secondly, the saints are delivered into the Antichrist's hands for the last 3 1/2 years of the tribulation. (This persecution of the saints will be clarified in Revelation. Also, the reason for this order will be understood in 2 Thessalonians 2.)

In conclusion, Daniel 7 tells of the “little horn,” the Antichrist, a powerful leader over the ten horns ruling the world. He is a boastful man who dismisses God from authority by setting his own agenda. Ultimately, this changes times and laws and results in persecution of the saints. The good news for the saints of God is this: a Holy God will destroy him!

2. Historical Preview of Antichrist (i.e. the small horn): Antiochus IV Epiphanes

Daniel 8:9-19, 23-26 NASB

9 Out of one of them came forth a rather small horn which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the Beautiful Land.

10 It grew up to the host of heaven and caused some of the host and some of the stars to fall to the earth, and it trampled them down.

11 It even magnified itself to be equal with the Commander of the host; and it removed the regular sacrifice from Him, and the place of His sanctuary was thrown down.

12 And on account of transgression the host will be given over to the horn along with the regular sacrifice; and it will fling truth to the ground and perform its will and prosper.

13 Then I heard a holy one speaking, and another holy one said to that particular one who was speaking, "How long will the vision about the regular sacrifice apply, while the transgression causes horror, so as to allow both the holy place and the host to be trampled?"

14 He said to me, "For 2,300 evenings and mornings; then the holy place will be properly restored."

15 When I, Daniel, had seen the vision, I sought to understand it; and behold, standing before me was one who looked like a man.

16 And I heard the voice of a man between the banks of Ulai, and he called out and said, "Gabriel, give this man an understanding of the vision."

17 So he came near to where I was standing, and when he came I was frightened and fell on my face; but he said to me, "Son of man, understand that the vision pertains to the time of the end."

18 Now while he was talking with me, I sank into a deep sleep with my face to the ground; but he touched me and made me stand upright.

19 He said, "Behold, I am going to let you know what will occur at the final period of the indignation, for it pertains to the appointed time of the end....."

23 In the latter period of their rule,

When the transgressors have run their course,

A king will arise,

Insolent and skilled in intrigue.

24 His power will be mighty, but not by his own power,

And he will destroy to an extraordinary degree

And prosper and perform his will;

He will destroy mighty men and the holy people.

25 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.

26 The vision of the evenings and mornings

Which has been told is true;

But keep the vision secret,

For it pertains to many days in the future.

This is another vision Daniel had that was initially prophetic and has been fulfilled in history. The text picks up after Alexander the Great's death and is prophesying about the Seleucid Empire, one of the remaining four pieces of the Greek Empire. The "small horn" mentioned here in Daniel 8 is different than the little horn in Daniel 7. The "small horn" is Antiochus IV Epiphanes (215-164 b.c.), the Seleucid King from 175-164 b.c. This vision also consists of a ram which is Medo-Persia and a goat which is Greece. The passage states that "out of this goat arises the small horn."

Even though this prophecy is about Antiochus IV Epiphanes, verses 17 & 19 mention it is not *only* about Antiochus IV Epiphanes, but also about the end-time events. There are characteristics or actions of Antiochus that are similar to that of the Antichrist. Therefore, the text has an immediate and specific fulfillment in Antiochus *and* a long range fulfillment in Antichrist. The

specifics are not explained. (A further historical study of your own regarding Antiochus may help you get a better picture. Study the Jewish Maccabees). We can simply conclude the following about Antiochus:

- a. He started out with great flattery and cunning (he was not even the rightful heir to the Seleucid Throne from which he ruled).
- b. He was exceedingly ruthless in murdering thousands of Jews.
- c. He desecrated what the Jews deemed holy in the Jerusalem Temple.
- d. His self-appreciation was embodied in the title he gave himself: Epiphanes which means "appearance, manifest" or illustrious and was displayed upon coins of the era inscribed with "King Antiochus, The Manifest of God." He viewed himself as divine.

We will later see that these four characteristics also define the Antichrist.

3. The Beginning Count-Down for Antichrist's (i.e. the prince) Specific Dealings

Daniel 9:24-27 NASB

24 Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy place.

25 So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress.

26 Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its' end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined.

27 And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.

This passage unfolds a period of "seventy weeks" in which God deals with Israel. Verses 24-26 detail the time and events of the Coming Messiah. The Antichrist is introduced as "the prince who is to come" (vs 26) and his operations unfold (vs 27). This "Seventy Weeks of Daniel" provides the people of Israel an incredible timeline: 7(weeks) + 62 (weeks) + 1 (week). Verse 27 describes the final "week" which is different from the previous 69 (7+62). This word "week" means "sevens" in the Hebrew (שָׁבֻעַ שִׁבְעִים- shabuim) and refers to "sevens" of literal years, each year being 360 prophetic days. The beginning of this 7 year period (2,520 days) is when the Antichrist will "make a firm covenant with the many for one week." The Antichrist makes a covenant, but it is GOD who defines the parameters of 7 prophetic years. The Antichrist will break this agreement in the midst of the seven years. Note: although Scripture says this covenant is made, does not necessarily mean it will be apparent to all people.

With whom does the Antichrist make this covenant? Does he originate it or simply confirm one previously established? The Scripture does not clearly answer these questions. We *do* know that this covenant relates to God's covenant with Israel because verse 27 mentions the sacrificial

system is stopped. Also, “the many” indicates more than only Jews and the Antichrist are involved in this agreement.

3A. The Mid-Point: The Abomination that Causes Desolation

In the middle of these 7 years, there are two things evoked by the Antichrist. Evidently, he has enough authority that he causes one thing to cease (sacrifice) and something else to occur (abomination). First, the Antichrist puts an end to the “*sacrifice and grain offerings*” of the Jewish people. Next, he instigates an event called “The Abomination that Causes Desolation” of which Scripture does not give great detail. The Jewish system is displaced with something that is an abomination to the Jews and causes them to flee Jerusalem. Their lives will depend on it!

4. Antichrist’s (i.e. the king) Character, Warfare and Ultimate End Unveiled

Daniel 11:35-45 NASB

35 Some of those who have insight will fall, in order to refine, purge and make them pure until the end time; because it is still to come at the appointed time.

36 Then the king will do as he pleases, and he will exalt and magnify himself above every god and will speak monstrous things against the God of gods; and he will prosper until the indignation is finished, for that which is decreed will be done.

37 He will show no regard for the gods of his fathers or for the desire of women, nor will he show regard for any other god; for he will magnify himself above them all.

38 But instead he will honor a god of fortresses, a god whom his fathers did not know; he will honor him with gold, silver, costly stones and treasures.

39 He will take action against the strongest of fortresses with the help of a foreign god; he will give great honor to those who acknowledge him and will cause them to rule over the many, and will parcel out land for a price.

40 At the end time the king of the South will collide with him, and the king of the North will storm against him with chariots, with horsemen and with many ships; and he will enter countries, overflow them and pass through.

41 He will also enter the Beautiful Land, and many countries will fall; but these will be rescued out of his hand: Edom, Moab and the foremost of the sons of Ammon.

42 Then he will stretch out his hand against other countries, and the land of Egypt will not escape.

43 But he will gain control over the hidden treasures of gold and silver and over all the precious things of Egypt; and Libyans and Ethiopians will follow at his heels.

44 But rumors from the East and from the North will disturb him, and he will go forth with great wrath to destroy and annihilate many.

45 He will pitch the tents of his royal pavilion between the seas and the beautiful Holy Mountain; yet he will come to his end, and no one will help him.

The first 35 verses of ch. 11 have already been fulfilled in specific kings of history (as closely followed by that of Bible interpreters). For example, verses 15-35 are prophetic of Antiochus IV Epiphanes. It seems verse 35 is forewarning a change that starts in verse 36 because verses 36-46 do *not* historically relate to Antiochus or the subsequent actions of any king. That is because these events are related to the “end/appointed time” and the “future” Antichrist. The war taking place is in the Middle East, and the Antichrist’s character as “king” is unveiled. One would think

his identity would be clearly apparent by this point. Unfortunately, most of the world is totally deceived and has long since rejected Jesus Christ, the only One who could deliver them.

A few informative characteristics of the “king” Antichrist are given. He “*will speak monstrous things against God.*” This is where his speech “changes” from that of Daniel 7 making his self-exaltation blatantly clear! Leon Wood says in his commentary on Daniel:

4 “Astonishing things: The word used (root, pala’, ‘to separate’) is a plural niphthal participle, meaning literally ‘things done astonishingly, unbelievably.’ The thought of uniqueness is connoted. This person will speak things against God that will be unique to himself – different, apparently, from what any other would dare to speak, in degree of insolence and self-exaltation.”

4 Leon Wood, A Commentary on Daniel, Zondervan, 1973, p. 305

The Antichrist’s persona displayed in the beginning of his “career“ (Daniel 7) changes at the end of his career (Daniel 11). He switches from boastful and deceptive speaking “in the place of God” to “speaking monstrous things against God.” He now makes known that he is against God and every god. In this self-exaltation, he disregards everything and everyone. Things that would typically affect any human, don’t affect the Antichrist. He can set them aside because he is so absorbed with himself. The text explains this concept. Normally, a son is affected by what his father has worshipped. Not the Antichrist. Normally, a man is affected by what his mother/women feel and desire in family/society. Not the Antichrist. Normally, a citizen is affected by what society worships. Not the Antichrist. *Because he is totally self-absorbed toward his own purpose, he disregards everything!* He is self-absorbed: vs 36. This is how he is self-absorbed: vs 37a. He is self-absorbed: vs 37b. This is how he is self-absorbed: vs 38-39.

Ultimately, this self-absorption leads him to “worship a god of fortresses” (vs 38). This means he immerses himself in military capabilities to maintain his role as world leader, even over the horns which run the world economically. This probably happens because *politically* things are starting to spin out of his control.

Section Two – New Testament Groundwork

Matthew 24

1. The Abomination that Causes Desolation

Matthew 24:15-21 NASB

15 "Therefore when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand),

16 then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains.

17 Whoever is on the housetop must not go down to get the things out that are in his house.

18 Whoever is in the field must not turn back to get his cloak.

19 But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days!

20 But pray that your flight will not be in the winter, or on a Sabbath.

21 For then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will."

Matthew 24:15 speaks of "The Abomination That Causes Desolation" which is referencing Daniel 9:27. (Luke 21:20 mentions the desolation of Jerusalem, but it does not specifically state the abomination. Also, Mark 13:14 is essentially the same as Matthew 24:15 except it also says the "abomination" stands "where it should not be.") There are not many details given about the "abomination." It is simply stated as occurring and left at that. Going beyond what is stated in the Scripture to give more understanding is not advantageous! So, what conclusions *can* be drawn about this "abomination?"

In the middle of the seven years, the Antichrist interrupts the Jewish sacrifice. He does something to the Jewish people, Jerusalem, and the holy place that is *desecrating*, an abomination. Take note, the use of the word *desolation* in Matthew 24 calls for those in Jerusalem to flee. The reason is because this abomination will be "vile" in the eyes of the Jewish people, and actually the beginning of great tribulation. In fact, this text is where the popular term "The Great Tribulation" is derived. However, "The Great Tribulation" is *not* the full 7 years at the end of this age, but only the last half of those 7 years. Of course, we also want to know where this "abomination" takes place. Jesus does state that this "abomination" is "standing in the holy place." Daniel states that "on the wing of abominations this one, the Antichrist, will come." Some assume it will occur *in* a rebuilt Jewish temple. However, the word "temple" is not used in either of the texts. Neither Daniel 9:27 nor Matthew 24:15 say "temple," so we cannot *assume* the abomination takes place in a physical temple.

In conclusion, we know the abomination *will* happen. It will be *standing* (not "seated") in the holy place, relating to the sacrificial site of Daniel (wing), and the Jewish people should flee! We have no further details.

Revelation 13 & 17

The Book of Revelation sets the stage for the third and final section of this booklet. Revelation is picture-truth. We try to be very careful not to search for truth beyond the symbol-context. The

didactic elements are always seen in their context. In many instances, interpreting is not easy.

1. The Rise of the First Beast – Revelation 13

Revelation 13:2b-6 NASB

2b And the dragon gave him his power and his throne and great authority.

3 I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed. And the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast;

4 they worshiped the dragon because he gave his authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?"

5 There was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies, and authority to act for forty-two months was given to him.

6 And he opened his mouth in blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle, that is, those who dwell in heaven.

Revelation 13 refers to the Antichrist and the “ten horns” that support him are called “the beast from the sea.” They are given authority by the Dragon who is Satan. They are mentioned again in chapter 17. Context determines which aspect of “the Beast” is being discussed. Meaning, sometimes the Beast is only the Antichrist, and sometimes the Beast is the ten horn system of economic rule. It can be difficult to distinguish between the two. Nevertheless, in verse 3, it is clear that one of the seven “heads” receives a fatal wound and comes back to life. This would seem to be the Antichrist. (Please note: some people interpret this as the beast world system and not specifically the Antichrist.) This feigned death-resurrection event causes the world to be amazed “after” the Beast. In other words, they are amazed by what the Beast does, and so they follow him. Their following him proves they worship him!

Also, take note of a similar sequence as of that in the book of Daniel. Remember, the Antichrist’s speech changes from Daniel 7 to Daniel 11. In Daniel 7 it says he speaks “arrogant” things and in Daniel 11 it says he speaks “monstrous things against the God of gods.” In Revelation 13:5, it says that he speaks “boastful words.” Then, it speaks of his blasphemies and specifically in verse 6 when it says he “*blasphemes God and His people.*” But, this will only last 42 months.

2. The Rise of a Second Beast and an Image to the First Beast – Revelation 13

Revelation 13:14-15 NASB

14 And he deceives those who dwell on the earth because of the signs which it was given him to perform in the presence of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who had the wound of the sword and has come to life.

15 And it was given to him to give breath to the image of the beast, so that the image of the beast would even speak and cause as many as do not worship the image of the beast to be killed.

There is yet another beast in Revelation 13, and he is the “World Social Engineer” so to speak. He is the cultural- propagandist and social-implementation officer for the first beast. The second beast is given power and authority by Satan to move the peoples of the world towards worship. The second beast “*gives breath*” or propagates both the worship of the first beast and “*the image*” of the first beast. What is this image? Many view it as a literal statue that is somehow placed in a

rebuilt Jewish temple. However, this interpretation may be going beyond what is actually stated in Revelation 13. Once again, do not miss the spiritual significance. They first worshipped the beast *by* following him in amazement. Now it states they make an image *to* or *for* the beast. This change in preposition in verses 14-15 is significant. They make an image *to* the beast. What does that mean? Think of it this way: when someone gives you a gift, they are giving/presenting you with something that is a reflection of them. Similarly, when someone makes an image *to* the Antichrist, they are essentially presenting before him that which is already true of them, a reflection of them. They are presenting themselves before the Antichrist as one of his.

The flow of authority, power, and worship throughout Revelation 13 reveals an interesting parallel to the trinity. The First Beast (Antichrist) is the perfect incarnation of the Dragon (Satan). The Dragon empowers the Beast and brings him back to life. The Second Beast (False Prophet) motivates and enhances Satan's people toward the First Beast, the one they worship. Sound familiar? God the Father sends the Son. The Son is the perfect Image of the Father. He represents the Father perfectly and is, in fact, God Himself. His goal is recreating those whom He has called and sealed into His own image. The Holy Spirit was sent to enhance Jesus Christ and worship of Him by true saints! This text is not about physical worship of a statue in a temple building. It *is* about the spiritual realities of worshipping something other than Jesus Christ. The "image" language is "worship-becoming like the object we worship" language. This is true of Jesus Christ and His saints in the N.T. epistles and it is true of Antichrist and his followers in the Book of Revelation.

3. The Ruling Nature of the First Beast – Revelation 13

Revelation 13:17 NASB

17 and he provides that no one will be able to buy or to sell, except the one who has the mark, either the name of the beast or the number of his name.

Revelation 13 also tells the specific type of authority that the "ten horns" exercise. (see also Daniel 7:7) It is through these ten horns that the first Beast (Antichrist) receives the Dragons' (Satan) rule and authority. *The Beast ruling through the Ten Horns is a World Economic Rule!* Daniel 7 states this ten horn system is an extension of the fourth beast. In history, we see that each of the kingdoms was conquered by the subsequent kingdom. Rome was the last kingdom, so it was not conquered by another kingdom, rather it fell due to internal changes. Thus, this "economic rule over the world" will extend from the west, the lasting effects/remnants of the Roman Empire. The Second Beast will move the world toward embracing the particulars of this rule. He is the cultural rule of the two-beast system, and has authority to move the masses socially and culturally toward the worship of the first beast who exercises economic rule. The second beast is perceived as a lamb although he is as authoritative as a dragon. (See Rev 13:11) There are other symbols and images in Revelation which portray the political rule and religious rule/role of the over-arching Beast System. We will not look at all of them. Yet, is it possible that the Antichrist and the Ten Horn Beast system are already "on the prowl" in our world? Are they being enhanced toward their world role by the 2008 collapse of the world financial markets? Do you know who is internally behind the financial movements of this present world system? Do you know why Europe has a Euro for their monetary unit? Do you know why there are rumors that we may soon have an "Amero" (Canada, United States, Mexico) as our monetary unit?

Many believe that these "ten horns" must be ten geo-political entities, that is, countries of

Europe which would have been the main part of the Roman Empire. I do not believe the text states that *specifically*. The *rule* (horn) of the ten within the framework of the Ten-Horn Beast System is defined: economic rule *over* the whole world, not economic rule *through* ten geo-political entities. What tells us to define it as geo-political rule through Europe when the text actually and specifically defines it as economic rule over the whole world? According to Daniel 7:24, the system has its roots in the West/Roman Empire.

This economic rule could be the reason for the Antichrist's powerful military influence. (as in Daniel 11) There may be other reasons why this military influence is at his disposal. What follows (in Revelation 13) regarding the beast "speaking," people listening, and the mark of the beast are all indicators that this worship will literally occur because a physical mark is employed. Who is the "he" that provides the mark? The World Social Engineer/False Prophet provides the mark because he is the one whom Rev. 13:16-18 refers. The Second Beast sways the people to take the mark. The mark itself is the mark of the First Beast.

4. The Relationship of Antichrist to the Harlot Woman – Revelation 17

Revelation 17:3-5, 12-13, 16-17 NASB

3 And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness; and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast, full of blasphemous names, having seven heads and ten horns.

4 The woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a gold cup full of abominations and of the unclean things of her immorality,

5 and on her forehead a name was written, a mystery, "BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.".....

12 The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but they receive authority as kings with the beast for one hour.

13 These have one purpose, and they give their power and authority to the beast....

16 And the ten horns which you saw, and the beast, these will hate the harlot and will make her desolate and naked, and will eat her flesh and will burn her up with fire.

17 For God has put it in their hearts to execute His purpose by having a common purpose, and by giving their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God will be fulfilled.

The Harlot Woman is not a literal woman, but represents false religious *thoughts* [Babylon is written upon her forehead - Rev 17:5] which are expressed through a conglomeration of religions! She, false religion, is made *desolate* by being *exposed*. Then, *those same people* holding false religious thoughts follow after the Beast. Worshiping the image of the Beast begins to take precedence over *false religion (The Harlot Woman)*! The World Empire of the Beast and the False Religion of the Harlot Woman co-exist until God decides to begin *His judgment*! The Woman is *first in line* and God uses the Beast in judgment against her. This is done in sovereign judgment because, in reality, they refuse Him! "She" is eaten up by the Ten-Horns/Beast giving to her a *supplanting purpose*! The "flesh" and "fire" language are symbolic of what the Beast does to the Woman. He used her to fulfill his lusts for power. Their "relationship" is now nullified. God places in the Beast's heart the desire to execute *God's purpose*! It's God's intent that the Beast should hate this Woman and actually do what he does to her. She is a scorned lover and the Beast now has all power over her before he himself is judged by God.

Section Three – The Defining Text

2 Thessalonians 2

2 Thessalonians 2 is the only Scripture that states the Antichrist is *revealed*! Below is the passage and in bold is what will be explained in the subsequent interpretation.

2 Thessalonians 2:1-12 NASB

1 Now we request you, brethren, with regard to **the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ** and our gathering together to Him,
2 that you not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that **the day of the Lord** has come.
3 Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless **the apostasy** comes first, and **the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction,**
4 who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that **he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God.**
5 Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things?
6 And you know what restrains him now, so that in his time he will be **revealed.**
7 For **the mystery of lawlessness** is already at work; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way.
8 Then that lawless one will be **revealed** whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by **the appearance of His coming;**
9 that is, **the one whose coming** is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders,
10 and with all **the deception of wickedness** for those who perish, because they did not receive **the love of the truth** so as to be saved.
11 For this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe **what is false,** [what is false = literally **the lie** in Greek]
12 in order that they all may be judged who did not believe **the truth,** but took pleasure in wickedness.

There are several instances in this text when “the,” a definite article, is used: *the* coming of our Lord Jesus Christ; *the* day of the Lord; *the* apostasy; *the* man of lawlessness; *the* son of destruction; *the* mystery of lawlessness; *the* appearance of his coming; *the* one whose coming; *the* deception of wickedness; *the* love of the truth; *the* lie; and *the* truth. *A series of definite articles this long is quite unique in the Bible!!* What can we conclude from this? There is only one apostasy like this apostasy, and there is only one man of lawlessness like this man of lawlessness, etc. These concepts are intricately woven in unique persons and events closely aligned with each another! Please don’t miss that. Let’s look at each.

1. The Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ

This is what all true saints long for! It is unique in the history of redemption and still future at the point of this writing. The following two texts provide the significance of this event.

1 John 3:2 NASB

2 Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be.

We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is.

2 Thessalonians 1:6-10 NASB

6 For after all it is only just for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you,

7 and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus will

be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire,

8 dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.

9 These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,

10 when He comes to be glorified in His saints on that day, and to be marveled at among all who have believed--for our testimony to you was believed.

2. The Day of the Lord

This day is first spoken of in the Old Testament. Joel tells where it lies in a sequence.

Joel 2:30-31 NASB

30 I will display wonders in the sky and on the earth,

Blood, fire and columns of smoke.

31 The sun will be turned into darkness

And the moon into blood

Before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes.

The Old Testament portrays the “Day of the Lord” as both incredible judgment and yet salvation. It is to occur after the turning of the sun to darkness and the moon to blood. These events take place during the sixth seal of Revelation 6:12. Biblically it is quite natural to equate the “Day of the Lord” with the “Second Coming of Jesus Christ.” Take note of what I call “interpretive sequence.” 2 Thessalonians 2:3-12 is an unfolding of events that Paul expects the Thessalonians to experience. We know this because Paul is telling them to *watch* for certain events that are *going* to occur before the Day of the Lord. The events are: the apostasy, the man of lawlessness revealed and taking his seat in the temple of God. Paul warns the saints to look *for* these events! Some believe the saints are raptured *before* the tribulation, and thus will not experience these events (as defined by them). But, notice the sequence in the text: “*this*”(apostasy and man of lawlessness revealed) is what “*you will see*” (saints) BEFORE “*this*” (Day of the Lord)! Why would Paul tell them of events *before* the Day of the Lord that they themselves would *not* see if there has been a rapture? How would that help them *not* be confused? Remember, the very reason Paul is telling them such things is because false teachers have caused them confusion.

3. The Apostasy

The word “apostasy” is Ἀποστασία in the Greek – apostasia. This noun is usually translated as “apostasy” or “falling away.” It means “rebellion, abandonment in religious sense, apostasy” (Greek-English Lexicon, Arndt-Gingrich, University of Chicago Press, 1971, p. 97). There is only *one* other instance where Paul talks about a “falling away” (1 Tim 4:1) which is specifically within the context of the Christian faith. It is the Greek root verb ἀφίστημι – ahistami.

1 Timothy 4:1 NASB

“But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons,”

The writer of Hebrews uses this same Greek verb again within a Christian context:

Hebrews 3:12 NASB

“Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God.”

There are a few other Greek words used for “rebellion” in various New Testament texts, but they are associated with ideas of “inciting” people to riot, or “unruly,” or religious/political rebellion (i.e. Korah in Jude 1:6). So, how can we determine which interpretation of “apostasy” to use for 2 Thessalonians 2? Is this world-wide? Is this exclusively Jewish? Is this only the Antichrist? Or, is this Christian? Context gives the answer. Normally, this term is applied with the understanding that one is “falling away” from a previously held religious position. Paul’s use of the word “apostasy” in 2 Thess. 2 and of the verbal form “fall away” in 1 Timothy 4:1 is in the context of “Christians” falling away from the faith. Verses 9-12 also allude to this fact. When did the world ever *receive* the truth, let alone *love* the truth? This statement indicates that the nature of the apostasy is *supposed* Christians who never actually received *the love* of the truth! This happens even as they may have the outward form or label of “Christian.” Thus, it will be an individual, yet massive, falling away of supposed Christians from the Biblical gospel. Although they might not deny the truths of the gospel, they are not grounded in them. Do you think that could happen in our “evangelical” churches? Maybe it’s already happening.

4. The Man of Lawlessness – The Son of Destruction

The term “man of lawlessness” is used once in the Bible (2 Thess 2). This “man of lawlessness” whom the Lord will slay (Rev. 19:20) is none other than the Beast, the Antichrist. This is the only person it could be based upon research of other texts of Scripture. He is also called “the son of destruction” (perdition) in verse 3 which is the second time this is used of a man in Scripture. Jesus referred to Judas, one of the disciples, as “the son of perdition” in John 17:12. He was obviously a disciple in name only. Further, it states that the Antichrist is *revealed*. But, *how* is he revealed?

5. The Seating of the Antichrist in God’s Temple

The word “temple” in 2 Thess 2:4 is a form of the Greek word ναός. (English—naos). Whenever Paul uses this word, it describes an individual member or corporate “body” of Christ. In other words, it is the church, whether a person or the visible whole. He employs other Greek words when referring to a temple as a literal building. To be fair, there are instances in the New Testament when ναός is used to reference a building. But, it is not used by Paul in his epistles. Accordingly, if we dare say that Paul changes his pattern of writing, then we should immediately ask a question. If this is a literal building, a rebuilt Jewish Temple in Jerusalem, would the Jewish people allow for a “seat” in that temple for a King/World Ruler to sit upon? For that matter, would they allow a seat for their “Messiah” to sit upon? One would assume that the *Jews* would rebuild their own Jewish Temple if that rebuilding should occur. One would assume that they would build it according to the pattern given to them in the Old Testament. Where is there a

“seat” in that pattern? There is none. There is a mercy-seat but that is nothing like this seat. This seat in 2 Thessalonians 2 has the idea of sitting upon a throne for the purpose of executing a rule. Thus, it is metaphorically the place or position of authority.

What does the Antichrist explicitly *do* to get this position of authority? First, he is “setting himself against” (vs. 4) which is ἀντικείμενος in the Greek – antikeimenos and literally means just that. Notice the first four letters are “anti.” Its root meaning is “be opposed” or it could mean “form a contrast to” and translated “opposes” in most bibles. Notice how he “positions” himself against every god or object of worship: he exalts himself above them. The Beast magnifies himself as Daniel said. By this self-magnification he *displaces* every other worship object. He opposes God by plopping himself in the position or “seat” of authority from which he reigns.

Great men of God in the history of the church have preached that this temple is *not* a Jewish temple (building) in Jerusalem. In fact, before the mid nineteenth century, *most* believed it was not a temple building but was the manifested “temple” upon the earth, the saints. For example:

C. H. Spurgeon preached a message (1898; Sermon #2591) titled “Pride the Destroyer” on Habakkuk 2:4. When he references 2 Thessalonians 2, it is quite obvious he is translating it as the visible church and not a Jewish temple in Jerusalem. Matthew Henry in his commentary on 2 Thessalonians says regarding 2:4: “As God was in the temple of old, and worshipped there, and is in and with his church now, so the antichrist mentioned here is some usurper of God's authority in the Christian church, who claims divine honors;...”

There are many other wonderful teachers/preachers of God's Holy Word throughout the centuries who believed this temple to be the visible church and that the Antichrist “seats” himself in that temple by becoming the leader of the apostasy. Many false prophets and false teachers have appeared on the scene throughout the history of the church. How did they become prophets/teachers? They placed themselves in the middle of the church, that is, the visible entity upon the earth. They have lead many people astray from *within* that temple. What makes this false man different? He is the last one! It is *the* apostasy because it is *the* revealing of *the final* Antichrist and not just any antichrist. The Apostle John refers to the coming of the spirit of antichrist in four texts in his epistles:

1 John 2:18 NASB

Children, it is the last hour; and just as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have appeared; from this we know that it is the last hour.

1 John 2:22 NASB

Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son.

1 John 4:3 NASB

And every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world.

2 John 1:7 NASB

For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the antichrist.

Where did this spirit of antichrist appear? It emerged within the visible churches as they were being established. The strategy for destruction of the visible church by this spirit of antichrist has always been from within! That is why there were so many councils at the beginning of Christendom. They had to deal with the spirit of antichrist manifest in false teaching from within the church. This antichrist spirit will prevail in the visible church with the appearance of the final Antichrist. However, God will allow it for His own purposes.

The very heart of this “seating in the temple” refers back to an Old Testament concept in Isaiah of God’s prophetic judgment of the King of Babylon. Isaiah describes the fall of the spirit that is behind the king – Satan. (Also cf. Ezekiel 28:12-19.)

Isaiah 14:12-14 NASB

*How you have fallen from heaven,
O star of the morning, son of the dawn!
You have been cut down to the earth,
You who have weakened the nations!
But you said in your heart,
I will ascend to heaven;
I will raise my throne above the stars of God,
And I will sit on the mount of assembly
In the recesses of the north.
I will ascend above the heights of the clouds;
I will make myself like the Most High.*

Although this quote is a lament against the King of Babylon, Bible scholars through the centuries say it describes the fall of Satan. Please note the condition of the king’s heart which precedes his fall! In the midst of his self-magnification, he wishes to supplant God. He cannot take God’s seat upon His heavenly throne, so his only option is an earthly “seat” from where he can sit and rule. This is also what is happening in 2 Thessalonians 2: the Antichrist is empowered by Satan, and as his representative, takes his seat among the temple of God. He wishes to place himself in the visible seat of authority in place of Jesus Christ. That seat from an earthly perspective is the ruling over the *visible church* of Jesus Christ upon the earth. The Antichrist leads what seems to be the church of true Biblical faith and doctrine into apostasy by his very presence! So, we can conclude that this apostasy is the falling away of so-called saints because the final antichrist is the one carrying it out and thus *revealed* in it.

There is a final note on this “seating in the temple of God” in 2 Thess 2:4. Many commentators equate it to that of Matthew 24:15 which states that there is an abomination that causes desolation “*standing in the holy place.*” Some equate “*seating in the temple of God*” with “*standing in the holy place.*” This is most unfortunate because the contexts are quite different. When the Antichrist is “sitting in the temple of God” (2 Thess 2), it is during apostasy, lawlessness, lack of love for the truth and deception. When the Antichrist is “standing in the holy place” (Matt 24), the immediate outcome is destruction and flight for the Jewish people. The restrainer of 2 Thessalonians 2:7 specifically restrains the revealing of the Man of Lawlessness. So, does this “revealing” take place in the middle of the tribulation? If you take the “seating in the temple” to mean a literal Jewish temple in the middle of the tribulation, then you are forced to conclude it is in that event he is revealed. So, he wasn’t revealed when he made a covenant at

the beginning of the seven year tribulation? On the same day, according to one interpretation of eschatology, millions of people disappear from the earth in rapture? Unto who is he revealed and what is revealed about him? Is he revealed to the people he deceives? The context says it is in the midst of deception and not in the midst of abomination. The apostasy (ultimate deception and falling away from the faith) precedes and is a prerequisite for the abomination. So, if one man is in the spotlight of the apostate church, and he is heading toward ruling the world, look out!

6. Displaying Himself as God

Many of us have the image in our minds of the Antichrist, with bulging facial veins, crying out in a rebuilt Jewish temple, “I AM GOD!!!” This may be unfortunate.

The word “displaying” in verse 4 is the Greek word ἀποδεικνύντα – apodeiknunta. It is translated “to proclaim,” “to show,” “to point to,” or “to display” depending on the Bible version. We can translate it “proclaim” as in “I am God with bulging veins.” Or, we can translate it “showing” or “displaying” as in “I am in the position that I want. I know you are simply required to behold me as the one who is sovereign and in charge.” Obviously, there is a big difference between these two concepts. But, if the “spirit of lawlessness” and the “deluding influence” are already in place, it is consistent to say the he will display himself in his position given by Satan. He now rides the crest of the deception which has gone before him. Satan, the angel of light, has prepared and is now empowering him. The Antichrist simply has to take his place as the object of worship – that is both an “external” position and in the hearts of those who follow him. As a result of not receiving the love of the truth, his followers are deceived and thus worship him.

7. The Revealing of the One Who Seats Himself in God’s Temple

Consequently, the Antichrist takes his seat in the temple of God in 2 Thessalonians 2 probably before the final 7 years and he commits the abomination of desolation spoken in Daniel 9 in the midst of the tribulation. *Same person but different events!* Please catch what I just said. The timing and activities of the abomination of desolation and the events of 2 Thessalonians 2 is different. *Same person - changed persona - different visible status and events!* Sadly, the revealing of the Antichrist will also be the revealing of people who are apostate in Christendom. This will likely do two things to all true saints of Jesus Christ. It will cause them bewilderment for a time as they wonder if people in the visible church are actually paying attention! It will be personally and grievously painful as we watch those who we thought were saved fall away. This will call for diligent prayer and merciful warning!

8. The Mystery of Lawlessness

Regarding the mystery of lawlessness, Thomas Manton in his commentary, says of verse 7:

“What is the mystery of iniquity? I answer - The design of usurping Christ's kingdom, and his dignities and prerogatives over the church, to countenance the kingdom of sin and darkness, under the mask of piety and religion. Surely it is something, quite contrary to the gospel, which is the 'mystery of godliness,' 1 Tim. iii. 16. So that this mystery is such a course and state design as doth frustrate the true end and purpose of the gospel, and yet carried on under a pretence of advancing and

promoting it.”

This is a profound statement by Puritan Thomas Manton considering what is now happening in the visible church. This interpretation of the text of 2 Thessalonians 2:7 was written by him in his own words about 3 ½ centuries ago!

9. The Revealing of the Lawless One

The lawless one is *revealed* like the Scripture (and our dear brother Thomas Manton of the 17th century) said! He is revealed as the leader of the final apostasy within “Christendom” on a massive scale! His change-agent tactics first take place within the visible apostate church which is the revealing of the fact that he is actually a lawless one.

10. The Appearance of His Coming

The Blessed Hope of the saints of God is the “appearance of His coming!” This phrase actually combines two Greek nouns which are each individually used of the second coming of Jesus Christ in other texts. In fact, the first Greek word *epiphaneia*, is a form of the Greek word that Antiochus IV Epiphanes took as his own title. Many have translated his title as “the illustrious one” or “the shining one.” This “appearance of His coming” (the second Greek word “coming” is *parousia*) in context refers to what Jesus will do to the Antichrist when He comes. Since it is intensified with two Greek words the meaning is clear. In brilliance of judgment, Jesus will in come on His white horse, on the clouds of heaven to destroy the Antichrist!

11. The One Who’s Coming

This is another reference to the Antichrist. Remember, even though he is the devil’s antichrist, He is God’s antichrist first! He doesn’t appear “without God” or contrary to God’s ultimate glory! God has determined he will come and has set the specific time beforehand.

12. The Deception of Wickedness

The world is blinded by its own wickedness. It is deceived into believing all is well when it is not. All people are born into this condition. God has graciously moved in the gospel to open the saints’ eyes to the truth. Still, the Antichrist’s deception will be enhanced with false signs and wonders in order to further deceive those who reject Christ.

13. The Love of the Truth

The truth is the Holy Bible and everything about the God revealed therein. Real saints don’t casually hold it as nice and fanciful data in their brain-cells. Nor are they committed to picking and choosing the pieces they like and don’t like as if they are judge over it! They love and hold it as most precious because they love the God of the Bible.

14. The Lie

Only One can redeem the fallen race of Adam. Satan does not want people to know that. Genesis 3:5 says, “Your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” **Satan’s**

lie is the false identification of the human spirit as God himself. The Antichrist will be **the perfect incarnation** of this lie! His revealing will be seamless for many because the spirit of antichrist working with this lie will have prepared the world to gladly receive him. God will use His “perfect” instrument, the Antichrist, for *His perfect purpose*. He will give the apostate church and the world over to “the lie” for judgment because they don’t love Him or His truth! God’s glory in judgment will have a clear visible history! The Antichrist is the perfect reflection of their own self-worship, worshipping their own fallen image as if it were god! In worshipping the Antichrist, they worship the power and spirit behind him which is the dragon, Satan himself. This is both extremely evil and extremely sad to watch! Plead with people to be reconciled to God in Jesus Christ. Otherwise, they are sadly gone to their eternal judgment.

15. The Truth

What is the apex of the Holy Bible? It is the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the only truth that will save. He is its’ entire focal point!

2 Corinthians 1:20 NASB

For as many as are the promises of God, in Him they are yes; therefore also through Him is our Amen to the glory of God through us.

Concluding Remarks

I hope and pray that you ponder this vital information. Unfortunately, most people have been pre-programmed to *not* consider the texts in the way outlined above. Yet, the fact remains. There is something happening in many churches today that is quite baffling! Are we on the brink of the apostasy? Or, could we *already* be experiencing it? Is the Antichrist currently being revealed within the visible church? Is Jesus Christ’s second coming near? It is quite possible, based on our study, he is revealed *before* the covenant and the abomination of Daniel 9:24-27. This is due to the fact that 2 Thessalonians 2, which details his revealing, takes place *even before* Daniel 9:24-27.

Thus, it is possible that we may know the Antichrist’s name someday. We may already know *of* him, but not know that he is the Antichrist. This man will attempt to supplant the authority Jesus Christ has of His church. However, *apostate* Christendom doesn’t *belong* to Jesus Christ! It is not His blood-purchased possession. Remember, Christ is the only head of His people which is why all true saints won’t buy into the Antichrist’s scheme!

God’s patience during this time does *not* mean God is ambivalent to His own Word. The Holy Gospel is profaned by the Antichrist, and he dares to use the Holy Name of Jesus. God, in His infinite and divine plan, has determined this will happen! But, the Bible tells us where the Antichrist will spend eternity: with the Dragon and the False Prophet in the lake of fire. Could an “earthly bus” full of people be heading toward the same precipice all at once?

Maybe the countenance of our face and tone of our speech in witnessing would begin to reflect this reality. Pray hard and witness hard. Real human destinies depend on Jesus Christ being presented to them in the glory and wonder of His Salvation! May God’s name be glorified in the midst of what might currently be the apostasy!