

## LSB 2 Thessalonians 2:1 - 4 Pt 4 THE antichrist

*1 Now we ask you, brothers, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, 2 that you not be quickly shaken in your mind or be alarmed whether by a spirit or a word 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 has 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 sanctuary of God, exhibiting himself as being God.*

This is now our fourth time that we have read through this section of 2 Thessalonians together. And we're expanding Paul's original intent which was merely to set these christians at ease who had been told they were living through the Day of the Lord, it was already upon them, no rapture, no meeting Jesus in the air and being removed to safety and joy while the world is in agony during that time frame.

Paul simply says, yeah, that's impossible because the apostasy has not happened and the son of perdition or destruction, the Antichrist capitol A major player in end times events, that person has not been revealed.

And we noted that the apostasy and that revelation of that person coincides with the event of the rapture when the true Holy Spirit regenerated believers are literally called out of this world, and the remaining tares, who are not wheat, will be left behind and will then be subjected to a deluding influence that channels the whole world into following this false messiah, the Antichrist.

Last week we took the occasion to study Daniel's chapter 9 prophecy which we believe Paul is basing his arguments on. It is a clear statement that explains very logically why we believe the church cannot be part of this picture of one world ruler and delusion where the whole world follows after this false messiah. And OH how the world wants a messiah. Someone who can solve this worlds problems. A one world ruler who makes peace.

Let's visit those verses as a review and finish our look at that passage so we can have the framework to make sense of what Paul told these folks that made perfect sense to them. We need to fill in the gaps of what Paul had already taught them so that what he tells them also makes perfect logical sense to us. Daniel chapter 9 verses 24 - 27

*24 "Seventy weeks have been determined for your people and for 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 Holy of Holies. 25 So you are to know and have insight that from the going out of a word to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince, there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be restored and rebuilt, 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 decreed. 27 And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will make sacrifice and grain offering cease; 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."*

We made our way through verse 26 last week and saved verse 27 for today. If you missed last week Daniel's prophecy clearly states there are 70 weeks of years, 490 years of history for Daniel's people the Jews, 483 of which were completed at the death and resurrection of Jesus the Messiah.

Clearly there are 7 final years of Jewish history to still happen. Those final seven years were put on hold, so to speak, at the resurrection of Jesus, and a parenthesis that Paul calls a mystery, something not revealed before it happened, the mystery of the church age. An age of grace that has lasted from Jesus' resurrection until today. Almost 2000 years exactly.

Thus, logically, God's timeclock for Daniel's people, God's chosen nation,

the jews, would restart at the rapture when Jesus meets His bride, the church, in the air, and we are all changed in an instant, given new physical bodies, like unto His, in which we will dwell with Him for eternity.

The church age comes to a close, in that moment, in that twinkling of an eye, but the world doesn't stop. God will deal with the jews for 7 final years which get more and more horrific as the time draws near to the end, and then Jesus will return to this world to rescue the jews that have survived the horrors and judgment will come upon all sinners and all rebellion against God. The old testament refers to this period as the time of Jacob's trouble.

Let's look at a few specific things in Daniels prophecy and then we'll rejoin Paul who is speaking of these events to the church at Thessalonica.

*27 And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week,*

Who is "he" in this statement? The antecedent of this person, he, is the prince who is to come, who comes from the people who destroy Jerusalem after Messiah the prince is cut off.

We've established that a prince will come in the future who is a son of the people who came and destroyed Jerusalem. Who was that. Rome. Rome destroyed Jerusalem in 70 AD. Total destruction. The stones were torn down. Not one stone left upon another, which Jesus foretold.

The emporer of Rome decreed a destruction that would make Jerusalem a non place. Forgotten in memory. Wasted to the ground level. Abandoned. Rome accomplished that in 70 AD.

Fast forward now to whoever will be here the moment after the church is removed. The jewish clock will restart. Paul gives us an important clue in vs. 3; *Let no one in any way deceive you, for it has not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction,*

So, then, logically, the rapture occurs. The church age of grace is completed. The church is removed to heaven. The Jewish clock, the time decreed for Daniels' people, the Jews, restarts, and at that time, this person, the man of lawlessness is revealed.

Think about it. The rapture can happen this afternoon. It's the next thing. That means if it happens in our life times, this person is alive and everything is at the ready for him to take center stage . . . but we don't know today who it is.

If the rapture is as close as I hope it is, and I hope at one level, but Jeff and I were at Carl's house installing a new pellet stove, and I can tell you, Carl's hope and longing for the rapture exceeds mine and yours. If the rapture is indeed close, whoever this person is, he's alive and standing at the door, ready to walk out onto the stage and begin his assignment.

The word for revealed is most telling in the original language. *apokaluptó* (ap-ok-al-ooop'-to) from /apó, "away from" and /kalýptō, "to cover". So, someone who is uncovered. to take the cover away from. The covers are removed and the person is revealed. And the verb tenses are; aorist, subjunctive, passive, 3rd person singular. *shall have been revealed*

We don't have a clue. Christians who are chomping at the bit for all these things to happen are forever throwing out guesses. In my father-in-laws time frame, there actually were some good reasons to say Hitler was this person, and we'll talk about that a little bit.

We simply don't know. Not right now. But Daniel gives us an important clue.

*27 And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week,*

Whoever this person is, he will make a treaty with the Jews, for one week. How many weeks of years do the Jews have left on God's clock to complete

their 70 weeks of years? One week. Good class.

The anti-christ, whoever he is, will make a treaty of peace with the jews, for one week. 7 years. Hitler was a bad choice, but a good image of a type. This person will have Hitlerian traits. But Hitler was trying to eliminate the jews. That was his stated purpose. No covenant with the people of God.

So then, for all of you Anti-christ watchers and spotters, before we leave this world, with Jesus, here is what we should look for. The jewish nation will be under duress to the point that a single person can somehow make a treaty of protection with them.

What are the conditions that might bring that about. Pressure against them. Severe pressure that threatens to undo them as a nation. From whom? Well they're surrounded by good candidates.

Something will threaten Israels survival. Someone, a single person will have the power to make a covenant of peace with Israel that alleviates the threat. Who? We don't know. But here's something to think about.

Many of us believe God raised up America and singularly blessed America so that we could act as a protectorate for Israel. We have done that since 1948. America hovers in the shadows with a big stick. You take out Israel, our friends, our allies, and we'll take out you.

It's the only reason they're there. The promise of annihilation for Israel's enemies if that challenge comes. Well, that challenge will come. Does that mean that when it does, America will no longer be the protectorate which shifts that responsibility to this single person? Perhaps.

Or . . . is America, in prophecy, the logical extension of the western civilization that flowed out of Rome? Are we part of the 10 nation confederacy, the revived Roman empire that Daniel and John, the writer of Revelation sees? Perhaps.

What will bring about the situation where Israel needs the covenant of protection and peace that a single person can effectively guarantee. That's the person we're curious to know about. As of today, Israel dwells securely in their own sovereign borders, whatever this threat is, we don't really know.

And it seems that this covenant will happen almost immediately when the church leaves. A covenant for one week. So whatever the cause of the need for the treaty is, perhaps we will see with our eyes the things that transpire to make such a treaty a dire necessity. Back to Daniel 9:27

*but in the middle of the week **he** will make sacrifice and grain offering cease; 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.”*

Still in Daniel's prophecy. In the middle of the remaining 7 years, 3½ years in, 3½ years left, these are 360 day years. In the middle of those days this person, the antichrist, takes it up a notch.

Sacrifice and grain offerings will cease. Another clue. The jews are secure in their homeland, but in order to make these sacrificial offerings, they need a temple and an altar. We all know that hasn't happened yet. Somehow it will.

In order for this portion of Daniel's prophecy to be literally completed, and all of the rest of it has been very literal, the jews will have to have a temple and an altar, to re-instate these historic sacrifices. Does that have to happen before the rapture. No. The jews have a temple ready to erect immediately . . . if a stray bomb or who knows what, eliminates the dome of the rock that is covering mount Moriah today.

During this period, we fully expect Israel will have a temple and an altar and they will be making sacrificial offerings. The antichrist interrupts those offerings. At the 3½ years point he will enter their temple, desolate

the temple with abominations, and declare himself God.

Here's something to think about. In Ezekiel 38 and 39 a nation from the recesses of the north, OK, class, put a ruler on the globe and go due north as far as you can go, and where are you? Russia. Everyone agrees. Ezekiel pictures a massive army marching into Israel and God Himself takes them out with a massive earthquake.

Israel is littered with military equipment. And Ezekiel says Israel will burn the leftovers for 7 years. I'm just thinking out loud here folks. Does that earthquake knock down the dome of the rock. Is that invasion the premise of a covenant with the antichrist? Is the covenant with antichrist the reason Israel can rebuild the temple?

OK, is there anything on the horizon that indicates any of this is going to happen tomorrow? No. We have to be honest folks. I don't see anything immediate that will bring any of this about.

Can God make it all happen so fast your head will spin? Oh! Absolutely! How much of the precursors will we get to witness? We really don't know, but all of these things are red flags that would go off in my mind if it all began to unfold.

Some massive army from the north on the border of Israel? That would get my attention. The United States no longer has the capacity to restrain Israel's enemies. That would get my attention. That could be chaotic if we live to see that scenario. Complete collapse of the USA so that we just don't even matter in prophecy. Possible, and well due.

Let's finish up this morning back in Paul's letter to the Thessalonians.

*3 Let no one in any way deceive you, for it has 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 sanctuary of God,*

*exhibiting himself as being God.*

Think all the way back to Daniel chapter 2, the giant image that comes up out of the earth. The 4 great powers that rule the world. Golden head, Babylon, Silver torso, Medo-Persia. The bronze thighs, Greece. The iron feet that crush, Rome. And finally in the end, feet made of iron and clay.

Somehow this world ruler has to join the arab moslem hordes with western civilization. Iron and clay. It doesn't really mix. Nothing but trouble trying to get iron and clay to hold together some how.

The root of the problem is religion. Moslems and the west. Perhaps the way the antichrist goes about solving the problem of religion is to enter the jewish temple and declare himself god. And the way he enforces his claim is to murder whoever says he isn't god.

The god of Islam is the clay and the God of Judeo-Christianity is the iron and the two simply cannot mix and be strong so Antichrist sets himself up as god, in the Jewish temple, and goes about removing heads from anyone who says otherwise. It's a horrific time.

In history we have two types two historic figures who are typical of this person who will be the final antichrist. Two historic persecutions of the jews by men who show us what the final anitchrist will be like.

In 167 BC a man named Aniochus Epiphanes was ruler of the region of Judea, he was part of the greek empire, and he unlike previous rulers forbade the jews to carry out their customs and religion in Jerusalem.

Normal policy for the Seleucid dynasty was to respect the different religions of the lands that they had occupied and not to interfere. But Antiochus did interfere and forbade the jews to worship in their temple according to their customs.

The jews had a word play. He was Antiochus Epiphanes, Antiochus the



Great One, but the jews called him Antiochus epimenes which means Antiochus the mad man.

The jews rebelled and Antiochus sent armies that slaughtered 40000 jews, men women and children, and took 40000 more into captivity and slavery. Then he entered the temple and made it a temple of Zeus. He forced the priests to eat pig meat.

Antiochus is a type, a picture for us of what we call the abomination of desolation. He turned the temple into a desolation. An abomination to God. That's a partial picture of Antichrist.

We have another picture. A type of a different facet of antichrist. And this picture is more about the man himself than the abomination of desolation. That picture is Hitler, and in particular, the demonic connections of demon possession that Hitler assumed.

We've all seen the movie clips of Hitler with a distorted face shrieking at the spellbound listening masses. History tells us it wasn't his voice when he was doing that. He was full of demons. And he surrounded himself with Tibetan monks, priests of the occult, who believed the earth was hollow. It all gets pretty fantastic if you study him at all.

Hitler's Nazis were convinced that they were destined to rule the world, and they came to this warped conclusion through the acceptance of many occult beliefs and practices, including astrology, the prophecies of Nostradamus, and the hollow/inverted Earth theory... hohlweltlehre.

That's typical of antichrist's connection with Satan himself who gives him the powers to perform miracles. And also the powers of delusion by speech, like Hitler. Satanic speech is part of his persona. In Daniel 8:23 the old King James says a man of fierce countenance. Like a red faced Hitler screaming with a voice not his own.

Daniel 7:8

*While I was contemplating the horns, suddenly another horn, a little one, came up among them, and three of the first horns were uprooted before it. This horn had eyes like those of a man and a mouth that spoke words of arrogance.*

Daniel 7:11

*Then I kept watching because of the arrogant words the horn was speaking. As I continued to watch, the beast was slain, and its body was destroyed and thrown into the blazing fire.*

Daniel 11:36

*Then the king will do as he pleases and will exalt and magnify himself above every god, and he will speak monstrous things against the God of gods. He will be successful until the time of wrath is completed, for what has been decreed must be accomplished.*

*Rev. 13:4 They worshiped the dragon who had given authority to the beast, and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast, and who can wage war against it?" 5 The beast was given a mouth to speak arrogant and blasphemous words, and authority to act for 42 months. 6 And the beast opened its mouth to speak blasphemies against God and to slander His name and His tabernacle—those who dwell in heaven....*

Antichrist combines the horrific acts and speech of both of these types. He is like Antiochus in how he rages against God's elect and how he desecrates the temple, and he is like Hitler in how he is under the direct control and is given miracle powers by Satan in order to deceive the whole world.

As Christians waiting for the deliverance of our Lord Jesus who we expect to come and call us home, out of this world, we are to be informed watchers.

God has given us enough information about events surrounding end times, the final 7 years of Jewish history, time on the clock not yet played out for Daniel's people, the Jews, so that we are to be informed watchers as we

wait.

Our prophecy radars are scanning current events for things that align with scripture. Informed watchers. Events that will cause Israel to be in a position where they will make a covenant, a treaty of protection with a single man who has the power to bring that protection. That will bleep on my radar screen. This morning I don't see that immediate threat or a single person who could bring a meaningful prospect of peace and protection for them.

I'll finish with just a few words about who it won't be though. This week in the headlines was this event.

Wall Street Journal ***The U.N. Abandons the Uyghurs***

New York Times ***China Turns Back Move for U.N. Debate on Abuse of Uyghurs***

The Briefing ***'A Sinkhole of Moral Equivalence': The U.N. Human Rights Council Votes to Ignore Abuses of Uyghur People in China***

The United Nations was formed in the wake of WWII in order to never again allow genocide to take place on the earth. It has proven impotent many times over including this week where it voted to do absolutely nothing about an entire ethnic group of people in communist China who are being cleansed from the earth.

Because of the power of a single man, Xe Jinping and the fear of him, the UN has become impotent to help an ethnic people who are being wiped out.

Do I think Xe is our man. No. He's as far the other direction from Rome as you can get. But I do take note that the personal force of power of single individuals can render the collective powers of combined protection against a Hitler like genocide impotent. The UN can't stop him. The UN won't stop him. They voted to ignore the genocide.

Are we to be sympathetic with muslims who are systematically getting

wiped out. Yes, of course. But the real take away is that one man with the power to do it is wiping out a people for religious reasons.

Christians who believe an ancient book has authority beyond political powers are an identical annoyance. We don't believe what the Uygher people believe, but to a political madman, we are an identical annoyance. Same exact problem. A people group who cannot be brought into alignment with the man in power leaves no choice but mass elimination.

The world is watching it happen and is powerless to stop the murders. In a world like that, we need to be informed watchers.