

1 and 2 Thessalonians Lesson 12 3Q 2012

The Antichrist

Read 2 Thes 1:1-2:

Concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered to him, we ask you, brothers, ² not to become easily unsettled or alarmed by some prophecy, report or letter **supposed to have come from us**, saying that the day of the Lord has already come. [Apparently people were going around and misrepresenting what Paul was teaching.] ³ **Don't let anyone deceive you in any way**, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the **man of lawlessness** is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. ⁴ He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, **so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God.**

⁵ Don't you remember that when I was with you I used to tell you these things? ⁶ And now you know **what is holding him back**, so that he may be revealed at the proper time. ⁷ **For the secret power of lawlessness is already at work**; but the one who now holds it back will continue to do so till he is taken out of the way. ⁸ And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the **Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendor of his coming.** ⁹ The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders, ¹⁰ and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. **They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved.** ¹¹ For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie ¹² and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness. ¹

¹ *The Holy Bible: New International Version*. 1984 (2 Th 2:1–12). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

Who is antichrist? I did a search on Wikipedia and here is a historic overview of what has been taught regarding antichrist:

Polycarp (ca. 69 – ca. 155) warned the Philippians that everyone who preached false doctrine was an antichrist.^[7]

Irenaeus (2nd century AD – c. 202) wrote the figure of the Antichrist was the "recapitulation of apostasy and rebellion." He uses the 666 to numerologically decode several possible names. Some names that he loosely proposed were "Evanthos", "Lateinos" ("Latin" or pertaining to the Roman Empire). In his exegesis of Daniel 7:21, he stated that the ten horns of the beast will be the Roman empire divided into ten kingdoms before the Antichrist's arrival.^[8]

Tertullian (ca.160 – ca.220 AD) held that the Roman Empire was the restraining force written about by Paul in 2 Thessalonians 2:7-8. The fall of Rome and the disintegration of the ten provinces of the Roman Empire into ten kingdoms were to make way for the Antichrist.^[9]

Cyril of Jerusalem, in the mid-4th century, taught that the Antichrist will reign as the ruler of the world for three and a half years, before he is killed by Jesus Christ right at the end of his three-and-a-half-year reign, shortly after which the Second Coming of Jesus Christ will happen.

John Chrysostom (c. 347–407) warned against speculations and old wives' tales about the Antichrist, saying, "Let us not therefore enquire into these things". He preached that by knowing Paul's description of the Antichrist in 2 Thessalonians Christians would avoid deception.^[13]

Jerome (c. 347-420) warned that those substituting false interpretations for the actual meaning of Scripture belonged to the "synagogue of the Antichrist".^[14] "He that is not of Christ is of Antichrist."^[15] To Jerome, the power

restraining this mystery of iniquity was the Roman Empire, but as it fell this restraining force was removed.

Augustine of Hippo (354 – 430) wrote "it is uncertain in what temple [the Antichrist] shall sit, whether in that ruin of the temple which was built by Solomon, or in the Church."^[20]

Pope Gregory I wrote to Emperor Maurice A.D. 597, concerning the titles of bishops, "I say with confidence that whoever calls or desires to call himself 'universal priest' in self-exaltation of himself is a precursor of the Antichrist."^[21]

Archbishop Arnulf of Rheims disagreed with the policies and morals of Pope John XV. He expressed his views while presiding over the Council of Reims in A.D. **991**. Arnulf accused John XV of being the Antichrist while also using the 2 Thessalonians passage about the Man of Sin, saying, "Surely, if he is empty of charity and filled with vain knowledge and lifted up, he is Antichrist sitting in God's temple and showing himself as God." This incident is history's earliest record of anyone identifying a pope with the Antichrist.^[22]

Cardinal Benno, wrote long descriptions of abuses committed by Pope Gregory VII, including necromancy, torture of a former friend upon a bed of nails, commissioning an attempted assassination, executions without trials, unjust excommunication, doubting the Real Presence in the Eucharist, and even burning it.^[24] Benno held that Gregory VII was "either a member of Antichrist, or Antichrist himself."^[25]

Eberhard II von Truchsees, Prince-Archbishop of Salzburg in 1241 at the Council of Regensburg denounced Pope Gregory IX as "that man of perdition, whom they call Antichrist, who in his extravagant boasting says, I am God, I cannot err."^[26]

Many Protestant reformers, including **Martin Luther, John Calvin, Thomas Cranmer, John Thomas, John Knox, and Cotton Mather, identified the Roman Papacy as the Antichrist.**^[30]

In calling the pope the "antichrist," the early Lutherans stood in a tradition that reached back into the eleventh century. Not only dissidents and heretics but even saints had called the bishop of Rome the "antichrist" when they wished to castigate his abuse of power.^[31]

William Tyndale, an English Protestant reformer, held that while the Roman Catholic realms of that age were the empire of Antichrist, any religious organization that distorted the doctrine of the Old and New Testaments also showed the work of Antichrist. In his treatise *The Parable of the Wicked Mammon*, he expressly rejected the established Church teaching that looked to the future for an Antichrist to rise up, and he taught that Antichrist is a present spiritual force that will be with us until the end of the age under different religious disguises from time to time.^[32]

Futurism, a product of the Counter-Reformation, was advanced beginning in the 16th century in response to the identification of the Papacy as Antichrist. **Francisco Ribera, a Jesuit priest, developed this theory** and **St. Bellarmine** codified this view of a personal Antichrist to come just before the end of the world and to be accepted by the Jews and enthroned in the temple at Jerusalem — thus endeavoring to dispose of the exposition which saw Antichrist in the pope. Most premillennial dispensationalists now accept Bellarmine's interpretation in modified form. Widespread Protestant identification of the Papacy as the Antichrist persisted in the USA until the early 1900s when the Scofield Reference Bible was published by Cyrus Scofield. This commentary promoted

Futurism, causing a decline in the Protestant identification of the Papacy as Antichrist.

Some US Futurists hold that sometime prior to the expected return of Jesus, there will be a period of "great tribulation"^[34] during which the Antichrist, indwelt and controlled by Satan, will attempt to win supporters with false peace, supernatural signs. He will silence all that defy him by refusing to "receive his mark" on their right hands or forehead. This "mark" will be required to legally partake in the end-time economic system.^[35] Some Futurists believe that the Antichrist will be assassinated half way through the Tribulation, being revived and indwelt by Satan. The Antichrist will continue on for three and a half years following this "deadly wound".^[36]

Latter-day Saints

In Mormonism, the *Antichrist* "is anyone or anything that counterfeits the true gospel or plan of salvation and that openly or secretly is set up in opposition to Christ. The great antichrist is Lucifer, but he has many assistants^[45] both as spirit beings and as mortals."

Islamic views: Masih Ad-Dajjal (Arabic: الدَّجَال, literally "The Deceiving Messiah"), is an evil figure in Islamic eschatology. He is to appear pretending to be God at a time in the future, before Yawm al-Qiyamah (The Day of Resurrection, Judgment Day). He will travel around the globe entering every city except Mecca and Medina obliging people to believe in him as a God. Then Isa (Jesus) will descend from the sky to the White lighthouse in eastern Damascus, Syria, placing his hands on the backs of two angels at the time of Fajr. This will happen at the time of the Dajjal and Isa will be the one to eventually defeat the Dajjal, killing him with his spear.^{[47][48]}

Ahmadiyya

The Ahmadiyya teachings interpret the prophecies regarding the appearance of the *Dajjal* (Anti-Christ) and Gog and Magog in Islamic eschatology as foretelling the emergence of two branches or aspects of the same turmoil and trial that was to be faced by Islam in the latter days and that both emerged from Christianity or Christian nations. Its Dajjal aspect relates to deception and perversion of religious belief while its aspect to do with disturbance in the realm of politics and the shattering of world peace has been called Gog and Magog. Thus Ahmadis consider the widespread Christian missionary activity that was 'aggressively' active in the 18th and 19th centuries as being part of the prophesied Dajjal (Antichrist) and Gog and Magog emerging in modern times. The emergence of the Soviet Union and the USA as superpowers and the conflict between the two nations (i.e., the rivalry between communism and capitalism) are seen as having occurred in accordance with certain prophecies regarding Gog and Magog.^[49]

1. · [^] [Cabinet 2001](#), p. [Interview with Bernard McGinn](#).
2. · [^] ["Word Search Results for "antichristos \(Strong's 500\) Strong's antichristos \(Strong's 500\)""](#). The Blue Letter Bible. Retrieved 2007-11-27.
3. · [^] See Strong's Bible Dictionary: [αὐτί](#) and the [Lexicon to Pindar](#). Related terms as noted by the Catholic Encyclopedia include: [antibasileus](#)-a king who fills an [interregnum](#); [antistrategos](#)-a [propraetor](#); [anthoupatos](#)-a [proconsul](#); [antitheos](#)-in [Homer](#), one resembling a god in power and beauty, in other works it stands for a hostile god
4. · [^] See Strong's Bible Dictionary: [χριστός](#)
5. · [^] [a b e](#) See McGinn, Bernard, *Antichrist*, 2000, Columbia University Press; <http://www.cabinetmagazine.org/issues/5/widholm.php> accessed October 2010
6. · [^] [Jewish Encyclopedia: Armilus](#): "bald-headed, with one large and one small eye, deaf in the right ear and maimed in the right arm, while the left arm is two and one-half ells long."
7. · [^] [Polycarp's Letter to the Philippians](#), paragraph 7
8. · [^] Hughes, Kevin L. (2005). *Constructing antichrist : Paul, biblical commentary, and the development of doctrine in the early Middle Ages*. Washington, D.C.: Catholic Univ. of America Press. p. 29-31. ISBN 9780813214153.
9. · [^] ["On the Resurrection, chp 24"](#). Ccel.org. 2005-06-01. [Archived](#) from the original on 28 June 2010. Retrieved 2010-06-18.
10. · [^] Hippolytus's [Treatise on Christ and Antichrist](#), part 2
11. · [^] [Origen 1872](#), p. 386
12. · [^] from Athanasius' ["Four Discourses"](#)

13. · ^ [Chrysostom Homily 1 on the 2nd Epistle of St. Paul the Apostle to the Thessalonians](#)
14. · ^ [Jerome 1893b](#), p. 334
15. · ^ [Jerome 1893](#), p. 19
16. · ^ [Jerome 1893c](#), p. 449
17. · ^ [Jerome 1893d](#), pp. 236–7
18. · ^ [a b c d Jerome 1958](#)
19. · ^ ["Latin Tiburtine Sibyl"](#). [Http-server.carleton.ca. Archived from the original on 2 July 2010. Retrieved 2010-06-18.](#)
20. · ^ [City of God, Book 20](#) chapter 19, cited in Brug's [A Scriptural and Historical Survey of the Doctrine of the Antichrist](#)
21. · ^ quote from McGinn, Bernard, *Visions of the End. Apocalyptic Traditions in the Middle Ages*, New York: Columbia University, 1979. p. 64., found in Brug's [A Scriptural and Historical Survey of the Doctrine of the Antichrist](#)
22. · ^ Bernard McGinn, *Antichrist: two thousand years of the human fascination with evil*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2000 p. 100. and [Schaff & Schley Schaff 1885](#), p. 291
23. · ^ See [The Correspondence of Pope Gregory VII](#) trans. Emerton, Ephraim. New York: Columbia University Press, 1990., p. 162.
24. · ^ From long quotations in [Foxe 1583](#), p. 121
25. · ^ quoted by David M. Whitford, [The Papal Antichrist: Martin Luther and the Underappreciated Influence of Lorenzo Valla](#), *Renaissance Quarterly*, 61:26–52, Spring 2008
26. · ^ [The Methodist Review Vol. XLIII, No. 3](#), p. 305.
27. · ^ See [Daniel 7:23-25](#), [Revelation 13:1-2](#), and [Revelation 17:3-18](#)
28. · ^ [a b](#) Article on "Antichrist" from Smith and Fuller, [A Dictionary of the Bible](#), 1893, p. 147
29. · ^ [Daniel 7:8](#)
30. · ^ [The AntiChrist and The Protestant Reformation](#)
31. · ^ See [Building Unity](#), edited by Burgess and Gross
32. · ^ Tyndale, William, *Parable of the Wicked Mammon*, c. 1526, (facsimile copy of later printing, no ISBN number, Benediction Classics, 2008) at pages 4-5
33. · ^ See ["Tyndale's Doctrine of Antichrist and His Translation of 2 Thessalonians 2"](#), R. Davis, New Matthew Bible Project. (A shorter version of this article was also published in the Tyndale Society Journal No. 36, Spring 2009, under the title *Tyndale, the Church, and the Doctrine of Antichrist*)
34. · ^ ["Matthew 24:21 \(King James Version\)"](#). BibleGateway.com. [Archived from the original on 16 January 2008. Retrieved 2007-12-03.](#)
35. · ^ ["Revelation 13:16-17 \(King James Version\)"](#). BibleGateway.com. [Archived from the original on 3 December 2007. Retrieved 2007-12-03.](#)
36. · ^ Pink, Arthur W. (1923). ["The Antichrist"](#). biblebelievers.com. pp. Chapter 6, The Career of the Antichrist. [Archived from the original on 7 July 2007. Retrieved 2007-06-25.](#)
37. · ^ ["Peter I, czar of Russia"](#). [The Columbia Encyclopedia. Archived from the original on 12 February 2008. Retrieved 2008-02-10.](#)
38. · ^ Schink, W.F. "The Scriptural Doctrine of the Antichrist." *Our Great Heritage: Vol. 3* Ed. Lange, Lyle and Albrecht, Jerome G. Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing house, 1991. p. 572.
39. · ^ [a b](#) [Net Bible: Man of sin](#)
40. · ^ [St. John Chrysostom](#), Homilies on II Thess., Nicene-Post Nicene Fathers
41. · ^ [Man of Sin](#), Kurt Simmons
42. · ^ (compare [Bousset](#), *Der Antichrist*, 93 ff, etc.)
43. · ^ See footnotes in [Revelation 7 and 13](#) in the *Scofield Reference Bible*, 1917
44. · ^ Bell, Rob; Golden, Don *Jesus Wants to Save Christians* 2008.

45. · ^ Korihor is directly referred to in *The Book of Mormon* as an anti-Christ (Alma 30:6)
46. · ^ LDS, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. "Bible Dictionary: Antichrist". Intellectual Reserve, Inc.
47. · ^ Sahih Muslim, 41:7023
48. · ^ Who is the evil Dajjal (the "anti-Christ")?
49. · ^ Islam and Communism
50. · ^ "Unveiling of the 'Unseen' by the Quran" in "Knowledge Revelation, Rationality and Truth" by Mirza Tahir Ahmad, hosted on Al Islam, the Official Website of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community.
51. · ^ Bailey, Alice A. *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy* New York:1957 Lucis Publishing Co. See under "Hitler" in index

Thoughts?

What or who is antichrist?

- The man of lawlessness – what does that mean?
 - What law? How might this be manifest?
 - Might it be manifest by replacing God’s law of love, the design for life, with imposed human law constructs?
- Daniel describes a little horn that grew great, but “not by its own power.” So where does the little horn get his power? Revelation 13:2 tells us the power comes from the dragon. But what is the dragon’s power?
 - The little horn power throws truth to the ground and causes deceit and the dragon is the father of lies (John 8:44).
 - “Since the children have flesh and blood, he [Christ] too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy *him who holds the power of death--that is, the devil*” Hebrews 2:14.
 - What is the power of death? And how can the devil hold it? Christ gives us the insight we need in John 17:3 “Now this *is eternal life*: that they may *know you*, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.”
 - Satan’s power is the lies he tells that we believe, which alienate us from God!

- The little horn power sets itself up against the prince and the dragon fought against Michael the Prince (Revelation 12:7).
 - What kind of warfare is this? How do they fight against God?
 - 2Cor 10:3-5
- The little horn power takes away the daily sacrifice
 - What does this mean?
 - The daily sacrifice is just a metaphorical way of saying God's entire plan to heal and restore from sin. God's plan of salvation was taken away. The dragon creates a false system, a system that supplants God's plan (Mark 4:15, 2Cor 11:14, 2Thes 2:9). The dragon's false plan does not result in healing and restoration but is a plan that degrades the human being.
 - What does that false system look like? What are the elements?
- The little horn power brought the place of his sanctuary low. The dragon establishes the synagogue of Satan (Rev 2:9, 3:9) a false sanctuary, a spirit temple filled by the Satanic spirit. The man of sin sets himself up in God's temple proclaiming himself to be God.
 - What does this mean? What is God's temple? How could this man of sin enter into God's temple? Which temple?
 - 1CO 3:16 Don't you know that **you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you?** 17 If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him; for God's temple is sacred, and **you are that temple.**
 - 2Cor 6:16 What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? **For we are the temple of the living God.** As God has said: "I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people."
 - EPH 2:19 Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household, 20 built

on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. 21 In him the **whole building** is joined together and rises **to become a holy temple** in the Lord. 22 And in him you **too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit**.

- 1PE 2:4 As you come to him, the living Stone-- rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to him-- 5 **you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood**, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. 6 For in Scripture it says: "See, I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious cornerstone, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame." 7 Now to you who believe, this stone is precious. But to those who do not believe, "The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone, " (see Zech chapter 4) 8 and, "A stone that causes men to stumble and a rock that makes them fall." They stumble because they disobey the message--which is also what they were destined for. 9 But you are **a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation**, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. 10 Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.
- Heb 3:6 But Christ is faithful as a son over God's house. And **we are his house**, if we hold on to our courage and the hope of which we boast.

What is the temple that has been defiled? Here is what our church thought over 100 years ago:

In the cleansing of the temple, Jesus was announcing His mission as the Messiah, and entering upon His work. That **temple**, erected for the abode of the divine Presence, was designed to be an **object lesson** for Israel

and for the world. From eternal ages it was God's purpose that **every created being, from the bright and holy seraph to man, should be a temple for the indwelling of the Creator. Because of sin, humanity ceased to be a temple for God.** Darkened and defiled by evil, the heart of man no longer revealed the glory of the Divine One. But by the incarnation of the Son of God, the purpose of Heaven is fulfilled. **God dwells in humanity,** and through saving grace the **heart of man becomes again His temple.** God designed that the temple at Jerusalem should be a continual witness to **the high destiny open to every soul.** But the Jews had not understood the significance of the building they regarded with so much pride. They did not yield themselves as holy temples for the Divine Spirit. The courts of the temple at Jerusalem, filled with the tumult of unholy traffic, represented all too truly the temple of the heart, defiled by the presence of sensual passion and unholy thoughts. **In cleansing the temple** from the world's buyers and sellers, Jesus announced His mission to **cleanse the heart from the defilement of sin,**--from the earthly desires, the selfish lusts, the evil habits, that corrupt the soul. "The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the Messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, He shall come, saith the Lord of hosts. But who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth? for He is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap: and He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and **He shall purify the sons of Levi,** and purge them as gold and silver." Mal. 3:1-3. {DA 161.1}

What is the temple? The human mind/soul?

And what defiles the soul temple? The lies about God that Adam and Eve believed that broke their trust and confidence and relationship with God, resulting in fear and selfishness, and the continued lies that we believe that prevent us from trusting God and being reconciled to Him.

If those persistent lies about God are not removed by the truth about God that Jesus Christ has brought, then Satan's principles of selfishness continue to grow – the earthly desires, the selfish lusts, the evil habits. These destructive elements strengthen within and instead of Christlike character developing we develop the character of the rebel, the Satanic character; and the soul, the individual created with dignity, nobility of character, in God's image to represent Him to an onlooking universe, the being designed to be the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit instead of revealing Godlike character becomes a synagogue of Satan and the habitation of devils and reveals the Satanic character, ultimately ending in desolation and destruction.

Thoughts?

So what is antichrist trying to do? Establish his character, his methods, in the Spirit temple, which means what? Trying to make us like Satan, selfish, arrogant, mean, unkind, cruel, exploitive of others, unloving, impatient etc.

Now, here is one reference from one of the founders of the SDA church regarding antichrist:

Christ is the only true standard of character, and he who sets himself up as a standard for others is putting himself in the place of Christ. And since the Father "hath committed all judgment unto the Son" (John 5:22), whoever presumes to judge the motives of others is again usurping the prerogative of the Son of God. **These would-be judges and critics are placing themselves on the side of antichrist,** "who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." 2 Thessalonians 2:4. {MB 125.3}

The sin that leads to the most unhappy results is the cold, critical, unforgiving spirit that characterizes

Pharisaism. When the religious experience is **devoid of love, Jesus is not there...** {MB 126.1}

When men indulge this accusing spirit, **they are not satisfied** with pointing out what they suppose to be a defect in their brother. **If milder means fail of making him do what they think ought to be done, they will resort to compulsion.** Just as far as lies in their power **they will force men to comply with their ideas of what is right.** This is what the Jews did in the days of Christ and what the church has done ever since whenever she has lost the grace of Christ. **Finding herself destitute of the power of love, she has reached out for the strong arm of the state to enforce her dogmas and execute her decrees.** Here is the secret of all religious laws that have ever been enacted, and the secret of all persecution from the days of Abel to our own time. {MB 126.2}

Christ does not drive but draws men unto Him. The only compulsion which He employs is the constraint of love. When the church begins to seek for the support of secular power, it is evident that she is devoid of the power of Christ--the constraint of divine love. {MB 127.1}

Thoughts? Agree or disagree? What methods does the antichrist power use? Deceit, criticism, judgmentalism, coercion, power to intimidate. What does revelation say about the beast power? No one can buy or sell... the use of coercive power.

What is happening in the world today? Do we find religious people, devoid of love and grace, seeking the strong arm of the state to enforce its rules? What about Islam? Are they seeking to use the state to enforce their religious rules? What about Christianity?

Given all we have read, do you have any thoughts on what Daniel 8:14, 2300 years until the sanctuary will be cleansed, is referring to?

- Would it be referring to cleansing our minds from the lies of Satan?
- Cleansing our characters from the methods of Satan?
- Cleansing a people, spirit temple, ready to meet Christ?
- “The first tabernacle, built according to God's directions, was indeed blessed of Him. The people thus were preparing themselves to worship in the temple not made with hands--a temple in the heavens. The stones of the Temple built by Solomon were all prepared at the quarry and then brought to the Temple site. They came together without the sound of ax or hammer. The timbers were also fitted in the forest. The furniture was likewise brought to this house all prepared for use. {3MR 231.3}

Even so, the mighty cleaver of truth has **taken out a people from the quarry of the world and is fitting this people, who profess to be the children of God, for a place in His heavenly temple.** We want the cleaver of truth to do its work for us. **We are taken from the quarry of the world. The material must not be a dead substance but living souls, and these souls must be brought out of the quarry of the world, where the hand of God can fit them for the temple in heaven.** We are here as probationers, and we must pass under the hand of God. All rough edges and rough surfaces must be removed and **we must be stones fitted for the building.** We are brought into church capacity with defects of character, but we must not retain them. **We must be fitted and squared for the building. We must be "laborers together with God," for we are "God's husbandry," we are "God's building."** In view of this we must see that our temple is not defiled with sin. We should be lively stones, not dead ones, but live ones that will reflect the image of Christ. We must be worshipers in spirit and in truth. {3MR 231.4}

What about this quotation, what is being described?

Many **exalt human reason, idolize human wisdom**, and set the opinions of men above the revealed wisdom of God. **This affords opportunity for the working of Satan, and the spirit of Antichrist** is far more widespread than any of us imagine. . . . {7BC 950.2}

The maxims of the world, that know not God, have been worked into the theories of the church. **In the eyes of men, vain philosophy and science, falsely so-called, are of more value than the Word of God.** The sentiment prevails to a large extent that the divine Mediator is not essential to the salvation of man. A **variety of theories advanced by the so-called worldly-wise men for man's elevation**, are believed and trusted in more than is the truth of God, as taught by Christ and His apostles. {7BC 950.3}

Thoughts? Are you aware of any theories based on worldly wisdom infecting Christianity? What might some of those theories be?

- Evolutionism
 - Science so called
- Penal substitutionary atonement
 - Based on worldly governmental design, logic, and principles.
 - Which leads to the “justified” use of coercive power as sin must be punished.
 - Moves the work of Christ away from the spirit temple and into a distant building hidden somewhere in the cosmos. It prevents the cleansing of the sanctuary and instead promotes a legal process in a building in heaven in which record books are examined and forgiveness stamped next to names.

What do you think of the destruction of the antichrist? How is he destroyed?

Verse 8: And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the **Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth** and **destroy by the splendor of his coming.**

What does that mean? Does it sound similar to Rev 19:19-21:

Then I saw the beast and the kings of the world and their armies gathered together to fight against the one sitting on the horse and his army. ²⁰ And the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who did mighty miracles on behalf of the beast—miracles that deceived all who had accepted the mark of the beast and who worshiped his statue. Both the beast and his false prophet were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur. ²¹ **Their entire army was killed by the sharp sword that came from the mouth of the one riding the white horse.** And the vultures all gorged themselves on the dead bodies.

What kills the antichrist? Overthrown by the breath of his mouth and destroyed by his splendor, and killed by a sword coming out of his mouth? What does this mean?

SUNDAY

Read fourth paragraph, “no matter how...” thoughts?

I hear it frequently, “I heard Come and Reason teaches dangerous ideas, that the death of Jesus isn’t necessary for our salvation...” When asked, have you listened for yourself or gone off what someone told you? Have you asked that person who told them?

Do we believe salvation is possible without the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ? Absolutely not! Without what Jesus accomplished no human could be saved. Yet some misrepresent us and because of such misrepresentation prevent others from examining the evidence for themselves.

This happened to Graham Maxwell frequently and he eventually wrote a short paper entitled *The Scourge of Theological Gossip*. I have included the link to this in our notes:

<http://pineknoll.org/component/content/article/1212>

MONDAY

The lesson focuses on Paul's overview – the day of the Lord will not occur until Satan's counterattack against Christ's mission happens first.

His counterattack will focus on the cross to misrepresent it, and distort it so badly that Satan's ideas will be accepted as true into the heart/mind of God's people. He will set himself up in God's temple, and Satan's idea of God will be established there.

Thus God prophesied through Daniel (8:14) that 2300 years would pass before enough truth would be recovered for the sanctuary to be cleansed.

We are taking a message of God's kingdom to the world which is designed to free minds from the distortions about God that have infected Christianity.

Thoughts?

TUESDAY/WEDNESDAY discussed above

THURSDAY

What does it mean God sends powerful delusion? God using his power to create mental illness?

No, it is the way the Bible attributes to God the outworking of His natural laws. God is love and he built the universe to operate in harmony with his character of love. Love requires

freedom. Thus, when people choose to reject truth, what is the only option left, on any subject? A lie, they are given over to believe a lie because of their own freewill choice to reject the truth.

It is God's doing in that God chose to create a universe in which genuine freedom exists, rather than a universe inhabited by robots preprogrammed by him.

Read second paragraph, "In today's..." the lesson describes this correctly, but don't you find it interesting that when it comes to the Bible language of God making them delusional, the lesson correctly understands that it is describing God allowing them to reap what they have chosen, rather than inflicting it on them. Yet, when it comes to their eternal death they lesson can't apply this same truth and instead insists on God as the source of inflicted death?

FRIDAY

Read and discuss questions 1 and 2