

THE ANTICHRIST

BIBLE TEXT : II Thessalonians 2:1-12; Daniel 7:7-28; 8:23-25;
11:21-24, 28-32, 36-38, 45; 12:1-3; Revelation 13:1-18.

LESSON 413 Senior Course

MEMORY VERSE "The mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way" (II Thessalonians 2:7).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

2 Thessalonians 2:1-12

¹ Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and *by* our gathering together unto him,

² That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.

³ Let no man deceive you by any means: for *that day shall not come*, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;

⁴ Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

⁵ Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?

⁶ And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time.

⁷ For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth *will let*, until he be taken out of the way.

⁸ And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:

⁹ *Even him*, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,

¹⁰ And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

¹¹ And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:

¹² That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

Daniel 7:7-28

⁷ After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it *was* diverse from all the beasts that *were* before it; and it had ten horns.

⁸ I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn *were* eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things.

⁹ I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment *was* white as snow, and the hair of

BIBLE REFERENCES:

I Events Prior to the Reign of the Antichrist

1. The falling away must first come, II Thessalonians 2:1-3.
2. The Rapture of the Church will transpire before the antichrist is revealed, II Thessalonians 2:5-8;

Isaiah 26:20-21

²⁰ Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast.

²¹ For, behold, the LORD cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.

II The Antichrist

1. A covenant with the Jews is made and broken, Daniel 11:30-32.

Daniel 9:27

²⁷ And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make *it* desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

2. He is a world-wide ruler, Daniel 7:7, 8, 15-25; 11:21-24, 28, 29; Revelation 13:7.
3. He is governed by Satan, II Thessalonians 2:9-12; Daniel 8:23-25; Revelation 13:1-6.
4. He exalts himself as God, II Thessalonians 2:4; Daniel 11:36-38, 45; Revelation 13:8-18; Matthew 24:15.

2 Thessalonians 2:4

⁴ Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

Matthew 24:15

¹⁵ When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)

III The Tribulation

1. It is a time of trouble, Daniel 12:1-3;

Matthew 24:21

²¹ For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.

2. God's judgements are poured out on the world, Daniel 7:9, 10; Revelation 16:1-21

¹ And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth.

² And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and *upon* them which worshipped his image.

³ And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead *man*: and every living soul died in the sea.

⁴ And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers

his head like the pure wool: his throne *was like* the fiery flame, *and* his wheels *as* burning fire.

¹⁰ A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened.

¹¹ I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld *even* till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame.

¹² As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away: yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time.

¹³ I saw in the night visions, and, behold, *one* like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.

¹⁴ And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion *is* an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom *that* which shall not be destroyed.

¹⁵ I Daniel was grieved in my spirit in the midst of *my* body, and the visions of my head troubled me.

¹⁶ I came near unto one of them that stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the things.

¹⁷ These great beasts, which are four, *are* four kings, *which* shall arise out of the earth.

¹⁸ But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever.

¹⁹ Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast, which was diverse from all the others, exceeding dreadful, whose teeth *were* of iron, and his nails *of* brass; *which* devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet;

²⁰ And of the ten horns that *were* in his head, and *of* the other which came up, and before whom three fell; *even of* that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look *was* more stout than his fellows.

²¹ I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them;

²² Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom.

²³ Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces.

²⁴ And the ten horns out of this kingdom *are* ten kings *that* shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings.

²⁵ And he shall speak *great* words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and

and fountains of waters; and they became blood.

⁵ And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus.

⁶ For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy.

⁷ And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous *are* thy judgments.

⁸ And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire.

⁹ And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory.

¹⁰ And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain,

¹¹ And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds.

¹² And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.

¹³ And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs *come* out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.

¹⁴ For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, *which* go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

¹⁵ Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed *is* he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.

¹⁶ And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.

¹⁷ And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done.

¹⁸ And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, *and* so great.

¹⁹ And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.

²⁰ And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.

²¹ And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, *every stone* about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.

3. The antichrist is defeated, Daniel 7:11, 12, 26.

4. Jesus Christ takes the reins of government, Daniel 7:13, 14, 18, 22, 27, 28.

NOTES:

The Antichrist

Jesus said: "I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive" (John 5:43). This one who shall come in his own name is none other than the antichrist of whom John warns, "Ye have heard that antichrist shall come" (I John 2:18). The Apostle Paul refers to him as "that man of sin," "the son of perdition."

Now we are told that he will come before the day of Christ. That is, he will come and reign before the revelation of Christ, which is at the close of the Tribulation. Let us look at the order of the events as told in II Thessalonians 2.

laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.

²⁶ But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy *it* unto the end.

²⁷ And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom *is* an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.

²⁸ Hitherto *is* the end of the matter. As for me Daniel, my cogitations much troubled me, and my countenance changed in me: but I kept the matter in my heart.

Daniel 8:23-25

²³ And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up.

²⁴ And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practise, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people.

²⁵ And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify *himself* in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand.

Daniel 11:21-24

²¹ And in his estate shall stand up a vile person, to whom they shall not give the honour of the kingdom: but he shall come in peaceably, and obtain the kingdom by flatteries.

²² And with the arms of a flood shall they be overflowed from before him, and shall be broken; yea, also the prince of the covenant.

²³ And after the league *made* with him he shall work deceitfully: for he shall come up, and shall become strong with a small people.

²⁴ He shall enter peaceably even upon the fattest places of the province; and he shall do *that* which his fathers have not done, nor his fathers' fathers; he shall scatter among them the prey, and spoil, and riches: *yea*, and he shall forecast his devices against the strong holds, even for a time.

Daniel 11:28-32

²⁸ Then shall he return into his land with great riches; and his heart *shall be* against the holy covenant; and he shall do *exploits*, and return to his own land.

²⁹ At the time appointed he shall return, and come toward the south; but it shall not be as the former, or as the latter.

³⁰ For the ships of Chittim shall come against him: therefore he shall be grieved, and return, and have indignation against the holy covenant: so shall he do; he shall even return, and have intelligence with them that forsake the holy covenant.

³¹ And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and

The Falling Away

First there comes a falling away. Perhaps the greatest display of the falling away has been the departure from the fundamental doctrines of the Church and turning to modernism. Many people hold to the name "Christian" but deny the deity of Christ. They claim to teach from the Bible, but deny the miracles thereof. They acknowledge a "Supreme Being" but substitute Darwinism for the Genesis record of Creation. "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away."

The Holy Ghost

Now after the falling away, we read of One who still prevents the revelation of the antichrist. "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth [hindereth] will let [hinder], until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed" (II Thessalonians 2:7, 8). He who now hinders is none other than the Spirit of God, the Holy Ghost who was sent down to earth on the Day of Pentecost and has remained to this day seeking out a Bride for Christ. The Holy Spirit will leave this world with the Bride to present us to Christ at the Rapture of the Church.

"Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast" (Isaiah 26:20).

With the Bride safe in God's pavilion enjoying the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, the antichrist is then revealed on the earth. After the antichrist's brief reign the Lord will destroy the antichrist with the "brightness of his coming." This coming will be the revelation of Christ at the beginning of the Millennium.

The Mystery of Iniquity

The mystery of iniquity, which worked in Paul's day is certainly working more strongly in our day. One of the strong delusions that is most baffling today is that of communism. This godless religion based upon the atheistic theories of Marx and Engels promises utopia, but delivers serfdom and abject slavery. It rejects truth as such, and calls anything truth that furthers its cause. "It cast down the truth to the ground; and it practised, and prospered" (Daniel 8:12). From a standpoint of subjecting people and gaining control over much territory by lies and false propaganda, Communism has prospered and now dominates one third of the world's land surface and more than one third of the world's population. This atheistic philosophy dethrones God and sets up man and so-called science. It promises peace, but advocates violence and bloodshed. This philosophy reduces man from a spiritual being to an animal and condemns to death any who disagree with its tenets. It justifies lying, stealing, immorality, and even murder if it furthers the cause of Communism.

The Man of Sin

Out of a tumultuous sea of political agitation arises one "whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness." This one, the antichrist, is called "that man of sin," literally, the man of lawlessness. That is a good point to remember. Why? Because that is exactly what he is — lawless. He disregards all law, except what he himself institutes.

So strong is his power of deception, that all the world will wonder admiringly after him. Men will proclaim, "Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him?" He speaks great things and draws the world unto himself. His description as a beast is that made up of a leopard, bear, and lion. This would

shall take away the daily *sacrifice*, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate.

³² And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he corrupt by flatteries: but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do *exploits*.

Daniel 11:36-38

³⁶ And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done.

³⁷ Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all.

³⁸ But in his estate shall he honour the God of forces: and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honour with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things.

Daniel 11:45

⁴⁵ And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.

Daniel 12:1-3

¹ And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation *even* to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.

² And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame *and* everlasting contempt.

³ And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.

Revelation 13:1-18

¹ And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.

² And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as *the feet* of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.

³ And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.

⁴ And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who *is* like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?

⁵ And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty *and* two months.

indicate that in his kingdom are manifest some of those qualities that made up the kingdoms described in Daniel 7. The golden splendour of Babylon, the massive power of Medo-Persia, the elegance of art and intellect of Greece, the iron law and discipline of Rome are all combined to make men stand in awe of such a ruler.

"He shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many." Peace and prosperity -- two of the greatest desires of man -- are accomplished by him for a time. "He shall come in peaceably, and obtain the kingdom by flatteries" (Daniel 11:21). "He shall enter peaceably even upon the fattest places of the province; and he shall do that which his fathers have not done, for his fathers' fathers; he shall scatter among them the prey, and spoil, and riches" (Daniel 11:24).

The Abomination of Desolation

As we understand Daniel 9:27, the antichrist makes a covenant with the Jews for a seven-year period (one prophetic week). This covenant embraces the right of the Jews to set up their temple on Mt. Moriah, the site of Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem. The Jews resume their worship with sacrifices being made in their temple. In the middle of this period, the antichrist breaks his covenant with the Jews and "exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God" (II Thessalonians 2:4). This is "the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet" (Matthew 24:15).

To further his demands for worship, we see another beast rising out of the earth, a false prophet, whose office is to convince the world of the deity of the first beast, and to demand that he be worshiped. Though the looks of the false prophet resembles a lamb, his speech betrays the source of his power -- the devil -- "he spake as a dragon."

The Mark of the Beast

The absolute control that Satan has through these two men is shown in the demand for the mark of allegiance in the right hand or in the forehead of each of their subjects. Without this mark one cannot buy or sell; with it he is doomed to eternal hell. "If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, . . . and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone . . . and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name" (Revelation 14:9-11). "Choose you this day whom ye will serve" (Joshua 24:15).

The Comparison

Satan's triumph through the antichrist is short. From the time he sets himself up as God until the end of his reign is only forty-two months. Compare this with Christ's Millennial Reign on earth for one thousand years, and choose for Christ today. Be sure that your name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life, or you will be caught in the snares of the arch-deceiver. "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Revelation 13:8). Is your name written there?

Though the reign of the antichrist promises peace, no sooner does he exalt himself as God until the Almighty begins to pour out judgements upon the earth. We have but to study the Book of Revelation to see what transpires in this short period of tribulation. "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be

⁶ And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.

⁷ And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.

⁸ And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

⁹ If any man have an ear, let him hear.

¹⁰ He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.

¹¹ And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.

¹² And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.

¹³ And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men,

¹⁴ And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by *the means of* those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.

¹⁵ And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.

¹⁶ And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads:

¹⁷ And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

¹⁸ Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number *is* Six hundred threescore *and* six.

accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man" (Luke 21:36).

QUESTIONS

1. Name the order of events before the Millennium.
2. What is meant by the falling away?
3. Where does the antichrist get his power?
4. How widespread is his domain?
5. What happens to those who take his mark?
6. What is the "abomination of desolation"?
7. What are some of the other Scriptural names for the antichrist?
8. How long does the antichrist reign?
9. Where does the antichrist make his headquarters?
10. How is the antichrist overthrown?