

Who Hindered the Antichrist? : Part 1

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Politics Economics And Religion: Great Dividers, Different Opinions Regarding Proper Interpretation Of Bible Prophecy, Defining The Word "Antichrist", Christ-Hating Jews And False Disciples, Peter And Paul's Warnings, First Disciples Were All Jewish, Dogs And Swine, Traditionalists And Old Bottles, Synagogue Of Satan, Antichrist Of Jewish Stock, Paul Warns Of A Falling Away Or Apostasy, Some Disciples Abandon Jesus, The Apostles Flee In Gethsemane, Modern Apostasy, Last Days

There is an old saying which says that if you want to start an argument, just mention the topics of politics, economics or religion. Friends have been lost, and families have been divided over differences of opinions stemming from heated discussions regarding these three nasty subjects. No one wants to be told how to vote, how to spend their money, or what to believe in. If you don't believe me, just offer some unsolicited advice and see if you aren't met with hostility. While I personally try to avoid the first two topics, there is no way I can avoid discussing religion; after all, over eighty per cent of my life has been dedicated to the study of the Scriptures.

If there is one thing which I know with a great deal of certainty, it is that there is a lot of disagreement within religious circles concerning the proper interpretation of the Scriptures. This is particularly true in the field of eschatological study, that is, the study and interpretation of Bible prophecy and the end of all things. It seems that the only thing which we Christians can agree upon, is that there is still so much that we don't comprehend. But believe me; there are many of us who are continually endeavoring to

understand the mysteries of God's Word. Personally, I have been devoted to trying to understand the prophetic mysteries of the Bible for over forty-five years now. I feel that I have made considerable progress over the years, but even I must humbly admit that I still remain stumped by certain passages and prophetic events.

One eschatological subject which has for a long time been in the forefront of discussion is that of the revelation of the Antichrist. Untold hours have been spent trying to properly decipher the Scriptures which describe this ominous Biblical character; and many papers have been written regarding the possible identity of, and the correct timing and place of appearance of this man on the prophetic stage. I myself have written extensively concerning this individual. A major part of my series called "The Kings of the North and the South" is dedicated to discussing him. For the sake of clarification, I define the Antichrist in the following manner in my article entitled "Who Is Who?: Defining Important Prophecy Terms".

I am currently convinced that the word Antichrist is most appropriately applied to the Jewish false messiah. I do not believe that the Beast and the Antichrist refer to the same person. In my view, the Beast refers to a political/military foreigner who invades Israel, while the Antichrist is a Jewish-born political and spiritual leader. Not only is the Antichrist against Jesus Christ, but he seeks to convince many in Israel that he is in fact Christ returned to the Earth, or possibly Jesus Christ come to the Earth for the first time, in total contradiction to traditional Christian interpretation of the Scriptures. The term "antichrist" is introduced to us in the Epistles of John, as we see by the following four verses:

"Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time."

1 John 2:18, KJV

"Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son."

1 John 2:22, KJV

"And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world."

1 John 4:3, KJV

"For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist."

2 John 1:7, KJV

As can be seen, the overall meaning of the word "antichrist", -- or "anti-christ" as some people prefer to spell it -- is anyone, or any spirit who denies the existence of God; and more specifically, anyone or any spirit who denies that Jesus Christ is the Son of God who has come in the flesh to redeem the world of sin. Notice that John gets even more specific by stating that even in his time the spirit of antichrist, and many deceivers -- or antichrists -- were already in the world. Exactly who were the primary culprits who denied the Divinity of Jesus Christ? Who were those who repeatedly fought against Christ, and then tried to pervert the doctrines of the Early Church?

As you probably already know, the Scriptures provide us with a startlingly clear answer to these two questions. But if you are not yet aware of this truth, please consider what Jesus had to say to the unbelieving Jews of His day. It is some very strong stuff. I have added words in brackets in certain places for the sake of clarification:

"Ye [speaking to the Jewish leadership] are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it."

John 8:44, KJV

"And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom

[the Jews who falsely claimed to be God's "Chosen People"] shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Matthew 8:11-12, KJV

". . . Did ye [speaking to the unbelieving Jews] never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected [meaning the unbelieving Jews rejecting Jesus], the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, [from the unbelieving Jews] and given to a nation [God's new born-again Christian nation] bringing forth the fruits thereof. [meaning the fruits of true repentance]"

Matthew 21:42-43, KJV

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves."

Matthew 23:15, KJV

"Go your ways: behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves."

Luke 10:3, KJV

There should be no doubt then who these troublemakers were. As I have mentioned before, on quite a few occasions in his many writings -- and likewise during his various missionary travels -- the Apostle Paul made harsh comments regarding his unbelieving Jewish brethren. Paul repeatedly warned the Christian brethren to beware of Jewish unbelievers and their very divisive nature. Consider the following example verses:

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them."

Acts 20:28-30, KJV

"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them."

Romans 16:17, KJV

"In whom the god of this world [Satan] hath blinded the minds of them [the Jews] which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."

2 Corinthians 4:4, KJV

"But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him . . . For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works . . . Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;"

2 Corinthians 11:3-4, 13-15, 24-26, KJV

"I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be

accursed."

Galatians 1:6-9, KJV

"And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage:"

Galatians 2:4, KJV

"Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision."

Philippians 3:2, KJV

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;"

1 Timothy 4:1-2, KJV

"If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself."

1 Timothy 6:3-5, KJV

"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;"

2 Timothy 4:3, KJV

"But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain. A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject; Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself."

Titus 3:9-11, KJV

The Apostle Paul was not alone in issuing such stern warnings to the young Christian Church. Peter also warned the brethren

to beware of their divisive and antichrist Jewish brethren, who would attempt to sow confusion amongst the congregations by planting false doctrines, and by denying the very Lord who purchased them with His own Blood on the Cross. Consider the following two verses:

"But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of."

2 Peter 2:1-2, KJV

It is a scriptural fact that the first Apostles and Disciples which joined the First Century Church were of Jewish origin. It wasn't until after Peter's revelation in the Book of Acts -- please see Acts chapter ten -- and until the beginning of Paul's ministry to the Gentiles, that those first Disciples fully understood that Salvation was meant for both Jew and Gentile alike.

As the previous Scriptures all very clearly demonstrate, the false brethren and antichrists who were mentioned by Peter, John and Paul were in fact Christ-hating Jews who were still in bondage to the Mosaic Law; and who entered into the flocks of God feigning to be disciples, in order to cause division, and to force circumcision and other aspects of the Mosaic Law upon the new Disciples. This is precisely who Paul is talking about when he warns the brethren to "beware of the concision" in the previous verse.

Furthermore, when Paul writes "Beware of dogs" in that same verse, all he is doing is teaching the very same thing that Jesus taught regarding the unbelieving Jews who rejected Him. This becomes evident by the following verse. Please note that in the Gospels, Jesus specifically sent the Twelve Apostles to be a witness to the house of Israel. Therefore, we should assume that the "dogs" and "swine" who He mentions in this verse are in fact the unbelieving Jews:

"Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye

your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you."

Matthew 7:6, KJV

Sadly, as we all know, that is precisely what the unbelieving Jews did to Jesus. They tore Him apart on the Cross; just as they tore apart Stephen when they stoned him to death like ravenous, blood-thirsty dogs in the Book of Acts. Of course, Stephen was just the first Disciple to be martyred. Others would follow in his steps sometime later.

As we have seen, because the stubborn, unbelieving Jews did not accept faith in the Sacrifice of Christ as being the only requirement for one to receive forgiveness and inherit Eternal Life, they were trying to mix God's Grace with their own self-righteous works. By way of their misguided actions, they were in essence saying that Jesus' Sacrifice was not enough. Thus, they fell under the deception that they had to help Him save themselves, through their continued observance of the Sabbath and other feast days; by adhering to specific dietary laws; by being circumcised; by offering the required sacrifices; and by doing other things which were mandated by the Mosaic Law. It was in fact these outdated doctrines and traditions which they tried to force on the new Christian Disciples. As I discuss at length in other articles, this ultimately resulted in the meeting in Acts chapter fifteen.

These misguided liars, deceivers and harsh legalists refused to acknowledge that through His Death on the Cross, Jesus had not only brokered a New Covenant, but He founded a new Church which was bought with His very own Blood. They were traditionalists who wanted to preserve the old, and what had always been. They were old bottles. They were quite happy with their Temple and synagogue services. After all, it was that very corrupt religious system, as well as maintaining the status quo with Rome, which kept them in power for so long. Furthermore, that system kept a sword hanging over the heads of the common people, so that they could control them. Ironically, those Jewish religious leaders were much like the Roman Catholic Church today, which claims to have a monopoly on Salvation.

However, even though they claimed to be true Jews, Paul said that they were no such thing, as we see by the following two verses:

"For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."

Romans 2:28-29, KJV

Once again we see that Paul was following the Lord. Consider the fact that even after His triumphant return to Heaven, the Lord still wanted to make it very clear to His First Century followers, exactly how He viewed those Jewish false brethren. Thus, when Jesus sent an Angelic Messenger to the Apostle John, so that John could receive the visions and prophecies which are contained in the Book of Revelation, consider what He said regarding those false Jews:

"I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan."

Revelation 2:9, KJV

"Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee."

Revelation 3:9, KJV

Thus, through the aforementioned Scriptures, we see that while the word "antichrist" can be used in a general sense to describe anyone who rejects Jesus Christ, in those early days of the Church, it was used primarily to describe the Christ-rejecting Jews who attacked and murdered Jesus, and who then persecuted and plagued his Apostles and Disciples wherever they went to preach the Gospel. So how does all of this information relate to our primary topic of discussion in this series? Quite simply, for many years now, I have been of the opinion that the Antichrist of the Scriptures concerns an actual Jew.

Due to the various descriptions we find in the prophecies of both the Book of Daniel and the Book of Revelation, we have a fairly clear idea regarding how the political Beast and the religious False Prophet operate. However, there exist certain aspects regarding the Antichrist which are somewhat elusive. One point in particular concerns the identity of the individual who the Scriptures inform us holds back the revelation of the Antichrist until his appointed time.

As you may know, a key chapter to helping us understand the revelation of this evil deceiver is found in Paul's second Epistle to the Thessalonians. Thessalonika was counted among the churches which were established by the Apostles during the First Century. It was located in what is still known today as Thessalonika, Macedonia, Greece. The second chapter of Paul's second Epistle begins with the following relevant information:

"Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, 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. 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;"

2 Thessalonians 2:1-3, KJV

As I point out in a few other articles, the Apostle Paul's concern in writing this particular chapter was that some of the brethren were under the mistaken impression that the day of the Lord's Return was at hand. Thus, Paul was attempting to restore their composure, while at the same time issuing a warning to them to not believe anyone who might voice such false teachings. As Paul informs the Thessalonian Disciples, Jesus would not return until a "falling away" occurs first. This phrase is derived from the Greek word "apostasia", and means a falling away, a defection, or an apostasy. In this particular case, being as we are obviously dealing with a religious matter, it stands to reason that Paul is actually referring to a falling away from the Christian faith.

This would not be the first time that such a falling away, or apostasy, is mentioned in the Scriptures. We know that the Old Testament is literally filled with examples of how the ancient Israelites repeatedly backslid and fell away from the Lord. But insofar as the New Testament and our Christian faith is concerned, I am reminded of a certain incident that we find in the Gospel of John, right after Jesus gave His "Eat my flesh, drink my blood" sermon:

"Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it? When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you? What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before? It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life. But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him. And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father. From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?"

John 6:60-67, KJV

We also know that on the night of Jesus' arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane, His followers also fled away in fear. I don't believe that the Apostles actually abandoned their faith in this particular instance. They simply did what most people would probably do when their life is threatened. Consider the following verses. As you can see, this event was in fact a fulfilled prophecy that is found in the Book of Zechariah:

"Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones."

Zechariah 13:7, KJV

"Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite

the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad. But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee. Peter answered and said unto him, Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended. Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. Peter said unto him, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said all the disciples . . . But all this was done, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled."

Matthew 26:31-35, 56, KJV

"And Jesus saith unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered. But after that I am risen, I will go before you into Galilee. But Peter said unto him, Although all shall be offended, yet will not I. And Jesus saith unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this day, even in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. But he spake the more vehemently, If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise. Likewise also said they all . . . And they all forsook him, and fled."

Mark 14:27-31, 50, KJV

As I said, this was not an apostasy in the truest sense of the word. As we all know, the Apostles may have fled in fear that night, but once they were empowered by the Holy Spirit in the Book of Acts, they boldly carried the Gospel far and wide in obedience to Jesus' own directive.

If we want to talk about a true apostasy, we merely have to look at our modern day. An apostasy is clearly evident all around us. It can be observed in our governments, in our religious institutions, in our public school systems, in the various forms of mass media and entertainment industries, -- including the Internet and the World Wide Web -- and in the absence of moral values being taught in our homes. In many quarters we are seeing a steady decline in faith in God and in His Holy Word, which has had a direct effect on the world around us.

As I point out in articles such as "Science and Technology: The Forbidden Knowledge?", many people are transforming from being spiritually motivated creatures, to being creatures of invention, modern science, and technological wonders. So many have replaced their faith in the One True God, with faith in themselves and humanity's abilities to manipulate the world around us. Many people have lost respect for the sacredness of life, which has resulted in a massive increase in crime and violence, in the destruction and loss of both flora and fauna, in the pollution of our water, land and air, and even in evil man defining what constitutes human life and what doesn't. In short, man is playing "God", deciding who should live, and who should die; even for the unborn who don't have a say in the matter.

For modern Christians, perhaps the most evident sign of this ongoing apostasy can be found in the attitudes of the people we deal with in our daily lives as we try to remain faithful to the Lord by sharing His Word with others. A few verses which come to mind which clearly reflect the mentality of our current times are the following:

"And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them."

Romans 1:28-32, KJV

"Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation."

2 Peter 3:3-4, KJV

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away."

2 Timothy 3:1-5, KJV

"This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:"

Ephesians 4:17-18, KJV

"In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."

2 Corinthians 4:4, KJV

"There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: Their feet are swift to shed blood: Destruction and misery are in their ways: And the way of peace have they not known: There is no fear of God before their eyes."

Romans 3:11-18, KJV

Allow me to clarify that in the previous verses where the phrase "last days" is used, the Apostles Peter and Paul are not referring to our current times, despite what many of my Christian brethren have been led to believe. As I point out in articles such as the series "Jesus Christ's Return: Have We Been Deceived?", they are in fact referring to the final

days and years of that particular Prophetic Age in which they lived. According to my understanding, that age lasted for about four hundred and ninety years, and began when the the Prophet Daniel's "Seventy Weeks" prophecy began to be fulfilled not quite five hundred years before the time of Christ. Please refer to that series for more details.

Please go to part two for the continuation of this series.

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Who Hindered the Antichrist? : Part 2

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Revelation Of The Antichrist, The Temple Of God: Greek Root Words, Diana Of The Ephesians, Jesus Prophecies Destruction Of The Temple, True Temple Of God, Satanic Deception Of The Antichrist, Spiritual Blindness Of Unbelieving Jews, Fear Of The Common Jews, God's Wrath: One Million Jews Perish In 70 AD, First Jewish-Roman War, Zealots And Sicarii, Our Wicked Human Heart, Trust God And Not Your Flesh, God Chose Their Delusion, Jesus Warns To Flee From Jerusalem And The Romans

Returning to our primary discussion, it is in front of this spiritually dark backdrop of First Century apostasy that the Apostle Paul warns his readers that the Son of Perdition -- that is, the Antichrist -- would appear on the world stage. Once he did, what would be his agenda? Again, Paul makes it quite clear as we continue reading his sobering letter to

the Thessalonians:

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

2 Thessalonians 2:4-5, KJV

As the previous verses reveal, this man, who as I pointed out earlier, I am convinced would be a Jewish-born false messiah, would be so powerful, and so deceptive, that he would either be permitted by the misguided Jews to sit in the Temple in Jerusalem, or else he would forcibly place himself there, and would declare himself "God".

In the previous verse, the word "temple" is derived from the Greek word "naos", which is pronounced nah-os'. It is used forty-five times in the New Testament. Thayer's Greek English Lexicon states that this word is used to refer to the Temple at Jerusalem, but only to the sanctuary itself consisting of the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies. Upon reading this, I performed an examination of all of the verses in the New Testament where this word is used. I discovered that it is indeed true that "naos" is used to refer to the actual structure of the Jewish temple. This is also the word that Jesus used when He challenged the Scribes and the Pharisees to destroy His body, as we see by the following verses:

"Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But he spake of the temple of his body."

John 2:19-21, KJV

The second Greek word which is translated as "temple" in the New Testament is the word "hieron". Pronounced hee-er-on', the Greek English lexicon defines it as a sacred place or a temple, and states that it is used to refer to the temple of Artemis at Ephesus, as well as to the temple at Jerusalem. "Hieron" is used seventy-one times in the New Testament. A

more expanded definition found in the lexicon states as follows:

----- Begin Quote -----

"The temple of Jerusalem consisted of the whole of the sacred enclosure, embracing the entire aggregate of buildings, balconies, porticos, courts (that is that of the men of Israel, that of the women, and that of the priests), belonging to the temple; the latter designates the sacred edifice properly so called, consisting of two parts, the "sanctuary" or "Holy Place" (which no one except the priests was allowed to enter), and the "Holy of Holies" or "the most holy place" (which was entered only on the great day of atonement by the high priest alone). Also there were the courts where Jesus or the apostles taught or encountered adversaries, and the like, "in the temple"; also the courts of the temple, of the Gentiles, out of which Jesus drove the buyers and sellers and the money changers, court of the women."

----- End Of Quote -----

This definition is quite accurate. My examination of the Scriptures where this word is used revealed that "hieron" indeed refers to the interior of the temple enclosure. In many of the verses I looked at, the phrase "in the temple" was used, or a similar phrase which clearly showed that the writer was referring to the interior of the temple on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. This is likewise the word that is used when Satan tempted Jesus on the pinnacle of the temple. As stated in the previous definition, the only time "hieron" is used to mean anything else, is when it is used one time in reference to the temple of the Ephesian goddess Diana in Acts chapter nineteen. In that case, the Greek lexicon provides us with the following information regarding Diana, who was also known as Artemis:

----- Begin Quote -----

Artemis {ar'-tem-is}

Diana = "complete light: flow restrained"

Artemis, that is to say the so called Tauric or Persian or Ephesian Artemis, the goddess of many Asiatic people, to be distinguished from the Artemis of the Greeks, the sister of Apollo. A very splendid temple was built to her at Ephesus, which was set on fire by Herostratus and reduced to ashes; but afterwards in the times of Alexander the Great, it was rebuilt in a style of greater magnificence.

----- End Of Quote -----

Thus we see that collectively, "naos" and "hieron" are used one hundred and sixteen times to refer to the Second Temple at Jerusalem; that is, to Herod's Temple. Only one time is "hieron" used to refer to something else. From this evidence, it becomes apparent that when Paul used the term "temple of God", this is the Temple he was referring to. Consider the audience he was addressing in his Epistle. It was primarily Jews who had been converted to Christianity, as well as some Gentiles who had begun to receive the Word of the Lord.

In short, in those days during the First Century, when a Jew said "the temple of God", all Jews and Christian converts understood that the speaker was referring to the Temple at Jerusalem. As becomes evident in the Book of Acts, Jews from all over northern Africa, southern Europe and the Middle East would make pilgrimages to Jerusalem to worship at that one Temple, even though they had local synagogues in their places of residence. Consider the following example which mentions Paul's final persecution in Jerusalem by the Asian Jews:

"And when the seven days were almost ended, the Jews which were of Asia, when they saw him in the temple, stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him,"

Acts 21:27, KJV

One final interesting point worthy of note is the following. Considering that the Second Temple would be destroyed about three years after Paul's execution -- his death is assumed to have occurred around 67 AD -- what would motivate Paul to

even write about "the temple of God"? I suspect that either through direct revelation from the Lord; or possibly from learning from the Apostles and Disciples who had actually been with Jesus; or most likely through his personal study of the Old Testament Scriptures -- the New Testament did not yet exist at that time -- Paul knew that the Second Temple was going to be destroyed in accordance with Jesus' own words, as we see by the following verses:

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down."

Matthew 23:37-24:2, KJV

"And as he went out of the temple, one of his disciples saith unto him, Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here! And Jesus answering said unto him, Seest thou these great buildings? there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down."

Mark 13:1-2, KJV

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

Luke 13:34-35, KJV

"And as some spake of the temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts, he said, As for these things which ye behold, the days will come, in the which there shall not

be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down . . . And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh."

Luke 21:5-6, 20, KJV

While we know that this Temple was indeed destroyed in 70 AD by Roman general Titus and his armies, we also know that the true Temple of the Lord is a spiritual building made up of living stones who are built upon the solid Rock foundation of Jesus Christ Himself. I have elaborated on this subject quite amply in other articles, so I will only mention a few key verses below for your edification:

"Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

John 4:20-24, KJV

"But he spake of the temple of his body."

John 2:21, KJV

"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?"

1 Corinthians 6:19, KJV

"And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ."

1 Corinthians 10:4, KJV

"If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious. To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer

up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner,"

1 Peter 2:3-7, KJV

Continuing our discussion regarding the appearance of the Antichrist, in the following verses, Paul explains that this Son of Perdition -- that is, the Jewish false messiah -- would be extremely powerful, and would deceive many with the demonic inspiration of Satan himself, by performing great lying wonders which many Jews would be quick to believe:

"Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

2 Thessalonians 2:9-12, KJV

As can be seen, the Apostle Paul states that the Antichrist would be received and heralded as a "savior" by the stubborn, spiritually blind and unbelieving Jews, all because they had rejected the Truth of God's Word. In accordance with some of the Old Testament prophecies, those foolish people despised and rejected Christ as being God's one true Messiah. Thus, they would gladly welcome this devilish counterfeit with open arms. Consider the following verses which reveal that this is so:

"Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me. And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes,

and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart,
and convert, and be healed."

Isaiah 6:8-10, KJV

"He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and
acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from
him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not."

Isaiah 53:3, KJV

"He came unto his own, and his own received him not."

John 1:11, KJV

This stubborn blindness of many of the First Century Jews is
made quite evident in verses such as the following which are
all found in the New Testament:

"And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest
thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them,
Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the
kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For
whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have
more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be
taken away even that he hath. Therefore speak I to them in
parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear
not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled
the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall
hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and
shall not perceive: For this people's heart is waxed gross,
and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have
closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes,
and hear with their ears, and should understand with their
heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. But
blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they
hear."

Matthew 13:10-16, KJV

"Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if
the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch."

Matthew 15:14, KJV

"Woe unto you, ye blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall
swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall

swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor! . . . Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel."
Matthew 23:16, 24, KJV

"And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it out: and his hand was restored whole as the other."
Mark 3:5, KJV

"And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind. And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also? Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth."
John 9:39-41, KJV

"But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him: That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him."
John 12:37-41, KJV

"And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them."
Acts 28:25-27, KJV

"(According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day . . . For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in."

Romans 11:8, 25, KJV

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

1 Corinthians 2:14, KJV

"But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which vail is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart."

2 Corinthians 3:14-15, KJV

"But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."

2 Corinthians 4:3-4, KJV

"Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:"

Ephesians 4:18, KJV

Two thousand years later today, based on my own limited experiences with Jews, and just knowing how hard-hearted some of them can be when it comes to the message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, I can just imagine how extremely difficult it must have been for the First Century Apostles and Disciples to reach their own Jewish brethren with the Gospel. By Jewish standards, believing in Jesus equated to an absolute heresy; and as I have pointed out before, the common Jewish people greatly feared the religious hierarchy which was in power during that age. I suppose

it was similar to people fearing the wrath of the Roman Catholic Church during the various Inquisitions. Consider the following verses which expose this deep-seated fear:

"Then the Jews sought him at the feast, and said, Where is he? And there was much murmuring among the people concerning him: for some said, He is a good man: others said, Nay; but he deceiveth the people. Howbeit no man spake openly of him FOR FEAR OF THE JEWS."

John 7:11-13, KJV

"And after this Joseph of Arimathaea, being a disciple of Jesus, BUT SECRETLY FOR FEAR OF THE JEWS, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus."

John 19:38, KJV

"Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled FOR FEAR OF THE JEWS, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you . . . And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you."

John 20:19, 26, KJV

Thus we see that Paul informs us that God would send this wicked one to deceive those wicked people who had knowingly rejected the loving Sacrifice of His own dear Son. In other words, the arrival of this impostor and vile deceiver would be an opportunity for those evil, Christ-hating people to fill their cups of iniquity, so that God could righteously judge them for their sinful, rebellious hearts. As Paul informs us in those previous verses, they would all perish for that very same reason. He writes "in them that perish".

As I explain in a number of other articles, that is exactly what happened when several different factions -- namely the Sicarii and the Zealots -- fled into the Temple compound and transformed it into a military fortress against the invading Romans during the seven-year First Jewish-Roman War, which is also known as "The Great Revolt". Many Jews were killed when

the Temple compound was burned to the ground by the Romans. Close to a million other Jews died as a result of disease or starvation, turned against each other, or were crucified by the thousands by the Romans on the great siege wall which surrounded Jerusalem. Many thousands more were enslaved and carried off to other Roman provinces. This is all verifiable historical fact. For example, on the Wikipedia website we read the following:

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The Zealots, Sicarii and other prominent revolutionaries finally joined forces to attack and successfully liberate Jerusalem in 66 AD, where they took control of the Temple in Jerusalem, executing anyone who tried to usurp their power. The local populace grew tired of their control and launched a series of sieges and raids to remove the radical factions. The radicals eventually silenced the uprising and Jerusalem stayed in their hands for the duration of the war. The Romans finally came to take back the city, and they led counter-attacks and sieges to starve the rebels inside. The rebels held for a considerable amount of time, but the constant bickering and the lack of leadership led the groups to disintegrate. The leader of the Sicarii, Menahem, was murdered by rival factions during an altercation; but promised to return in physical form to his people before the end of the 2nd fall of mankind right before his passing according to legend. Soon, the Romans stepped in and finally destroyed the whole city in 70 AD.

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As you can plainly see, rather than embrace the peaceful ways of Jesus Christ, rather than accept the spiritual liberation which He offered them through His own Death on the Cross, and rather than trust in God for their protection, those wicked unbelievers turned to violence and war. In fact, they even turned against their very own Jewish brethren who refused to take up their violent cause. They were indeed a very wicked and deceived lot. Consider the following verses:

"And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the

earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."

Genesis 6:5, KJV

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"

Jeremiah 17:9, KJV

"Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the LORD our God."

Psalms 20:7, KJV

"With him is an arm of flesh; but with us is the LORD our God to help us, and to fight our battles. And the people rested themselves upon the words of Hezekiah king of Judah."

2 Chronicles 32:8, KJV

"Thus saith the LORD; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD."

Jeremiah 17:5, KJV

"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."

Proverbs 3:5-6, KJV

You will notice that in his Epistle, Paul also wrote "God shall send them strong delusion". So we see then that not only did the Lord purposely allow that delusion to occur, but He personally chose that delusion for them, and made it so strong, that only those people who knew, understood and accepted His Word would fully comprehend what was really going on, and would be able to reject the deceptions of the Antichrist. Consider the following verses:

"I also will choose their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them; because when I called, none did answer; when I spake, they did not hear: but they did evil before mine eyes, and chose that in which I delighted not."

Isaiah 66:4, KJV

"For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect."

Matthew 24:24, KJV

Regarding the true Believers of that age who had accepted Christ as their Messiah, exactly what had Jesus instructed them to do when they saw these things occurring? Allow me to remind you again through the following verses:

"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:) Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains: Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house: Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day: For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened."

Matthew 24:15-22, KJV

"But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, (let him that readeth understand,) then let them that be in Judaea flee to the mountains: And let him that is on the housetop not go down into the house, neither enter therein, to take any thing out of his house: And let him that is in the field not turn back again for to take up his garment. But woe to them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter. For in those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be. And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days."

Mark 13:14-20, KJV

"And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people."

Luke 21:20-23, KJV

My friends, those were the people who were spared the great wrath of Rome which fell upon the city of Jerusalem and the Temple compound in 70 AD. The smart, obedient followers of Christ had already fled to the hills and were spared.

Please go to part three for the continuation of this series.

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Who Hindered the Antichrist? : Part 3

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Woman In The Wilderness And 144,000, Joseph's Dream, Herod the Great Persecutes Joseph And Mary, Red Dragon: Satan And Worldly Leaders, Length Of The Beast's Reign Of Persecution, Definition Of A Jewish Year And Related Biblical Phrases, In The Midst Of The Week, My Understanding Of The Events Of The Prophet Daniel's "70th Week", General Titus Roman Legions And First Jewish-Roman War, Destruction Of Jerusalem And Temple

Mount, Temple Sacrifices And Oblation Ceased, Broken Covenant And Deceptive Negotiations, Traitorous Herod Agrippa II, Ten Horns Side With Beast To Destroy Babylon The Great With Fire, Significance Of Jerusalem's Destruction On The Jewish Psyche, A Message Of Darkness Tribulation Hope Salvation Deliverance

As I explain in the series "Jesus Christ's Return: Have We Been Deceived?", as well as in "Tradition or Truth? Old Wine or New Wine?", while for many years I embraced the Futurist theological perspective -- and thus believed that many Bible prophecies remained unfulfilled -- in recent years, by God's Grace, and through a more diligent study of the Scriptures, I arrived at the conclusion that my understanding was rather flawed. As a result, I have been forced to alter my position on a number of different prophecy-related issues. Thus, as I explain in the series "The Woman in the Wilderness and the 144,000", I now believe that these Christians of the First Century who obeyed Jesus' warning -- which He had given them forty years earlier -- and who took flight from the wrath of the Roman Beast, represent the 144,000 and the Woman in the Wilderness. Consider the following verses where she and they are described in the Book of Revelation:

"And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne. And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days. And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not;

neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time. And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child. And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."

Revelation 12:1-17, KJV

"And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel."

Revelation 7:2-4, KJV

More specifically, following my practice of comparing verse with verse, I came to the conclusion that this woman actually represents First Century Israel -- and Mary in particular --

which not only gave birth to the Messiah -- the "man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron . . . [who] was caught up unto God, and to his throne" -- but also to the First Century Christian Church as well. This seems rather evident when we consider a dream which Joseph had in the Book of Genesis, as we see here:

"And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and, behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me. And he told it to his father, and to his brethren: and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What is this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth? And his brethren envied him; but his father observed the saying."

Genesis 37:9-11, KJV

In this dream, Joseph's eleven brethren are represented by eleven stars. Therefore, it is obvious that Joseph must be the twelfth star. In like manner, the Sun represents Jacob -- Joseph's father -- and the Moon must represent his mother, according to Jacob's own words. In short, this is a symbolic picture of the nation of Israel, of which Mary, the mother of Jesus, was a part. If you have a sharp eye, you will have already noticed that the woman in Revelation is represented by the very same three symbols as we see in Joseph's dream; that is, the Sun, the Moon, and twelve stars. So again, I believe that even though their accounts were written about 1,700 years apart, the Patriarch Joseph and the Apostle John are describing the very same thing; that is, Israel.

It is also common knowledge that Joseph and Mary were in fact persecuted by evil King Herod the Great when Jesus was about two years old. Perhaps it was at that time that they put the gifts of the three magi to good use when they fled into Egypt until Herod was dead. Consider the following verses:

"And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young

child to destroy him. When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt: And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son . . . But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, Saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead which sought the young child's life."

Matthew 2:13-15, 19-20, KJV

Concerning the Red Dragon, as you should already know, and as I point out in a number of articles, such as "Satan: His Origin, Purpose and Future", "Leviathan: An Ancient Dragon of the Sea?" and "When Was Satan Cast Out of Heaven?", this beast represents Satan himself. Verse nine in the previous group of verses is not the only place in Revelation where Satan is called a dragon or serpent. This very same kind of symbolism is repeated in chapter twenty, as we see here:

"And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,"

Revelation 20:2, KJV

However, we also know from the Scriptures that this word "dragon" is likewise sometimes used to describe the nature of the leaders of nations as well, all of whom merely serve as puppets of the great Red Dragon himself. These worldly "dragons" dwell in the "rivers" and "seas" of people over whom they rule. Consider the following two verses which prove this point:

"Speak, and say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against thee, Pharaoh king of Egypt, the great dragon that lieth in the midst of his rivers, which hath said, My river is mine own, and I have made it for myself."

Ezekiel 29:3, KJV

"And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues."

Revelation 17:15, KJV

Thus, while the Red Dragon in the Book of Revelation is a symbol for Satan, it can likewise represent King Herod who was indeed a dragon in Israel who persecuted Joseph, Mary and the Christ child. Furthermore, it was Herod the Great's descendants -- there were seven of them in all -- who also persecuted the seed of the fledgling Christian Church. We know that the phrase "remnant of her seed" represents the First Century Church, due to the fact that John writes that they "have the testimony of Jesus Christ". Therefore, they must be Christians.

Before returning to our main discussion regarding the vile deceiver known as the Antichrist, or Son of Perdition, let me call your attention to one more important point regarding the previous verses from the Book of Revelation. You will notice that we are told that the dragon persecutes the seed of the woman "for a time, and times, and half a time". So exactly what does this mean?

As I point out in the articles "Abomination of Desolation: Explained!", "The Great Tribulation and the Rapture" and "Do You Want Love and Light, Or Rod and Wrath?", it is Biblical code which represents the duration of the Beast's reign of terror and persecution against the Church in Israel during the seven-year First Jewish-Roman War. This phrase is equal to the same amount of time as the "thousand two hundred and threescore days" which are likewise mentioned in those same verses we read earlier in Revelation chapter twelve. Please note that I am not saying that this period signifies the full length of time that the Beast maintains political power. It is simply the amount of time that he is permitted by God to persecute the Church.

Aside from persecuting the Saints of God, both the Books of Daniel and Revelation inform us that the Beast puts an end to the Daily Sacrifice in the Temple in Jerusalem, sets up the Abomination of Desolation, and blasphemes against God for a period of three and a half Jewish years. This period is mentioned in these prophetic books in all of these ways:

1. "forty-two months"

2. "1,260 days"
3. "time and times and the dividing of time" (3 1/2)
4. "time, times, and an half" (3 1/2)

If you take the time to do the math yourself, what you will discover is that forty-two months is actually the same as Revelation's and Daniel's 1,260 days, and equates to three and a half Jewish years, or "time and times and the dividing of time", or "time, times, and an half". The reason why this is so is because unlike our modern year, the Jewish year in the Bible consists of twelve thirty-day months, for a total of 360 days per year. Thus, three and a half years in the Jewish lunar calendar equates to exactly 1,260 days.

Aside from the verses I already shared with you from the twelfth chapter of Revelation, following are the additional verses where these various phrases are found:

"And he [the Beast] shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until A TIME AND TIMES AND THE DIVIDING OF TIME."
Daniel 7:25, KJV

"And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for A TIME, TIMES, AND AN HALF; and when he [the Beast] shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished."
Daniel 12:7, KJV

"But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot FORTY AND TWO MONTHS. And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth."
Revelation 11:2-3, KJV

"And there was given unto him [the Beast] a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him

to continue FORTY AND TWO MONTHS. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. 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."

Revelation 13:5-7, KJV

In fact, the Prophet Daniel mentions two other very short periods which follow right after this 1,260-day period. The first lasts for thirty days -- bringing us to 1,290 days -- and the second one lasts for an additional forty-five days, bringing us to a total of 1,335 days. For many years now, I have wondered what these two additional short periods of time represent, and what happens during them. While I have made a few guesses over the years, I cannot say that I know with absolute certainty. Following are the verses from the Book of Daniel where these extra time periods are mentioned:

"And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days. Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days."

Daniel 12:11-12, KJV

As I explain in some of the aforementioned articles, directly related to these various Biblical phrases which represent the same amount of time, is the phrase "in the midst of the week", as we see here:

". . . and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. 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 . . ."

Daniel 9:26-27, KJV

If you have read some of my related articles, then you will already know that at this current time, I lean towards the following understanding regarding the previous two verses:

- The phrase "the people of the prince that shall come" is a direct reference to General Titus and his Roman legions.
- The phrase "destroy the city and the sanctuary" obviously refers to the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in the year 70 AD, or close to it. It really depends on the accuracy of the historical record. I accept this date by faith.
- The phrase "with a flood" refers to a wave of Roman armies or legions, as I explain in a number of other articles.
- The phrase "unto the end of the war" is referring to the First Jewish-Roman War.
- The phrase "desolations are determined" refers to the great destruction which will be wrought by the Romans, resulting in both the Temple Mount and Jerusalem being left in ruins and barren, and much of Israel being left bereft of a significant Jewish population for a substantial period of time. In fact, in recent years, and contrary to the Futurist point of view, I have been leaning towards the belief that the Temple won't ever be built again. My reasons are explained in the article entitled "Revelation's Babylon the Great".
- The phrase "the week" refers to the 70th week, or the final seven-year period of that 490-year Prophetic Age, which the Prophet Daniel describes in his "Seventy Weeks" prophecy. I discuss Daniel's prophecy more fully in other articles which I have already mentioned here, so please refer to them for additional details. You will find them listed at the end of this current series. Suffice it to say that I believe that this final 70th week, or seven-year period, was fulfilled in the First Jewish-Roman War, which lasted exactly that amount of time.
- The phrase "midst of the week" refers to the middle of that final seven-year period; that is, right at the middle of the First Jewish-Roman War, which lasted from 66 AD to 73 AD.
- The phrase "cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease" obviously refers to the Temple sacrifices and oblations being

put to an end in the middle of this seven-year period. Given that the historical record indicates that the Temple was destroyed in 70 AD, this would seem to be when the sacrifice and the oblation ceased.

- The phrase "the covenant" is one item I am not so certain about. Based upon a few other verses, my current leaning is that it may refer to an agreement that General Titus may have possibly made with Herod Agrippa II and other of his allies, regarding the invasion of Jerusalem. Please note that this Herod actually sided with Titus, and Herod's armies fought right along side of Titus' troops. In fact, to prove what a traitor he was, following Jerusalem's fall, both Herod and his sister Bernice went to live in Rome. Again, this is a historical fact.

Another reason why I tend to believe that this covenant may be a military deal, is because we are told by Daniel that this leader secretly works against it after it is made. This leads me to believe that it was just a Roman ploy all along. Consider the following verses which may possibly be related to the covenant that is mentioned in Daniel 9:27:

"And both these kings' hearts shall be to do mischief, and they shall speak lies at one table; but it shall not prosper: for yet the end shall be at the time appointed. 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. At the time appointed he shall return, and come toward the south; but it shall not be as the former, or as the latter. 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. And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate. 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 11:27-32, KJV

In my view, what adds weight to the possibility of this being a military deal is the fact that in the Book of Revelation, we are told by John that Ten Horns -- that is, ten kings or possibly military leaders -- side with the Beast as a result of their mutual hatred of Babylon the Great. Their ultimate goal, of course, is to destroy the mysterious Babylon -- by fire, no less -- as we see by the following verses:

"And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and TEN HORNS, and seven crowns upon his heads."

Revelation 12:3, KJV

"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."

Revelation 13:1, KJV

"So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and TEN HORNS . . . And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and TEN HORNS . . . And the TEN HORNS which thou sawest are TEN KINGS, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast . . . And the TEN HORNS which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire."

Revelation 17:3, 7, 12, 16, KJV

Now, if, as I currently believe, Babylon was indeed a code name used by the Apostles for the city of Jerusalem, and for the Temple compound in particular, then what I have described in the previous few paragraphs fits together like a hand in a glove. Why? Because they were indeed burned down with literal fire by the Roman soldiers.

As I explain in "Abomination of Desolation: Explained!", all

of these verses appear to be describing the same people -- that is, General Titus and the Romans -- the same war -- the seven-year First Jewish-Roman War -- the same Jewish Temple in First Century Jerusalem, the same daily sacrifice and oblation being ceased, and likewise the same Abomination of Desolation. All of these events were prophesied to occur sometime during the 70th week -- the last seven-year period -- of Daniel's "Seventy Weeks" prophecy. Some of them took place during the first three and a half years, while others occurred during the final three and a half years.

That is why in Daniel, the phrase "in the midst of the week" is used. The destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in the middle of the week marked a turning point in that first war. Jerusalem and the Temple were the spiritual center of Israel, even if it was a very corrupt center, which is why God chose to destroy it in the first place. No doubt their destruction broke the spirit and will of many Israelites, even though the radicals continued fighting until the fall of Masada a few years later in 73 AD. This marked the completion of the First Jewish-Roman War. The Jews had finally been broken; at least for the time being.

But some important questions remain. Why did God provide the Jews -- and more specifically, the First Century Church -- with such precise time-related details regarding this period? Exactly what was so important about the end of that Prophetic Age? Furthermore, why did this period of trouble -- that is, tribulation -- last precisely three and a half years and not go on longer? Why did this Roman Beast's reign of persecution and terror only endure for those 1,260 days? Why did Daniel write that those people who arrived at the 1,290 days would be blessed? Again, the Holy Scriptures provide us with a very clear and amazing answer. Consider the following verses. For your benefit, I have added some short comments in brackets in a few places, and placed some important words in uppercase:

"And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: [who defeated Satan in Revelation 12] and there shall be a time of trouble [the First Jewish-Roman War], such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy

people shall be delivered [from this world], every one that shall be found written in the book [the Book of Life]. 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. 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."

Daniel 12:1-3, KJV

"And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD SHALL BE DELIVERED: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem SHALL BE DELIVERANCE, as the LORD hath said, and in the REMNANT whom the LORD shall call."

Joel 2:30-32, KJV

In the following verses, please notice how Jesus is in fact quoting directly from both Daniel and Joel, just as we later see the Apostles doing in the Book of Acts:

"For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake THOSE DAYS SHALL BE SHORTENED . . . Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."

Matthew 24:21-22, 29-31, KJV

"For in those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be. And except that the Lord had

shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: BUT FOR THE ELECT'S SAKE, WHOM HE HATH CHOSEN, HE HATH SHORTENED THE DAYS . . . But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, And the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven."

Mark 13:19-20, 24-27, KJV

"For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh."

Luke 21:22-28, KJV

"And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come: And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

Acts 2:19-21, KJV

"For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which

are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

1 Thessalonians 4:14-18, KJV

"Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately. BLESSED ARE THOSE SERVANTS, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them. And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, BLESSED ARE THOSE SERVANTS."

Luke 12:35-38, KJV

"BLESSED is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days."

Daniel 12:12, KJV

Collectively-speaking, the previous Scriptures answer every question that I asked earlier. While the prophecies we find in Daniel, Revelation and elsewhere, and the warnings which Jesus issued in the Gospels all paint a rather dark picture for Israel of the late First Century, at the same time, they offer a wonderful message of hope, deliverance and Salvation for every person who embraced Christ during that same period. In so many words, Jesus was saying "It is going to get very bad for you; but don't give up, and don't lose your faith, because I am coming back for you, exactly as I promised to do. Count the days, remember the prophecies, and you will know when the blessed day of my Return is drawing near."

My friends, personally, I have no doubt that this is exactly what happened, and right on God's schedule, according to the timeline that is outlined in the previous prophecies. In my

view, to believe otherwise is to call God a liar.

Please go to part four for the continuation of this series.

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Who Hindered the Antichrist? : Part 4

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Timing Of Antichrist's Appearance, Why God Destroyed Temple Compound And Jerusalem, Antichrist Is Destroyed At Christ's Return, He Hath But A Short Time, Satan's 1st Century Wrath, Satan Repeatedly Endeavors To Destroy Jesus And His Ministry, Devil's Antics In Book Of Acts, Satan's Throne In Pergamos, Satan Cast Out Of Heaven During First Century, Revelation Was Written Before Fall Of Jerusalem, Satan Sets Up Earth Throne After Being Cast Out, Satan Moves From Pergamos To Jerusalem, Antichrist Jewish False Messiah Sounds A Lot Like Isaiah 14, Satan Could Not Arrive In The Flesh Until Unbelieving Jews Were Ready To Receive Him, What Contributed To The Apostasy?, Jesus' Delayed Return For Forty Years, Persecuted By Jews And Herods, Bleak Situation Inside Sieged Jerusalem, Crucifixions By The Thousands, Pressure From Zealots And Sicarii, Massive Loss Of Faith, A Perfect Opportunity For A New False Messiah, Rejection Of The Truth = Deception And Embracing Antichrist, Lying Wonders, Actual Identity Of Antichrist Remains Unknown, Someone Was Holding Back The Revelation Of Son Of Perdition, Abaddon And Apollyon, A Destroyer Destruction And Perdition, Rewarded According To Our Works, Satan Is The Angel Of Death And Destruction, Jesus Took Power Of Death From Satan, Jesus Owns Keys Of Death And Hell, No Second Death For Believers

At this point in our discussion, some of you will no doubt be wondering how all of the aforementioned events relate to our interest in the Antichrist. In actuality, they are directly related. Exactly why is this? Quite simply, because if the Temple compound was burned to the ground by the Roman legions in 70 AD -- that is, in the middle of the First Jewish-Roman War -- that means that the deceptive Jewish false messiah -- a.k.a. the Antichrist -- must have defiled the Temple, and demonstrated to those deceived Jews in a rather convincing manner that he was "God", at some point prior to that event.

We already know that the primary reason why God destroyed the Temple compound and Jerusalem at the hands of the Romans was because of the unbelieving Jews' rejection and murder of His Son, Jesus Christ. As we have already seen, Jesus warned both His friends -- Apostles -- as well as His enemies -- scribes, Sadducees and Pharisees -- that the day was approaching when these events would occur. It may have taken forty years, but that day did arrive, and it has never been forgotten since that time, particularly not by the Jews.

However, while that may have been God's primary motivation, at the same time, I would think that the Devil possessing a human being and declaring himself "God" in a holy place that supposedly belonged to God alone, would contribute to God's decision to make an end of Jerusalem, and more specifically, make an end of the Temple compound which had been so defiled by that deceptive creature. There's another important reason why God destroyed the Temple, which I explain in the series "Revelation's Babylon the Great".

As it turns out, we can be rather confident of the fact that the Antichrist enjoyed his short reign as "God" during that very same seven-year period, because the Apostle Paul not only tells us when that Son of Perdition was destroyed, but how he was destroyed as well. Returning to Paul's second Epistle to the Thessalonians, we learn that the Antichrist was destroyed by the Lord's spoken word, as well as by the brightness of His Coming, as we see here:

"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:"

2 Thessalonians 2:8, KJV

Based on all of the Scriptures we have already examined -- I explore many more in the series "Jesus Christ's Return: Have We Been Deceived?" -- if Jesus returned sometime during, or immediately after, that seven-year period -- or 70th week of Daniel's "Seventy Weeks" prophecy -- then that must be when the Antichrist met his fate. The Lord just spoke His Word, and that Satan-incarnate was destroyed, just like that. You will notice that in the previous paragraph I referred to it as "his short reign". Once again, this fits in perfectly with a verse that I shared with you in part three. Now that I have shared this bit of information with you, that verse will make even more sense, so let me share it with you once again:

"Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, BECAUSE HE KNOWETH THAT HE HATH BUT A SHORT TIME."

Revelation 12:12, KJV

Now think about that verse for a moment, and how being ousted permanently from Heaven must have affected that serpent. As that verse says, he was obviously hopping mad and filled with rage. If you read my article called "When Was Satan Cast Out of Heaven?", you will learn that even before arriving on the Earth and possessing the body of the Antichrist, that fiend was already busy trying to defeat God's plans. As we learned in part three, first he tried to kill the young Jesus by way of the devious plans of Herod the Great, who was terribly afraid of competition. When that plan failed, Satan bided his time and waited until Jesus was then a grown man, and ready to begin His public ministry. It was at that time that Satan tried to defeat the Lord through a variety of temptations in the wilderness area of the Jordan River Valley, as well as on the pinnacle of the Temple in Jerusalem.

Of course, as we all know, that plan didn't work out in the Devil's favor either. So what did he do next? He enraged the scribes, the Sadducees and the Pharisees against Jesus, so that they verbally persecuted Him, mocked and ridiculed Him, and tried to trap Him in His words with all their legalistic questions concerning the Mosaic Law. But no doubt, Satan's crowning achievement -- at least from his perspective -- was when he possessed Judas Iscariot, and used that traitor as a vehicle to destroy Jesus' physical body. But it was a rather short possession, because Judas soon felt remorse and went and hung himself. Following that event, we know that Satan continued to stir up the Jewish religious leaders against the Disciples in the Book of Acts. Likewise, he inspired Herod Agrippa I to slay the Apostle James, and to throw the Apostle Peter into prison.

Between that point in time, and the time when he possesses the Jewish false messiah and declares himself "God" in the Temple in Jerusalem, is a bit of a gray area in my personal understanding. However, we are offered a hint in the second chapter of the Book of Revelation. You may recall that one of the Seven Churches was located in Pergamos. This was the chief city of Mysia in Asia Minor. Today it is known as the city of Bergama in modern Turkey. Consider the following two verses where Pergamos is mentioned by name:

"I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea."

Revelation 1:10-11, KJV

Aside from the fact that the city of Pergamos was home to one of the early Christian congregations, what is interesting is the fact that in His rebuke to this particular Church, the Lord mentions that "Satan's seat" is there, and that Satan dwells there. Consider the following verses:

"And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; These

things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges; I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth. But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate. Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth."

Revelation 2:12-16, KJV

Some Bible commentators claim that the Lord was simply using the phrase "Satan's seat" in a purely metaphorical sense, due to the fact that there was a lot of wickedness in Pergamos. However, personally, I am not fully convinced of this point. According to Thayer's Greek English Lexicon, the Greek word that is translated as "seat" in this verse is "thronos". Just by looking at that Greek word, I am certain you know exactly what it means. The lexicon states that it refers to a stately seat; that is, the seat or throne of a potentate. The minute that I read that, I immediately thought of two verses which many of you will be familiar with, which were written by Paul in his Epistle to the Ephesians. Consider the following:

"Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

Ephesians 6:11-12, KJV

Furthermore, in that same group of verses, in the three-word phrase "where Satan dwelleth", the word "dwelleth" finds its origin in the Greek word "katoikeo", which the same Greek lexicon defines as meaning to house permanently; that is, to reside. I am obviously far from being an expert in the Koine Greek language. However, my impression is that the Lord is saying that Satan literally set up his throne in the city of

Pergamos. To add weight to my statement, allow me to mention two things. First of all, if you read the aforementioned article "When Was Satan Cast Out of Heaven?", you will learn that I have become convinced that Satan was permanently cast out of Heaven during the First Century. If you want to know exactly when -- or at least close to it -- please read the article.

The second point is this: While one popular view is that the Book of Revelation was written sometime around 90 or 100 AD, there are some theologians and Bible commentators who are of the opinion that it was really written considerably earlier; in fact, before the fall of Jerusalem in 70 AD. This makes a lot of sense to me, and I happen to agree with this latter opinion. Now, if this is indeed the case, and the events in Revelation 12 -- that is, Satan being cast out -- occurred when I believe it did, then the Devil would in fact have to set up his new throne somewhere on Earth. Do I need to say more?

So my running theory -- which I obviously cannot conclusively prove -- is that at some point, Satan just grew tired of the scenery in the city of Pergamos, and he decided to set up shop in the city of Jerusalem, where he ultimately possessed the Antichrist and defiled the Temple. I mean, just look at exactly how that Jewish false messiah is described by the Apostle Paul in his Epistle to the Thessalonians, and then remember the following verses which sound so very similar:

"How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit."

Isaiah 14:12-15, KJV

So, it seems very plausible to me that after being cast out of Heaven permanently in Revelation chapter twelve, the Devil

trampled around Israel for a while performing all of the evil which I have already mentioned; but eventually he set up his throne in the city of Pergamos. But ultimately, he took up residence in the Temple at Jerusalem itself, where he then possessed the Antichrist, or Jewish false messiah. We have seen how that would be a fatal move on his part, because the Lord would then arrive and destroy that deceiver with the brightness of His Coming. That is my Scriptural evidence. I will let you decide what you want to believe.

Returning to Paul's Epistle to the Thessalonians, please notice that in discussing the appearance of the Antichrist, he begins that one sentence with the phrase "And then shall that Wicked be revealed". Exactly when is the "then" in that verse? It is after the apostasy has begun, as we saw earlier in this series. The Antichrist would not be revealed until the unbelieving Jews had dug themselves deep into the pit of their own spiritual darkness and deception. I am reminded of this verse that is found in the Book of Ecclesiastes:

"He that diggeth a pit shall fall into it; and whoso breaketh an hedge, a serpent shall bite him."
Ecclesiastes 10:8, KJV

In other words, before Satan could arrive in the flesh, the spiritual environment had to be just right first. There had to be a spiritual vacuum, and a loss of faith first, so that people would be vulnerable and open to accepting this wicked deceiver. As I was contemplating all of these First Century events, I wondered what would cause this apostasy in the first place, particularly as it would seem to involve some Christians of the First Century as well. While the Lord had warned His followers about forty years earlier to flee from Jerusalem when they saw the Abomination of Desolation, we don't know how many of them actually obeyed His commandment when that day finally arrived.

Maybe some of them had even forgotten about Jesus' warning by then. Who knows. Do you remember every single thing that you were told, or that you heard, forty years ago? I most certainly don't. Actually, at my age, my memory is a lot worse than that, but I won't go into detail here.

But what occurred to me is the following. About forty years had passed, and Jesus' promised Return had not materialized yet. This in itself would cause a lot of weak Christians to lose their faith. This weakness in their faith would not be helped by the fact that the Jewish religious elders, along with the Herods themselves, were persecuting the nascent Christian Church. Now, if they had not obeyed Jesus' order to flee from the city, and found themselves trapped inside of it, just think about how much more this would complicate the situation, and negatively affect their faith.

As I pointed out earlier, and explain in even more detail in some of the aforementioned articles, for one thing, there was a great siege wall around Jerusalem. This meant that hundreds of thousands of people were trapped within the city. As time passed, even without the Romans lifting a finger, that wall would begin to take its toll. Supplies within the city would begin to dwindle. Food would become scarce. Water would also become scarce. Disease and starvation would begin to take a serious toll. Everyone would be on edge, and they would start to turn against each other, exactly as Jesus had said would happen.

Add to that growing misery the fact that those bloodthirsty Romans were crucifying Jews by the thousands on top of their huge siege wall, and you have a very bleak situation on your hands. As if that were not enough, let's not forget that the Zealots and the Sicarii had taken over the Temple compound, and pretty much the city itself, and were trying to pressure everyone to fight against the superior forces of the Romans.

So it was a very dark, negative situation which offered very little hope to the Jews and Christians who were trapped in the city. Even if the Jews had rejected Christ, many of them still believed in God; so no matter how you look at this dire situation, there was still room for everyone to lose faith. Maybe they felt as if God had abandoned them. Is it really any wonder then that Jesus had said the following about forty years earlier:

". . . Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find

faith on the earth?"

Luke 18:8b, KJV

As I shared with you in part one, consider again what Peter wrote regarding the last days of that Prophetic Age:

"Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation."

2 Peter 3:3-4, KJV

Under these circumstances, the time was ripe for a messiah and savior to arise; but he would be a false one, possessed by the very Devil himself. Just as Satan had tempted Jesus in the wilderness area of the Jordan River Valley, I can easily imagine this Jewish false messiah saying to all the desperate people who were trapped within Jerusalem, "Come now into the Temple and worship me as your god, savior and messiah, and I will deliver you from these Romans." Desperate and weak Jews, and perhaps even some weak Christians too, would fall for his wicked ploy, and would become totally deceived. As Paul wrote in his second Epistle to the Thessalonians:

". . . because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

2 Thessalonians 2:10-12, KJV

Now, I obviously don't know with any degree of certainty that this exactly how it happened. All I know for certain is that the situation was very desperate at that time, and that this false messiah must have said and done things which gave the deceived Jews reason to accept this man as their savior. As the Apostle Paul wrote, the Antichrist had "all power" from Satan, and he performed great "signs and lying wonders" that in some way convinced them that he was truly "God". I can't begin to imagine what those might have been, and Paul does not spell it out for us either.

At this current time, neither do I know the identity of this vile man. Based on the information I have shared with you in this series, the best I can do for now is offer my personal speculation, so please do not accept it as solid doctrine. Given what we know about the various players who were alive at that time, I would suggest that perhaps he was a Zealot, or a Sicarii. After all, they did control the Temple area. It could also have been the Jewish high priest or one of the other Temple priests. Perhaps as I continue to explore some of the ancient historical texts, I will discover some clues which will help me to further decipher this mystery. If so, you can be sure that I will share my discoveries with you.

Regardless of who this Antichrist was, we know that Satan possessed him, and used him to deceive the unbelieving Jews. While he may have promised them protection and salvation in the Temple compound, the real truth of the matter is that he blindly led them to their own slaughter and death, when the Romans broke through Jerusalem's walls, and burned down the Temple compound. Then, as we saw earlier, Jesus arrived and destroyed the Antichrist with the brightness of His Coming.

In my understanding, this is the basic scenario concerning the arrival of the Antichrist -- or Jewish false messiah -- during the latter half of the First Century. What Paul also informs his readers in that same chapter of 2 Thessalonians 2 regarding this Jewish false messiah, is the following:

"And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way."

2 Thessalonians 2:6-7, KJV

In the previous verses, Paul is reminding his readers that they already know what and who is holding back the actual revelation of this satanic Son of Perdition. In fact, Paul is stating that whoever or whatever this force is, its specific purpose is to make sure that the Son of Perdition is not permitted to manifest himself to the world until it is his time to do so. A verse prior to these statements,

Paul reminds the Thessalonians that he spoke to them of these very issues when he was present with him, as we see by this verse:

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

2 Thessalonians 2:5, KJV

Being as we were not there, and thus have no idea what Paul may have told the Thessalonian brethren in person, we have no choice but to really pray, and to rely upon the Lord's Spirit to help us understand what Paul may have be referring to. In spite of this limited information, by comparing Scripture with Scripture, there are still a number of important things which we can learn from the previous verses. The first point I would like to make concerns the phrase "Son of Perdition". For many people, this is a very mysterious phrase. They have no idea whatsoever as to what it means. In the original Greek text, the word that is translated into English as "perdition" is the word "apoleia", which itself is derived from the word "apollumi". Thus, both of these words have similar meanings. Thayer's Greek English Lexicon reveals the following as some of the definitions and usages of these two words:

----- Begin Quote -----

apoleia {ap-o'-li-a}

- 1) destroying, utter destruction
 - 1a) of vessels
- 2) a perishing, ruin, destruction
 - 2a) of money
 - 2b) the destruction which consists of eternal misery in hell

apollumi {ap-ol'-loo-mee}

- 1) to destroy
 - 1a) to put out of the way entirely, abolish, put an end to ruin
 - 1b) render useless
 - 1c) to kill

- 1d) to declare that one must be put to death
- 1e) metaph. to devote or give over to eternal misery in hell
- 1f) to perish, to be lost, ruined, destroyed
- 2) to destroy
 - 2a) to lose

----- End Quote -----

For reasons which I will now explain, I believe "son of destruction" may have been a better translation, although "perdition" also fits nicely in some ways as well. For example, in the Book of Revelation, we find the following verse which describes the angel that ascends out of the Bottomless Pit:

"And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon."

Revelation 9:11, KJV

Our interest here is in the words "Abaddon" and "Apollyon". The latter is the active participle of the same Greek word "apollumi". It means "destroyer". The first word, "Abaddon", is transliterated from the Hebrew word "abaddown". It also means destruction or ruin. If you read this ninth chapter of Revelation in its entirety, you will quickly realize that they are indeed appropriate names for this entity that rises out of the Bottomless Pit. To further demonstrate that the word "destruction" may have been a better translation, let us consider the following verses as well, which likewise use the Greek word "apoleia":

"But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition."

1 Timothy 6:9, KJV

"But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul."

Hebrews 10:39, KJV

"But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men."

2 Peter 3:7, KJV

"The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is."

Revelation 17:8, KJV

"And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition."

Revelation 17:11, KJV

In every single one of the previous verses, "perdition" can easily be understood to mean "lost and destroyed". This will be accomplished when they are cast into the Lake of Fire burning with brimstone. As the Scriptures inform us, every man will be rewarded according to his own works, and we will reap what we have sown, as we see by the following verses:

"If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? and shall not he render to every man according to his works?"

Proverbs 24:12, KJV

"For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works."

Matthew 16:27, KJV

"And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear:"

1 Peter 1:17, KJV

"And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins

and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works."

Revelation 2:23, KJV

"And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."

Revelation 14:13, KJV

"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works."

Revelation 20:12-13, KJV

Thus, it is easy to see that the reason why these people and beasts are destroyed, is because they are in fact destroyers themselves who yielded themselves to THE Destroyer; that is, to Satan himself. There should be no doubt that Satan is the Angel of Destruction and Death. I am reminded of these two verses:

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he [Jesus] also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;"

Hebrews 2:14, KJV

"And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth."

Revelation 6:8, KJV

As we see by the previous verse in Hebrews, by sacrificing His own life on the Cross, Jesus in fact took the power of death away from the Devil, and Jesus now owns the keys of

hell and death Himself. That is why the Second Death has no power over those people who are in Christ, as we see by the following two verses:

"I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."
Revelation 1:18, KJV

"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."
Revelation 20:6, KJV

Please go to part five for the continuation of this series.

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Who Hindered the Antichrist? : Part 5

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Son Of Perdition vs. Son Of God Who Brought Us Eternal Life, Judas Iscariot: A Traitor And Son Of Perdition, Satan: Angel Of Death And Destroyer, Old Testament Examples Of The Devil's Destructive Ways, Spoiler And Destroyer, Who Was Hindering Or Restraining The Son Of Perdition, Michael The Archangel Helps Prophetic Messages To Be Delivered To Daniel, Similarities To 2 Thessalonians 2, Michael Stands Up At End Of That Prophetic Age, Michael Protects Moses' Body From Satan, Much Proof That Michael Is The "He" In 2 Thessalonians, Joshua At Battle Of Jericho, Prophet Elisha's Chariots Of Fire, Scope Of Satan's

Power, Was The Devil Prohibited From Taking Human Form Until First Century?, Jesus And Satan Both Had All Power, Match Of The Age, The Devil Must Have Possessed A Physical Human Body, Satan Imprisoned And Then Cast Into Lake Of Fire, God's Work, Satan's Destructive Agenda To Defeat God's Plan Of Salvation, Our Personal Choice, Fall In Eden, Cain And Abel, Nephilim

In part four of this series, we learned how Paul described the "Son of Perdition" as one "whose coming is after the working of Satan". In short, as I noted there, my personal belief is that the "Son of Perdition" was the son of the Devil in the flesh. As such, he was the "son of destruction" and the "son of the destroyer". The proof lies in the fact that he led all of his deceived followers to a fiery death at the hands of the Roman soldiers. In equal manner, Jesus Christ is the Son of God who was likewise manifested in the flesh. However, the big difference is that Jesus has brought life and hope to a desperate, dying and lost world. While the Devil in the flesh sacrificed the lives of all of those people in the Temple, the Son of God in the flesh sacrificed His own life for us in love, by surrendering His earthly temple -- meaning His body -- to the wrath of unbelieving Jews. Thus He said:

". . . Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But he spake of the temple of his body. When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said."

John 2:19-22, KJV

If you find these thoughts interesting, consider the fact that there exists only one other place in the New Testament where we find the phrase "son of perdition" being used. As we learned in part four, in that case too, that wicked man -- Judas Iscariot -- met with destruction in the end, after he allowed Satan to possess him, in order to destroy Jesus' physical body. Followed are some verses relating to that

event:

"Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. And after the sop SATAN ENTERED INTO HIM. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly."

John 13:26-27, KJV

"While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the SON OF PERDITION; that the scripture might be fulfilled."

John 17:12, KJV

"Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that. And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself. And the chief priests took the silver pieces, and said, It is not lawful for to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood. And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in. Wherefore that field was called, The field of blood, unto this day. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value; And gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me."

Matthew 27:3-10, KJV

"Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus. For he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry. Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out. And it was known unto all the dwellers at Jerusalem; insomuch as that field is called in their proper tongue, Aceldama, that is to

say, The field of blood. For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and his bishoprick let another take."

Acts 1:16-20, KJV

To reiterate, once Satan entered into Judas, Judas' primary obsession was to destroy Jesus, because that is the Devil's whole game plan and purpose; that is, to destroy the Work of God, just as I explain in a number of other articles such as "Satan: King of Tyrus, King of Empires". Once that traitor had "destroyed" Jesus -- or at least so he thought -- then the Devil condemned Judas, and made him feel remorse and regret, so that Judas went out and destroyed himself as well by committing suicide. Such is the bad fruit of that foul fiend.

Within the pages of the Old Testament, we find additional examples of how Satan -- the Destroyer and Angel of Death -- has worked throughout the long course of human history to fulfill God's purposes. For example, the night of the Passover in Egypt, we know that he was there, as we can determine by this verse:

"For the LORD will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when he seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side posts, the LORD will pass over the door, and will not suffer THE DESTROYER to come in unto your houses to smite you."

Exodus 12:23, KJV

When King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon swept down and chastised Israel in the sixth century B.C., he was acting as a vehicle of the Destroyer, who in turn was acting as the Prosecutor and Executioner of God's Will, as we see here:

"The lion is come up from his thicket, and THE DESTROYER of the Gentiles is on his way; he is gone forth from his place to make thy land desolate; and thy cities shall be laid waste, without an inhabitant."

Jeremiah 4:7, KJV

In the previous two examples, the word "destroyer" finds its origin in the Hebrew word "shachath," which means destroyer,

corrupter, waster, and spoiler. These words "destroyer" and "spoiler" are found throughout the Old Testament. In most cases, they are referring to Satan the Destroyer who worked through the invading pagan kings as I have shown above. I discuss this topic in more detail in "Satan: King of Tyrus, King of Empires!", as well as in "The Seven Heads" series. Another Hebrew word which is sometimes used in Old Testament verses is "shadad". It means spoiler, destroyer and robber. This word is used as "spoiler" quite heavily in the Book of Jeremiah. Following are two more examples which show how Satan the Destroyer continued to perform his destructive deeds right up to the events of the late First Century:

"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. 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 8:24-25, KJV

"And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall DESTROY THE CITY AND THE SANCTUARY; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined."
Daniel 9:26, KJV

From the destruction of Jesus Christ's human body in about 30 A.D. -- which God raised from the dead -- to the total destruction of Jerusalem in about 70 A.D., Satan was indeed very busy. As I said, his whole game plan was to destroy, to destroy, to destroy. It is for these reasons that I believe that "son of destruction", or "son of the Destroyer", or "son of Satan" would have been a slightly better translation in the second chapter of Thessalonians. In one Bible I have seen, "son of perdition" is translated as "son of hell"; but that doesn't emphasize the physical and spiritual destruction which was met by the followers of the Jewish false messiah. Of course, he was a Jew, and Jesus did call them the children of Hell, so I suppose that in that regard, it can be viewed

as a fitting translation.

Returning to the Apostle Paul's warning to the brethren at Thessalonika, let us take another look at some of the verses we discussed earlier regarding the one who holds back the revelation of the Son of Perdition until his appointed time:

"And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way."

2 Thessalonians 2:6-7, KJV

In the previous verses, we find the words "withholdeth", "letteth" and "let". All three of these words are derived from the same Greek word "katecho", which means to hold back, detain, retain, restrain or hinder. Being as Satan is a spiritual entity, it should be obvious that Paul is talking about two spiritual entities here and not just a physical person or group of people. I have already shown that it is Satan who is working behind the wicked Son of Perdition. Therefore, there must have been another entity -- likewise spiritual in nature -- who was restraining him until his appointed time. Our task is to figure out who was hindering or preventing Satan from revealing himself through this Jewish false messiah.

While I have heard a variety of opinions over the years, there is only one answer which I have personally found to be Scripturally verifiable. From comparing Scripture with Scripture, I currently believe that Michael the Archangel -- or perhaps some other unidentified spiritual warrior -- is the strongest possible candidate for performing this important task. Furthermore, I believe that I have some rather convincing Scriptural evidence to support this view.

To begin with, you may recall that when the unidentified Angelic Messenger arrived to give Daniel the prophecies of Daniel chapters eleven and twelve, he was actually hindered from arriving for twenty-one days by the spiritual demon prince of Persia. Let us drop in on their conversation:

"Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia."

Daniel 10:12-13, KJV

Here we plainly see that it wasn't until Michael lent a hand by restraining or holding back the evil Persian demon, that the other Angelic Being was able to fulfill his mission and speak with Daniel. What an amazing insight into the battle which occurred between these two mighty spiritual warriors. Until Michael arrived, this demonic prince was successfully preventing the other Angel from delivering the prophecies to Daniel. However, then Michael stands in the way of, or withstands, that foul Demon of Darkness, so that he can no longer hinder the Angel who is attempting to reach Daniel.

In the previous verses, the word "withstood" is derived from the Hebrew word "amad". This word has a variety of meanings, including to take one's stand, to endure, persist, to hold one's ground, or to be steadfast. Thus we see that first the demon prince of Persia withstands the Angelic Messenger who is trying to get to Daniel, and then Michael arrives and withstands the demon while the message is delivered by the other Angel to the Prophet.

In my view, the above spiritual battle sounds very similar to the situation in Paul's Epistle to the Thessalonians, where an Angelic Being is holding back Satan so that he is unable to empower the Son of Perdition until the proper time for his revelation has arrived. Now, if my understanding is correct, then were it not for the faithful steadfastness of this Angelic Warrior, the Son of Perdition -- that is, the Jewish Antichrist -- would have come to power sooner than he actually did. The meanings of the Greek word "katecho" and the Hebrew word "amad" are just too similar to dismiss as being a mere coincidence.

Returning to Daniel chapter ten, at the end of the chapter,

after a bit of Angelic conversation with Daniel, it is again confirmed that Michael is helping to strengthen his fellow Angel, by resisting the evil demon prince, as we see by the following verse:

"But I will shew thee that which is noted in the scripture of truth: and there is none that holdeth with me in these things, but Michael your prince."

Daniel 10:21, KJV

In this case, the word "holdeth" is derived from the Hebrew word "chazaq", which means to hold, strengthen, prevail upon, be resolute, hold strongly with, and to be firm. Thus, Michael is again lending his support to this other Angel by firmly and resolutely holding back or hindering this demon prince.

By this time, it should be becoming clear to you that Michael is indeed a powerful Archangel who fights the Lord's battles against the legions of darkness who oppose God's Will. But if you still have any lingering doubts regarding this being one of his primary tasks for the Lord, consider this final verse we find in the Book of Daniel where we once again see Michael rising up and defending the descendants of Daniel's people:

"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."

Daniel 12:1, KJV

It shouldn't surprise you to learn that in both cases, the phrase "standeth up" and the second word "standeth" likewise are derived from that very same Hebrew word that we examined a minute ago; that is "amad". Michael is doing what he has always done. He is being a warrior for God and holding back the tide of evil at the end of Daniel's 490-year Prophetic Age. You can learn more about this age in articles such as "Jesus Christ's Return: Have We Been Deceived?".

Leaving these Old Testament examples behind, let us move up to the New Testament Book of Jude where we yet again find the Archangel Michael performing a task quite similar to what we find in 2 Thessalonians 2, and in the Book of Daniel. When Satan tried to steal the body of Moses, Jude informs us that it was again Michael the Archangel who prevented that foul creature from performing his devilish deed, as we see by the following verse:

"Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee."
Jude 1:9, KJV

At this point, we have now seen six clear cut examples in which an Angelic Being is resisting, hindering, withstanding or preventing a demonic being from accomplishing something. To refresh your memory, allow me to list them for you below:

- In Daniel chapter ten, we are TWICE told that Michael is assisting another Angelic Messenger in delivering a very important prophecy to Daniel.
- At the opening of Daniel chapter twelve, we are again told that Michael rises up to defend the descendants of Daniel's people at the end of that Prophetic Age.
- In the Epistle of Jude we are told that Michael withstood the Devil in regards to the body of Moses.
- In Revelation chapter twelve, we discover that Michael is a key participant in ousting Satan from Heaven.
- In 2 Thessalonians 2, we read about an unidentified entity who is withstanding and restraining Satan from manifesting himself in the body of the Jewish false messiah.

In five of those cases, there is absolutely no doubt that it is definitely Michael the Archangel who is performing these tasks. In the last case, we have someone who the Apostle Paul simply refers to as a "he". However, based on these Biblical precedents, I remain convinced that Michael the Archangel is

still the best candidate for being the mysterious "hinderer" who held back the Son of Perdition from being revealed until the late First Century. As we have seen, once he was allowed to reveal himself, it was just more terrible death and total destruction, because he is the Destroyer.

Before moving on, allow me to share with you another group of verses which are found in the Old Testament, This may possibly be yet another appearance by the Archangel Michael. It concerns Joshua and the fall of Jericho:

"And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries? And he said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the LORD am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant? And the captain of the LORD'S host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so.

Joshua 5:13-15, KJV

In all of the examples we have looked at in this series, it certainly seems like Michael is in charge of the Lord's Host; that is, His Celestial Army. So perhaps this was him at the Battle of Jericho as well. Following is another clear example of how God's Heavenly Forces do battle on the Earth, unseen by human eyes:

"And he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them. And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha."

2 Kings 6:16-17, KJV

If there's one thing that should be clear to you by now from reading everything I have shared with you in this series, it is that for reasons of His own, God gave Satan considerable freedom to do as he pleases on the Earth. From the Garden of

Eden, to influencing and controlling world rulers, Satan was given free rein. You may recall that in the Book of Job, the Devil even tells God that he is busy "going to and fro in the Earth", as we see by these two verses:

"And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it."

Job 1:7, KJV

"And the LORD said unto Satan, From whence comest thou? And Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it."

Job 2:2, KJV

But there was one thing that Satan was being prohibited or hindered from doing in Paul's second Epistle to the brethren at Thessalonika. He was being prevented from incarnating in a human body just as Jesus had done when He became the physical Son of God. In other words, it seems to me that up until that point, all of the Devil's dirty deeds were achieved through outside oppression, or by influencing people's thoughts, or in the case of the traitorous Judas Iscariot, even through temporary possession. After all, we are clearly told that Satan entered into Judas, remember?:

"And after the sop Satan entered into him . . ."

John 13:27, KJV

I don't get the impression that Satan was ever permitted to fully incarnate as a flesh and blood human being before that time. And to be honest, I still don't fully understand how he would have accomplished such a task. We know that Jesus had to literally be born as a human baby in order to achieve that goal. But whatever the method was, it does appear that Satan was there in physical form, sitting in the Temple, performing his "signs and lying wonders" as we discussed earlier in this series. Just as Jesus was given the Spirit without measure by His Father, and just as all power was given unto Him, let me remind you again that Paul writes that the Son of Perdition also had "all power"; except his power was from the Devil. Allow me to share these verses with you side-by-side for your

personal consideration:

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, ALL POWER IS GIVEN UNTO ME in heaven and in earth."

Matthew 28:18, KJV

"For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth NOT THE SPIRIT BY MEASURE unto him."

John 3:34, KJV

"Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with ALL POWER and signs and lying wonders."

2 Thessalonians 2:9, KJV

So this was like the match of the century, and in fact the match of the age. Two spiritual beings were on the Earth at the very same time, both in human form, and both fighting for the very fate of humanity. Thank God we know who won.

Those unbelieving Jews -- the Zealots, Sicarii and whoever else was in the Temple compound at that time -- must have literally seen and worshipped the Son of Perdition. They literally saw his amazing feats, and that is why they were so deceived. As we discussed previously, they rejected the truth in Jesus Christ, and they embraced the lies of their false messiah. As I stated earlier, the Jewish Antichrist may have possibly even been one of them. Another reason why I lean towards the belief that the Devil actually took on a physical human form at that time, is because of a verse I shared with you before from this very same chapter. Consider it again:

"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:"

2 Thessalonians 2:8, KJV

In my view, this verse must be talking about the destruction of a human body which served as the vehicle for Satan. After all, the Devil is a spiritual entity. Furthermore, we know that he could not have been destroyed by Jesus at that point in time, because as you may recall from earlier in this same

series, the Book of Revelation later informs us that Satan is imprisoned for a thousand years, and he is ultimately cast into the Lake of Fire, as we learn from the following verses:

"And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years . . . And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."
Revelation 20:2, 10, KJV

Considering how successful Satan had already been when it came to wreaking havoc, death and destruction on the Earth over the previous four thousand years, even though he was only in his spiritual form, we must ask ourselves why it was that he was so desperately trying to inhabit human form in the First Century. Let me suggest that maybe it was because that fiend wanted to force God's hand. This is a subject I likewise discuss in the series "Satan: King of Tyrus, King of Empires!". This requires a bit of thought to understand, but it really is not that difficult. We have already seen that Satan is the Destroyer. He is the author of confusion, chaos and destruction. He is Abaddon and Apollyon. He is in fact everything which God is not. He is in total opposition to the Plan and Work of God. The Lord clearly defined what the nature of that work is in the following verses that are found in the Gospel of John:

". . . This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent . . . And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day."
John 6:29, 40, KJV

Thus, as I explained earlier, since the start, Satan's goal was to frustrate God's overall Plan of Salvation, and to set up himself as "God", with humanity as the subjugated slaves of his Kingdom of Darkness. However, as the Scriptures make very clear, we are free moral agents, and there is always a choice to be made. God leaves it up to us to choose our own fate, as He has done for literally thousands of years:

"I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live:"
Deuteronomy 30:19, KJV

"And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."
Joshua 24:15, KJV

"And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word."
1 Kings 18:21, KJV

"No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."
Matthew 6:24, KJV

"Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?"
Romans 6:16, KJV

"Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils."
1 Corinthians 10:21, KJV

"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."
Galatians 5:1, KJV

"A double minded man is unstable in all his ways."
James 1:8, KJV

So again, this has been Satan's whole plan since the day he instigated the Fall in Eden. Once the Fall had occurred, and God's Plan of Salvation was put into effect, the Devil's next objective was obviously to prevent Divine Restitution from ever being implemented. After all, this was no doubt a great threat to his own Kingdom of Darkness. Thus, that snake did everything within his power to frustrate, hinder and prevent the birth of the Savior through the righteous line of Seth. It would have been through Abel, had it not been for the fact that Satan achieved a victory in that particular battle when he enticed Cain to rise up and slay his righteous brother.

As I explain in the series "Nephilim: The Giants of Genesis", one of Satan's most serious early attacks on God's Plan was the Angelic Invasion in Genesis chapter six where he and his fellow rebellious Angels attempted to corrupt the righteous seed through having sexual relations with humankind. As we all know, it was for this reason that the Lord had to stop the spread of evil by destroying humanity through the Flood in the days of the Patriarch Noah, as we see here:

"And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, That the sons of God [the Fallen Angels] saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose. And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years. There were giants [Nephilim] in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown. And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them."

Genesis 6:1-7, KJV

Please go to part six for the conclusion of this series.

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Who Hindered the Antichrist? : Part 6

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Nimrod's Tower of Babel, The Schemer Haman And Queen Esther, Jesus Born Despite Satan's Machinations, King Herod's Failed Attempt To Kill Jesus, Satan And Angels Are Not Omnipresent And Do Not Know Everything, Mystery Of God's Plan, Hopeless Sadducees And Modern Blind Unbelievers, Satan Actually Helped To Fulfill God's Redemptive Plan, Set Down At The Right Hand Of God, Throne Of David, Jesus Wars Against And Subdues All Wicked Spiritual Forces, Ongoing Harvest In The Ages To Come, Jesus Was King David's Direct Descendant, Firstfruits Of The Resurrection, We Shall Live For Evermore, Reading Resources

Following the Flood, Satan continued to resist God by trying to build up his own kingdom through such incidents as Nimrod and the Tower of Babel. Throughout the Old Testament, we see that foul fiend repeatedly trying to destroy the children of Israel, and in particular, the lineage of King David, through which Jesus would eventually be born. Consider, for example, the story of the Jewish heroine Queen Esther, who protected her people from the evil Haman. Through an act of deceit, he tried to trick Persian King Ahasuerus/Xerxes into destroying all of the Jews within his vast empire which stretched from India to Ethiopia. Thankfully, Satan failed, and Haman found himself hanging on the very gallows he had prepared for dear

Mordecai, who was the uncle of Queen Esther.

Despite that Evil Usurper's many failed attempts to frustrate God's wonderful Plan Of Salvation -- I have only mentioned a few examples in this series -- Jesus was born precisely on time, and precisely in the place where He was supposed to be born, in direct fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies which are found in God's Word. Consider the following example which is found in the Book of the Prophet Micah. It finds its fulfillment in the Gospel of Matthew. Please notice that even the verse references are similar:

"But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."

Micah 5:2, KJV

"And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet, And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel."

Matthew 2:5-6, KJV

As we have already discussed in parts three and four of this series, having failed for four thousand years to stop God's Plan, that evil Demon of Darkness then attempted to snuff out young Jesus' life through the atrocities which were committed by the Roman puppet, vain and evil King Herod the Great. But again, it was a dismal failure on the Devil's part, because Joseph, Mary and young Jesus fled to Egypt, after they had been warned by God in a dream.

This brings us to another interesting point. As I have also mentioned in other articles, it seems to me that Satan might not be aware of the future; that is, he is not omnipresent. If this is indeed so, then he cannot peer into the future like God can. As I explain in "Satan: King of Tyrus, King of Empires!", being that he is a spiritual entity, I believe that he is not subject to time or space. Thus, while he is able to exist through time, he cannot actually move through

time. So perhaps he is still forced to second-guess God. In fact, you may recall that Jesus made it clear that not even the Angels are aware of God's full plans until He actually carries them out. Consider these example Scriptures which prove this point:

"But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only."

Matthew 24:36, KJV

"Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into."

1 Peter 1:12, KJV

The fact that the Angels desire to look into things reveals that they must not know everything. In fact, contrary to what some people may believe, once we each have received our Resurrection Bodies, we won't know everything yet either. We will still be learning and growing spiritually in the Next Life. It is for this very reason that we are told that God's whole Plan of Salvation is a Mystery which is only meant to be understood by those to whom He chooses to reveal it; as we see by the following verses:

"In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight."

Luke 10:21, KJV

"And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables:"

Mark 4:11, KJV

"For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the

fulness of the Gentiles be come in."

Romans 11:25, KJV

"Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began,"

Romans 16:25, KJV

"But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory . . . But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."

1 Corinthians 2:7, 10, KJV

"Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself:"

Ephesians 1:9, KJV

"And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:"

Ephesians 3:9, KJV

"And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel,"

Ephesians 6:19, KJV

"Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints:"

Colossians 1:26, KJV

"To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:"

Colossians 1:27, KJV

"That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of

understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God,
and of the Father, and of Christ;"

Colossians 2:2, KJV

"And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness:
God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen
of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the
world, received up into glory."

1 Timothy 3:16, KJV

"But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he
shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished,
as he hath declared to his servants the prophets."

Revelation 10:7, KJV

Today, because we have God's Word, as well as the historical
record behind us, we understand that the Mystery is actually
the Mystery of Salvation and Resurrection into a new life in
the Spirit, which was put into effect when Jesus died on the
Cross, and rose from the dead three days later, in accordance
with His Father's long-range plans and Will. Consider these
additional verses:

"Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but
we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an
eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the
dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be
changed."

1 Corinthians 15:51-52, KJV

"But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren,
concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even
as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus
died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus
will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the
word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto
the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are
asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with
a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump
of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we
which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with
them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so

shall we ever be with the Lord."

1 Thessalonians 4:13-17, KJV

Sadly, today, just like the hopeless Sadducees of old who refused to believe in anything spiritual, there are still so many people in the world who as a result of their sins of pride, vanity, arrogance, haughtiness and sinful rebellion, have had their understanding darkened; so much so that they consider the preaching of the Christian Gospel -- including the Resurrection from the dead -- to be utter foolishness and madness. Consider the following verses:

"The same day came to him the Sadducees, which say that there is no resurrection, and asked him,"

Matthew 22:23, KJV

"Then come unto him the Sadducees, which say there is no resurrection; and they asked him, saying,"

Mark 12:18, KJV

"Then came to him certain of the Sadducees, which deny that there is any resurrection; and they asked him,"

Luke 20:27, KJV

"But when Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees, and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee: of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question. And when he had so said, there arose a dissension between the Pharisees and the Sadducees: and the multitude was divided. For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit: but the Pharisees confess both."

Acts 23:6-8, KJV

"And as he thus spake for himself, Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad."

Acts 26:24, KJV

"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God."

1 Corinthians 1:18, KJV

"Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened."

Romans 1:21, KJV

To continue then, it seems possible that initially, Satan may not have realized the "error" in his plan. As we have already discussed, after inciting the unbelieving Jews to verbally persecute the Lord throughout the duration of His ministry, Satan finally influenced the Sanhedrin, Judas and Pontius Pilate to crucify the Son of Man. Unbeknownst to him at the time, the Devil helped to accomplish exactly what had been a part of God's great Mystery all along. In short, it would seem that God used Satan's ignorance of the future to bring about his own defeat when Jesus rose from the dead, and then returned to the Earth forty years later to put His house in order. As we learned in part five, that is when He defeated the Antichrist, and banished wicked Satan to the Bottomless Pit. Consider the following interesting verses:

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

John 16:33, KJV

"And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

Matthew 19:28, KJV

"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:"

Matthew 25:31, KJV

"Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

Mark 8:38, KJV

"The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,"

Ephesians 1:18-22, KJV

"But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom."

Hebrews 1:8, KJV

"Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens;"

Hebrews 8:1, KJV

"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

Hebrews 12:2, KJV

"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."

Revelation 3:21, KJV

As you can see, we are told that Jesus is set down at the Right Hand of God on His own throne. He is God the Father's right hand man, and the next in authority. This is obviously a position which Jesus fully deserves, considering what He did for us all. The Scriptures make clear that the Throne

which God had promised to His Son, is the Throne of David, as we see by the following two verses:

"He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:"

Luke 1:32, KJV

"Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne;"

Acts 2:30, KJV

Having acquired His Kingdom, and His mandate from His own Father, we know that Jesus worked to subdue all spiritual entities who opposed His and His Father's rule, beginning with Satan and the Antichrist. After the Devil was cast out of Heaven by Michael and the Angelic Host which followed him, he made the mistake of assuming that he could simply possess the evil Antichrist, and set up his earthly throne in Jerusalem. It must have seemed like the perfect plan to him. After all, as we learned in part one, even Jesus said that the unbelieving Jews were the Devil's evil spawn. That this great war in the Spirit occurred is made evident by verses such as the following:

"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

Ephesians 6:12, KJV

"Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him

that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."
1 Corinthians 15:24-28, KJV

"Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day."

2 Thessalonians 1:6-10, KJV

"And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean."

Revelation 19:11-14, KJV

While Jesus has indeed overcome not only this world, but has also taken charge of His spiritual Kingdom, subdued Satan and all evil spiritual entities and potentates -- as per all of the previous verses -- I personally believe that God's great Mystery still remains to be completed in full. Why is this? Quite simply, because while Jesus' Death made it possible for us to restore our relationship with God the Father, and even though He restored balance to the Divine Order by defeating His Father's enemies, insofar as this world is concerned, we all know that there are still many more souls which need to be saved, who upon experiencing physical death, will join God the Father and Jesus Christ in their spiritual Kingdom. This ongoing harvest is an issue which I also discuss in "In the Ages to Come".

In the previous verse that is found in the Gospel of Matthew, the word "regeneration" is quite interesting and has a very profound meaning. It is translated from the Greek word "paliggenesia" which is defined as new birth, reproduction, renewal, recreation and regeneration. In a companion article entitled "Once Upon a Time: A True Story", I discuss some startling personal revelations concerning these topics. I hope that you will find time to read it.

Please also notice that in the previous verse that is found in the second chapter of the Book of Acts, the Apostle Peter says "according to the flesh". As many of you will already know, Jesus was indeed a descendant of King David, according to the flesh. However, while He was born in the flesh just as you and I are, we all know that He became the Firstfruits of the Resurrection, so that someday, we too might follow in His footsteps and enter a new life in the Spirit. Consider the following verses:

"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren."

Romans 8:29, KJV

"If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming."

1 Corinthians 15:19-23, KJV

"Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature . . . And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence."

Colossians 1:12-15, 18, KJV

"And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood . . . I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."

Revelation 1:5, 18, KJV

So again, just as Jesus and all of the Believers of previous ages now live for evermore, so shall we too someday follow in their footsteps, inherit our Spiritual Bodies, and dwell for evermore in the presence of the Lord. What a wonderful and exciting day that will be for each of us. I am reminded of the following very inspiring verse:

"But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

1 Corinthians 2:9, KJV

With that great verse, I will bring this series to a close. I trust that you have enjoyed it, learned something from it, and I pray that it has been a blessing in your life. If you have an account with Facebook, Twitter or Google+, I would really appreciate if you would take the time to click on the corresponding link that is found on this page. Thank you so very much! May God bless you abundantly!

For additional information, you may want to refer to the list of reading resources below which were also mentioned in this series, or which contain topics which are related to this series. All of these articles are likewise located on the Bill's Bible Basics website:

Abomination of Desolation: Explained!

Do You Want Love and Light, Or Rod and Wrath?

Jesus Christ's Return: Have We Been Deceived?

Leviathan: An Ancient Dragon of the Sea?

Nephilim: The Giants of Genesis

Once Upon a Time: A True Story

Revelation's Babylon the Great

Satan: His Origin, Purpose and Future

Satan: King of Tyrus, King of Empires

Science and Technology: The Forbidden Knowledge?

The Great Tribulation and the Rapture

The Seven Heads

The Woman in the Wilderness and the 144,000

Tradition or Truth? Old Wine or New Wine?

When Was Satan Cast Out of Heaven?

Who Is Who?: Defining Important Prophecy Terms

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