

**II THESSALONIANS 2:3-4**  
**DO NOT BE DECEIVED!**  
**PART 2**

Please turn in your Bibles this morning to II Thessalonians chapter 2 as we continue our study through Paul's second letter to the church in Thessalonica. And here in chapter 2 the focus of Paul is ***ENLIGHTENMENT ABOUT THE DAY OF THE LORD!***

You see, confusion had come upon these believers by people giving prophecies about this time, or speaking "Thus says the Lord" or there was even a forged letter that was supposedly from Paul, but it wasn't. And these false teaches and this false doctrine that was coming into the church in Thessalonica was that they had missed the Rapture of the church and they were in the Tribulation Period, the Day of the Lord had come!

We are currently in part 2 of our study called, "***Do Not Be Deceived!***" And last time we focused upon not being deceived, the Rapture has not happened yet because "**the falling away comes first.**"

And for many, as they read that, they see it as a departure from the faith. And I do agree that in the last days the Bible does speak of this departure from the faith, but I don't think that is what Paul is speaking of here.

The Greek word that Paul uses for "**falling away**" is APOSTASIA, and it can also mean "departure" or "departing." And I think that is what Paul is speaking of here. Paul is saying that the Day of the Lord will not begin until the church is removed, the Rapture occurs.

In other words, you did not miss the Rapture. You are not in the Tribulation Period or the Day of the Lord because the Lord has not come back for His Bride, the church yet.

As we saw last time, there has always been apostasy in the church, since it began. So, for this to be a sign, that would be a tough one to figure out. Yes, it is getting worse. And I do have to say that I never thought it would get this bad, at least not this bad in my lifetime. And the reality is, it will only get worse.

So, apostasy or a falling away from the truths of God found in the Word of God is something the Bible speaks of in the last days, the days we are living in. But that is not what Paul is speaking of here in II Thessalonians 2:3, as I have said. This is speaking of a departure or departing, the Rapture of the church.

This morning we are going to focus on what happens when the church is removed, when the Rapture takes place and millions of Christians are removed from this world.

So, with that as our background, let's begin reading in II Thessalonians chapter 2, beginning in verse 3 and let's see what the Lord has for us as we study the topic, "Do Not Be Deceived!"

## **II THESSALONIANS 2**

### **VERSES 3-4**

Paul tells us the key character in leading this apostasy is this man of sin, the Antichrist. And as Revelation chapter 13 tells us, the False Prophet will also play a role in this apostasy! In fact, it is the False Prophet who will lead the people of this world in the worship of this man of sin, the Antichrist!

We are told in Revelation 13:11-12 regarding this false prophet, “**Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon. And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.**”

And as we look at the religions of the world, it seems that the Pope, from the Roman Catholic Church, is trying to unite the religions of the world together and there are many in the Protestant church that are working together and joining with the Roman Catholic Church.

I don't know if the Pope will be the false prophet or not, but it obviously someone who is very influential in getting people to do what he wants, and this Pope is very good at that!

Now this man of sin, the Antichrist is also called “**the son of perdition,**” and there was only one other person who was called by that name, and that was Judas, (John 17:12). Also, Judas as he betrayed the Lord was possessed by Satan. There is only one other person who we know of that will be possessed by Satan and that is the Antichrist! (Luke 22:3).

This man of sin will become the leader of the world. He will have control of all the nations of the world. And you may be thinking, “How in the world can that happen? People are not going to submit to one man. In fact, we are a sovereign nation, we would not and could not surrender our sovereignty to anyone!”

One website gave this interesting description of what we want and what we see. I don't recommend this website, but they do make some interesting points. They wrote,

The world is filled with war, terrorism, turmoil and confusion. While men have created many amazing technological inventions, they cannot "create" peace. Scientists have unleashed the power of the atom but are powerless to "unleash" peace upon Earth. Astronomers have discovered much about the size, majesty and precision of the universe, but they cannot "discover" the way to peace. They can find galaxies far away throughout the universe, but they cannot "find" peace here on Earth.

War has been the primary means by which nations have settled disputes throughout history. It has been considered a natural state of equilibrium, while peace has been considered a period of recuperation from the previous campaign, in which preparations are being made for the next venture or conquest. A quote by Georges Clemenceau, the French statesman during World War I, accurately reflects this state of affairs: "I don't know whether war is an interlude during peace, or peace is an interlude during war."

General Douglas MacArthur eloquently stated mankind's current dilemma: "We have had our last chance. If we will not devise some greater or more equitable system . . . Armageddon will be at our door" (April 19, 1951, speech to Congress). . . .

Since that time, many have suggested that *one world government* is the only way to world peace and stability. But many questions arise. *Who* would bring it? *How* would it be phased in? *What laws* would it administer? How would they be *enforced*? Would sovereign nations relinquish their authority to it? Would it succeed, or would it eventually oppress and enslave all mankind? These questions always stop thinkers, planners, leaders and scientists in their tracks!

Therefore, world peace remains as elusive as ever. Seemingly everyone yearns for it, but no one knows how to obtain it. Why? Why cannot the experienced leaders and intelligent thinkers of our time find the way to peace? Why do people understand that the only solution that could bring peace is one world government yet, at the same time, acknowledge that this is utterly impossible if left in the hands of men? If men are not capable of governing their own individual lives, how could they govern the entire world?

- [https://rcg.org/landing/inside\\_rcg.html](https://rcg.org/landing/inside_rcg.html)

So, again, how does this man come to power? I believe it is on the heels of a major disaster, maybe several disasters!

First of all, as you look at Ezekiel chapter 37 you see God speaking of restoring the nation of Israel. A nation that was dead, lifeless He will bring back to life. And we saw this take place on the heels of Hitler and the Germans almost wiping them out!

The Jews are back in the land of Israel once again, ever since 1948. I guess I should clarify that. Jews have always been in the land of Israel, but they were not a nation ever since the Romans destroyed the city of Jerusalem and burned the Temple to the ground 70 A. D.

But that was not the final assault upon the Jews by the Romans as they tried to revolt again, and one writer tells us of this time,

But this great tragedy failed to quell the rebellious spirit of the Jews. Fifty-two years later, they rose up in rebellion once again in a well-organized guerilla campaign that lasted three years (132-135 AD).

This revolt proved to be the last straw for the Romans. Hadrian, the Roman Emperor, responded brutally. According to Roman historian Cassius Dio (c. 150-235 AD), 580,000 Jews were killed, and 50 fortified towns and 985 villages were razed to the ground. Those who were not killed were sold into slavery.

Additionally, Hadrian ordered Jews to be banned from Jerusalem, except on the day of Tisha B'Av (the day of mourning over the destruction of the first two temples). He changed the name of Jerusalem to Aelia Capitolina (after his family name, Aelius, and the Capitoline Triad of gods - Jupiter, Juno and Minerva). And he changed the name of the Jewish homeland from Judah to Syria Palestina (Palestina being the Latin name for the Jew's ancient enemies, the Philistines).

The ultimate result of the destruction of the kingdom of Judah was the worldwide dispersion of the remaining Jewish people. Yes, there were small pockets of Jews who remained in their homeland, settling mainly in the Galilee and in the city of Tiberias. But the vast majority were scattered to foreign nations - all of which was in fulfillment of very specific warnings God had supplied through His prophets over a thousand years before.

- <http://christinprophecy.org/articles/the-dispersion-of-the-jews/>

And now that they are in the land of Israel once again, some 8,333,790 as of November 7, 2017 out of some 15 million Jews in the world, we come to Ezekiel chapters 38 and 39!

And in these chapters, we see a war in the Middle East that is devastating. It seems like it is nuclear in nature as special people will come in to remove the dead! And this war that will happen will be led by Russia and the Muslim nations that surround Israel.

Does that sound familiar in the days we are living in? It should because we can see the Muslim nations around Israel, wanting to destroy the Jews and the nation of Israel. We see Russia, for the first time, with boots on the ground in the Middle East! We see Iran wanting to destroy Israel and having the nuclear capabilities to do so!

And yes, the Jews are back in the land of Israel today and they have been victorious in every war they have fought in since they became a nation once again in 1948. Even though they are surrounded by 100 million enemies on three sides, the fourth side is the Mediterranean Sea, they still exist as a nation, they have not been destroyed.

Even the day after they became a nation in 1948 their enemies attacked them and tried to push them into the Sea. But Israel was victorious even though they were outnumbered and outgunned!

But there is a war coming and 5/6<sup>th</sup> of this army will be wiped out, 5/6<sup>th</sup> of this Russian army with its Muslim allies will be destroyed! (Ezekiel 39:2 KJV)

Imagine Russia and her Muslim allies destroyed, who would be a world power then? It is not the United States, but it is Europe, the Revived Roman Empire will be in control. And it is out of this revived Roman Empire that the Antichrist will come out of.

Now, what I want to focus on next is what will usher in the Antichrist, why will the people look to a man to give them peace? And yes, this war is one of the reasons as the world will be on the brink of a nuclear holocaust, but I believe there will be much turmoil that will lead to the Antichrist coming to power!

So we see this war in the Middle East looming but not only that, we are also seeing that the earth seems to be shaking more. Let me explain. Scientists are saying,

“If it seems like earthquakes and erupting volcanoes are happening more frequently, that’s because they are. Looking at global magnitude six (M6) or greater from 1980 to 1989 there was an average of 108.5 earthquakes per year, from 2000 to 2009 the planet averaged 160.9 earthquakes per year: that is a 38.9% increase of M6+ earthquakes in recent years. Unrest also seems to be growing among the world’s supervolcanoes. Iceland (which is home to some of the most dangerous volcanoes on the planet), Santorini in Greece, Uturuncu in Bolivia, the Yellowstone and Long Valley calderas in the U.S., Laguna del Maule in Chile, Italy’s Campi Flegrei – almost all of the world’s active super-volcanic systems are now exhibiting some signs of inflation, an early indication that pressure is building in these volcanic systems.”

- <http://awarenessact.com/dramatic-increase-in-volcanic-eruptions-around-the-world-and-nobody-knows-why/>

God is shaking this earth to get people’s attention and they are not listening, they are only becoming complacent or fearful of what is going on, but, either way, they are refusing to come to God.

Not only that, but as you look at people today, the love of many has grown cold. There is an increase in lawlessness. People seem to be out of control. That is not what I am saying, that is what we are seeing. We are told,

There is a growing pattern of wickedness and lawlessness dominating our society today that throughout history was found in civilizations in the process of decline. It is a pattern evident in nations that rejected God’s Word as ultimate authority in their lives and is a pattern prevailing in many Americans today. . . .



The problem is not isolated only to the United States. Urban violence is exploding in countries around the world. In the rapidly growing cities of Latin America and Asia, in European capitals freeing themselves from years of communist rule, and in societies in the throes of political and social change in Africa and the Middle East, millions of people have been frightened and angered by a seemingly boundless wave of bloodshed. As in the United States, criminals abroad are increasingly armed with sophisticated weapons and police are out-manned; increasingly too there is despair over the inability of political leaders to stop the killing.

Public order has disappeared in “the new South Africa.” Crime is rampant. In Cape Town, a serious crime occurs every 17 seconds. Police have 1,227,047 unsolved cases under review, according to Crime Investigation Services divisional chief Johan le Rous. It is increasingly dangerous in South Africa to own a nice car since roving gangs of unemployed thugs surround nice cars at intersections, drag the driver and passengers out, beat them brutally, then drive off with the car – just for a wild “joy ride” in which the car is vandalized or wrecked.

Since virtually all perverted behavior people engage in is now categorized under “natural behavior,” a door is now opened for more wicked sins. Just thirty years ago we would have been appalled, even outraged, by the decadence and debauchery that daily fills our streets, TV shows, movie screens, music and art, video games, businesses, and political bodies. But today we rarely give it a second thought. In fact, we often give it our approval, or at least fail to speak out against it. We have gotten used to it all, even though it is not a good thing to get used to.

Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan wrote in the American Scholar, “The amount of deviant behavior in American society has increased beyond the levels the community can ‘afford to recognize’ and that, accordingly, we have been re-defining deviancy so as to except much conduct previously stigmatized, and also quietly raising the ‘normal’ level in categories where behavior is now abnormal by any earlier standard.” [Daniel Patrick Moynihan, “Defining Deviancy Down,” American Scholar, Winter 1993, pg. 17.]

As a society, we have gotten used to illicit sexual relationships, adolescent promiscuity, abortion, cheating, lying, stealing, prostitution, rape, divorce, and even murder. We have gotten used to financial mismanagement on both civil and personal levels. We have accepted political corruption. We have rejected personal and social responsibility and learned to blame anyone or anything else for our problems and failures. We have traded in our infinitely valued divine image for a nickel-plated pagan shrine erected in honor of self-interest, immorality, and social apathy. The American ideal today is me first to do what I want, when I want, to whom I want, regardless of who or what it may hurt. These are the signs of a society gone wrong. [Keith A. Fournier, “Re-Civilizing America,” Law & Justice, February 1994.]

- <https://www.jeremiahproject.com/last-days/signs-last-days-increase-wickedness/>

Now I am not trying to scare you but what I want you to see, as you look at what is happening in our nation and the world, is that people are not at peace. They are anxious, they are angry, they are ready to fight, they have no idea what to do and where to go. They are looking for direction and yet, they refuse to look to God.

Then who will they look to? Very simply, the Antichrist!

Keep in mind that what Paul is speaking of here in II Thessalonians chapter 2 is a specific period of time that this man of sin will be revealed. And I believe he comes on the scene because of a major war, even on the heels of a nuclear holocaust in the Middle East as Russia and her Muslim allies come against Israel and God destroys this invading army.

Not only that, but I believe there will be an economic disaster, there will be these ecological disasters, we will see violence as millions of people disappeared in the Rapture, and on the heels of all this, a man comes on the scene as a man of peace with all the answers!

Let me set the stage for this man of sin being revealed and I think you will find it interesting who opens the door for this man of sin to come on the scene.

In Revelation chapter 5 we see that John is in heaven before the throne of God. And God the Father has in His hand a scroll that is sealed with seven seals.

And an angel spoke forth saying, “**Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?**” Revelation 5:2.

And as John looked around he saw that there was no one who was worthy to take the scroll and loose its seals. In fact, we are told that there was no one even worthy to look at this scroll. And John wept because no one was worthy to take this scroll. It was a hopeless situation and I believe that this scroll is the title deed to the earth that was given to Satan when Adam sinned. And now, as John looks, he saw no one to redeem this back.

Then, we are told in Revelation 5:5-7, **“But one of the elders said to me, ‘Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals.’ And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth. Then He came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne.”**

Here we see one of the elders step forward and he tells John to stop weeping, or chill out, relax. Why did he do that? Because the tears that John was shedding were inappropriate or out of place for this situation.

You see, don’t look at the situation but look at the lion from the tribe of Judah who is not only worthy to take the scroll, but He is more than able to get the victory! He can redeem man back and not only man, but all of creation. You see, what was impossible for man to do, what was impossible for all of creation to do, Jesus was able to prevail and conquer what has disqualified all of us from doing!

But as John turns and looks he doesn’t see a lion from the tribe of Judah, but this little lamb and not just a little lamb, but **“a lamb as though it had been slain.”**

Think about it, the king of the jungle, a lion with all his majesty and power may be able to defeat a dragon, but this little, broken, wounded lamb, how could He defeat this dragon?

Because this lamb is also the lion from the tribe of Judah, He is Almighty God. Never lose sight of that fact. And don’t forget that the dragon, Satan, was defeated at the cross and shortly Jesus is going to step forward and complete the victory!

Then, in Revelation 6:1-2 we see Jesus, the One who took the scroll, the One who was worthy to not only take the scroll but to loosen its seals, open the scroll.

John tells us, **“Now I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals; and I heard one of the four living creatures saying with a voice like thunder, ‘Come and see.’ And I looked, and behold, a white horse. He who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer.”** Revelation 6:1-2.

Now please understand that this rider on a white horse is not the Lord, as some may think. It is the Antichrist who appears as the Lord, but he is a deceiver. Keep in mind that the word **“Antichrist”** means both “against” and “in place of” because he is against Jesus Christ and as we will see, he wants to be worshiped in place of Jesus Christ!

And as this Antichrist comes on the scene he does so as a man of peace, riding a white horse.

You see, he does not gain power, he does not gain this world leadership position by force but the world ushers him in. The reason I say that is because he has a bow but no arrows.

He rises to power without bloodshed, without force as the people welcome him with open arms to head this one-world government.

And notice that he is not wearing a crown of a King, a DIADEMA, but a victor’s crown or a STEPHANOS.

Only Jesus is worthy to wear the crown of a King and thus, this is not Jesus!

Now I believe this man of sin, the Antichrist is alive today, time will tell if that is true. But when you look at all that is happening, you would have to believe that he is in this world but he will not become a world leader until after the Church is removed and the Tribulation Period begins.

How is this man of sin driven into this position? Like I have said. I believe the world will be on the brink of destruction. The war in the Middle East spoken of in Ezekiel chapters 38 and 39, I believe, will include nuclear weapons.

Thus, the world will be on the brink of a nuclear holocaust. Is that possible today? You bet it is, look at the nations that have or are developing nuclear weapons and look at what they want to do with them, destroy Israel, just as the Bible says!

There will be an economic collapse. There will be environmental disasters. There will be huge problems that mankind will not be able to solve individually, but globally, with the right man in power, they believe it can be done.

Thus, this man of peace brings about a pseudo-peace and he controls the world. This is a judgment of God, the rider on the white horse who comes on the scene at the beginning of the Tribulation Period with a false peace – the first seal!

Therefore, if this is a judgment of God, the Antichrist coming on the scene, that means that the church, the Bride of Christ is not here when he is revealed. And that is what we have seen here in II Thessalonians 2:3, “**Let no one deceive you by any means for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition.**”

Again, that “**falling away**” is speaking of a departure and specifically, as you look at the context of what Paul is writing about, this is speaking of the Rapture of the church. Thus, the church is removed and then the man of sin is revealed and that is exactly what the Scriptures teach us.

I also like the insight that Professor Showers gives to us. He wrote, “When the church is raptured, all saved people will be removed from the earth. Instantly, the total human population on earth will change from a mixture of saved and unsaved coexisting together to unsaved only. All of those who were not in rebellion against God’s rule will be absent from the earth. All of those who were in rebellion against His rule will be left on the earth. Thus, as a result of the Rapture, a sudden worldwide or universal apostasy will occur.”

Can you imagine when believers are gone what this world will be like? It will not be good, and I think with the chaos that takes place, the violence that happens when believers are gone, this too will usher in this man of sin.

And we can look at history and see that in times of stress, times of turmoil, times of uncertainty, that the door is open for someone to come in and set right the wrongs that have been done. And it is amazing who can get in when our guard is down.

Let me explain how this can happen with Hitler’s rise to power. We are told,

The abject economic conditions of Germany after World War I helped catapult the man Adolf Hitler into power. German treasury then was low in gold; her budget unbalanced. Inflation went awry. In 1919, the German mark was worth 25c. Within 4 years, it declined in value until 4 trillion were needed to equal \$1 in buying power.

The German middle class lost all their savings. The value of every pension was wiped out. All security was gone. Then the people were ready to listen to any demagogue who would voice their bitterness. Enter Adolf Hitler.

It was Lenin who said that “the surest way to overthrow an existing social order is to debauch the currency.”

Now some may argue that they did not know what he was going to do. I disagree, I just think they cared more about their welfare than anything else, even putting this monster into power.

Let me show you what I mean as I share just a couple of things about Hitler's autobiography, *Mein Kampf*. We are told,

*(Mein Kampf . . . My Struggle)* is a 1925 autobiographical book by Nazi Party leader Adolf Hitler. The work describes the process by which Hitler became antisemitic and outlines his political ideology and future for Germany. Volume 1 of *Mein Kampf* was published in 1925 and Volume 2 in 1926. . . .

Hitler began *Mein Kampf* while imprisoned for what he considered to be “political crimes” following his failed Putsch [coup] in Munich in November 1923. Although Hitler received many visitors initially, he soon devoted himself entirely to the book. As he continued, Hitler realized that it would have to be a two-volume work, with the first volume scheduled for release in early 1925. The governor of Landsberg noted at the time that “he [Hitler] hopes the book will run into many editions, thus enabling him to fulfill his financial obligations and to defray the expenses incurred at the time of his trial.” The book was a bestseller in Germany during the 1930s. . . .



In *Mein Kampf*, Hitler used the main thesis of “the Jewish peril”, which posits a Jewish conspiracy to gain world leadership. The narrative describes the process by which he became increasingly antisemitic and militaristic, especially during his years in Vienna. He speaks of not having met a Jew until he arrived in Vienna, and that at first his attitude was liberal and tolerant. When he first encountered the antisemitic press, he says, he dismissed it as unworthy of serious consideration. Later he accepted the same antisemitic views, which became crucial to his program of national reconstruction of Germany.

*Mein Kampf* has also been studied as a work on political theory. For example, Hitler announces his hatred of what he believed to be the world’s two evils: Communism and Judaism.  
...

- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mein\\_Kampf](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mein_Kampf)

Why is this even important? Because I want to show you that what Hitler believed was not a secret. The people read his book, they knew what he was about and yet, they allowed him to gain such power that no one was able to stop him before he killed millions of people!

That could not happen today, could it? You bet it could. Now, like him or not, agree with me or not, just listen to what I am going to say because it shows you that this can happen in our day and when things get even worse, the world will embrace this man of sin to help them out of the mess they are in!

Back in 2007, when Barack Obama was running for President of the United States, no one really knew who this guy was. And one of his slogans went like this, “Change we can believe in!” And people were excited. They wanted change, but he never said what was going to change, did he? No, he didn’t.

And yet, when you read the articles that he wrote. When you look at the books he praised. When you see who was influencing his life, you can clearly see what the focus of his life is all about – ***SOCIALISM!*** And when you look at the eight years that he was President of the United States, that is exactly what he promoted. So why are we surprised.

In fact, let me share this with you to show you that trouble is a great way to bring about change, to get what you want.

Listen carefully to what Henry Kissinger said at the New York Stock Exchange in January of 2009. He said,

“ . . . President Obama is coming into office at a moment when there is upheaval in many parts of the world simultaneously,” Kissinger responded. “You have India, Pakistan; you have the jihadist movement. So he can’t really say there is one problem, that it’s the most important one. But he can give now impetus to American foreign policy partly because the reception of him is so extraordinary around the world. His task will be to develop an overall strategy for America in this period when, really, a new world order can be created. It’s a great opportunity, it isn’t just a crisis.”

Not only that, but listen to what President Obama said before the United Nations back in 2016. He said, “As President of the United States, I believe America has been a rare superpower in human history insofar as it has been willing to think beyond narrow self-interest; that while we’ve made our share of mistakes over these last 25 years . . . ***We’ve bound our power to international laws and institutions.***” (President Barak Obama before the United Nations 2016)

Now wait a minute, I thought we were a sovereign nation? I think the correct term was “were” and now we are changing, although President Trump is trying to turn things around again.

But make no mistake about it, we are moving towards a one world government and even though we have this reprieve, you might say, it is coming!

I believe the same will be true of the Antichrist. I think many will know of this man, they will know what he is about, but the concern is for their own lives and what they want, and they will be willing to give away anything to obtain it.

You doubt that? Then listen to this. “We do not want another committee; we have too many already. What we want is a man of sufficient stature to hold the allegiance of all people and to lift us out of the morass into which we are sinking. Send us such a man, be he God or the Devil, and we will receive him!” (Paul-Henri Spaak, former prime minister of Belgium and former secretary-general of NATO)

So, we see that this man of sin, this son of perdition is unleashed upon this earth, what is he like? Paul tells us in II Thessalonians 2:4. This is the man, **“who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.”**

Now, as you read that, who does that sound like? It sounds like Satan himself and it should because this man is indwelt by Satan himself. And, as I have said, the only other person we find in the Scriptures that is indwelt by Satan is Judas, who betrayed the Lord!

Let me show you what I mean. We see this spoken of Lucifer, Satan in Isaiah 14:12-15, what brought him down. We are told, **“How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations! For you have said in your heart: ‘I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation On the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.’ Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, To the lowest depths of the Pit.”**

Lucifer, his name before his fall, wanted to exalt himself above God, and yet, he is not a god, he is an angelic being that was created by God. But he did have a free will and in his rebellion, he was cast down!

And this man of sin will do the same. He will exalt himself, demand to be worshiped as God and at the 3½ year mark of the 7-year Tribulation Period he will go into the rebuilt Temple in Jerusalem and demand to be worshiped as God!

And as we continue on in our study of this chapter over the next few weeks we will see how this man of sin will work. We are told in II Thessalonians 2:9-11, **“The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”**

Yes, he comes riding in on a white horse looking like a good guy, but that is a deception. He is coming to destroy people’s lives, not initially, but those last 3½ years will be brutal.

And remember that this is a judgment of God upon a Christ rejecting world. And of this man of sin, one commentator wrote, “This person will be the consummate lawless one; a blasphemous sinner, who will live in open defiance of God’s law. Of all the billions of godless, evil, lawless sinners in human history, his evil influence will be greater than any other’s. Even in the end times, when ‘lawlessness is increased’ (Matt. 24:12), this Satan-energized leader will stand out as the one whose depraved, wicked, lawless leadership sweeps over the whole world - with influence never before seen.”

Now we talked a little about this and maybe you are wondering, “How does the Antichrist go into the Temple in Jerusalem when there is no Temple in Jerusalem any longer? In fact, there has not been a Temple in Jerusalem since 70 A. D. when the Romans destroyed it!”

That is a good point. What I can tell you is that the Bible is clear on this. The Jews will rebuild their Temple in Jerusalem and I don’t believe that this will take place until the church is gone, and the Antichrist is revealed.

In Revelation 11:1-2 we are told, “**Then I was given a reed like a measuring rod. And the angel stood, saying, ‘Rise and measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there. But leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles. And they will tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months.’**”

This is a fascinating section to me because John is told to measure the Temple proper, NAOS in the Greek or the inner Temple, which consisted of the holy place and the holy of holies. He is also told to leave out the outer court because that has been given over to the Gentiles. I believe the Temple will be rebuilt during the Tribulation Period; the sacrifices started up again, both the grain and the blood, and then, during the last 3½ years the sacrifices will cease, and the city trampled by the Antichrist as he demands to be worshiped as God!

We see this mentioned in the book of Daniel regarding this covenant to rebuild the Temple. We are told, **“Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, Even until the consummation, which is determined, Is poured out on the desolate.”** Daniel 9:27.

I believe it is that covenant that the Antichrist makes with the Jews to rebuild their Temple that happens shortly after the start of the 7-year Tribulation Period and goes with the ushering in of the Antichrist, who I believe ushers in this time of judgment.

And when you think about it, the Temple has to be rebuilt because it speaks of the blood and the grain sacrifices that will take place for the first 3½ years of the 7-year Tribulation Period. Without the Temple you can't make those sacrifices!

Today this Temple Mount area is a hot bed of contentions. You see, in around 630 A. D. Omar built this Dome of the Rock supposedly on the spot where Mohammad was to have ascended up into heaven. In fact, it is the third most holy site for Muslims, Mecca being the first, which is the birthplace of Mohammad and then Medina.

Back in 1967, during the Six Day War, the Jews recaptured the old city of Jerusalem and the Temple Mount. And General Moshe Dayan, in a gesture of peace, gave control to Jordan to oversee the Temple Mount and now the Palestinians are in charge. So, what is the problem?

The problem with the Jews building their Temple on this Muslim site is given to us in a Time magazine article dated October 16, 1989 and titled, "Time for a New Temple?" They said, "The merest hint of rebuilding the temple is considered an outrage by the prophets followers, who, in the words of an official at Al Aqsa, 'Will defend the Islamic holy places to the last drop of their blood.'"

You see, if the Jews attempted to rebuild on this site, you would see a holy war break out! I believe the key to the site of this third Temple is found in this verse as John is told to leave out the outer court because it has been given to the Gentiles!

Now I don't think the Dome of the Rock is where the Holy of Holies in the Temple was located. You see, there is a jagged rock there and the Ark of the Covenant would not be placed on a jagged rock but a flat rock.

What is interesting to me is that around thirty-five years ago, after spending sixteen years studying the Temple Mount area, a physicist and archaeologist at Hebrew University named Dr. Asher Kauffman came to some remarkable conclusions.

In his landmark article in the March/April 1983 issue of *Biblical Archaeological Review*, Dr. Kauffman declares that while the Dome of the Rock has been assumed to sit on the sacred site of the Holy of Holies, the true location is actually one hundred meters north. What is one hundred meters north of the Dome of the Rock? A small gazebo-like structure, below which is the only other place the original bedrock of the Temple is exposed.

As opposed to the jagged rock in the Dome of the Rock, however, the stone one hundred meters to the north is flat - providing a much more likely setting for the Ark of the Covenant within the Holy of Holies. Not only more logical, this site seems more historical. You see, according to the Mishna - the highly esteemed book of Jewish oral traditions - when the priest stood in the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement, he could look through the veil, through the door, and see the Eastern Gate directly before him.

The results of a secret excavation in 1970 confirmed that the original Eastern Gate is directly below the present Eastern Gate. This makes Kauffman's assertion even more intriguing. For if you stand one hundred meters north of the Dome of the Rock, the Eastern Gate is in plain view and when I was in Israel I was able to do this!

Not only that, when the Muslims built the gazebo-like structure in A. D. 691, they gave it two names: The Dome of the Spirits, and the Dome of the Tablets. Thus, even Islam recognized this site as the spot where the tablets (the Ten Commandments within the Ark of the Covenant) and the Spirit (the *shekinah*, *chabod*, glory of God over the Ark of the Covenant) had been.

If the Dome of the Spirits or the Dome of the Tablets is the same place where the Holy of Holies was located, then the Jews could rebuild their Temple and the Dome of the Rock would not have to be destroyed or taken down.

Why? Because it will be in the outer court, a place that John was told not to measure for it has been given to the Gentiles! I believe that is the covenant that is made, to rebuild the Temple and to have these Islamic shrines still standing on the Temple Mount, but in the outer court!



If you go to Israel or even check on the Internet, you will find a group of Jews that are involved in an organization called the Temple Institute, and they are preparing to rebuild the Temple and restart the sacrifices!

Today, they have all that they need to rebuild the Temple and start the sacrifices, including the priests to oversee these things. You can view the Temple implements on their web page and it is fascinating.

Why are they doing this? Because the Orthodox Jewish community understands that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. (Leviticus 17:11; Hebrews 9:22).

Today they are ready to rebuild, they are just waiting for permission to do so. And folks, I believe it will be the Antichrist, after the start of the Tribulation Period, who will give them permission to rebuild the Temple and in the outer court, where the Dome of the Rock and the Al-Aqsa mosque are located, as John is told, don't measure this area because it has been given over to the Gentiles!

The Temple will be rebuilt once again as I have said, they even have the plans already to what this Temple will look like!

And thus, the Antichrist will go into this rebuilt Temple and demand to be worshiped as God and it is then that the Jews will recognize, this man, the Antichrist is not their Messiah!

And make no mistake about it, they are preparing for their Messiah. Rabbi Chaim Valoshinere said the following in the mid-nineteenth century, "When you see the Russian army begin to move southward and enter Turkey, put on your Sabbath garments and get ready to welcome the Messiah."

Russia is preparing for a war, we will see what happens.

Not only that, but if you were to ask an Orthodox Jew today how will you know that this man is your Messiah? They will tell you, "Because he has allowed us to rebuild our Temple!"

In saying that, remember what Jesus said in John 5:43, "**I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive.**"

In other words, they rejected the true Messiah, Jesus and they will embrace a man who is coming in his own name! They are set up to receive this man of sin, at least for a time.

And it is not only the Jews, but the people of this world will embrace this man of sin because he comes on the scene as a man of peace and then his true colors will be seen, and it will be too late!

So, I hope with the information I have given you that you understand what Paul is saying here in II Thessalonians 2:3-4. First, the "**falling away**" or the departure, the Rapture will occur. Then the man of sin, the Antichrist will be thrust on the scene as a leader of the governments of this world. And this man of sin, this son of destruction will demand to be worshiped as God!

As Paul said, "**Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you, not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come. Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.**" II Thessalonians 2:1-4.

May we not be shaken by what we see but may we be comforted by the Word of God! Do not be deceived!

**TEMPLE IMPLEMENTS TO BE USED IN THE REBUILT TEMPLE**

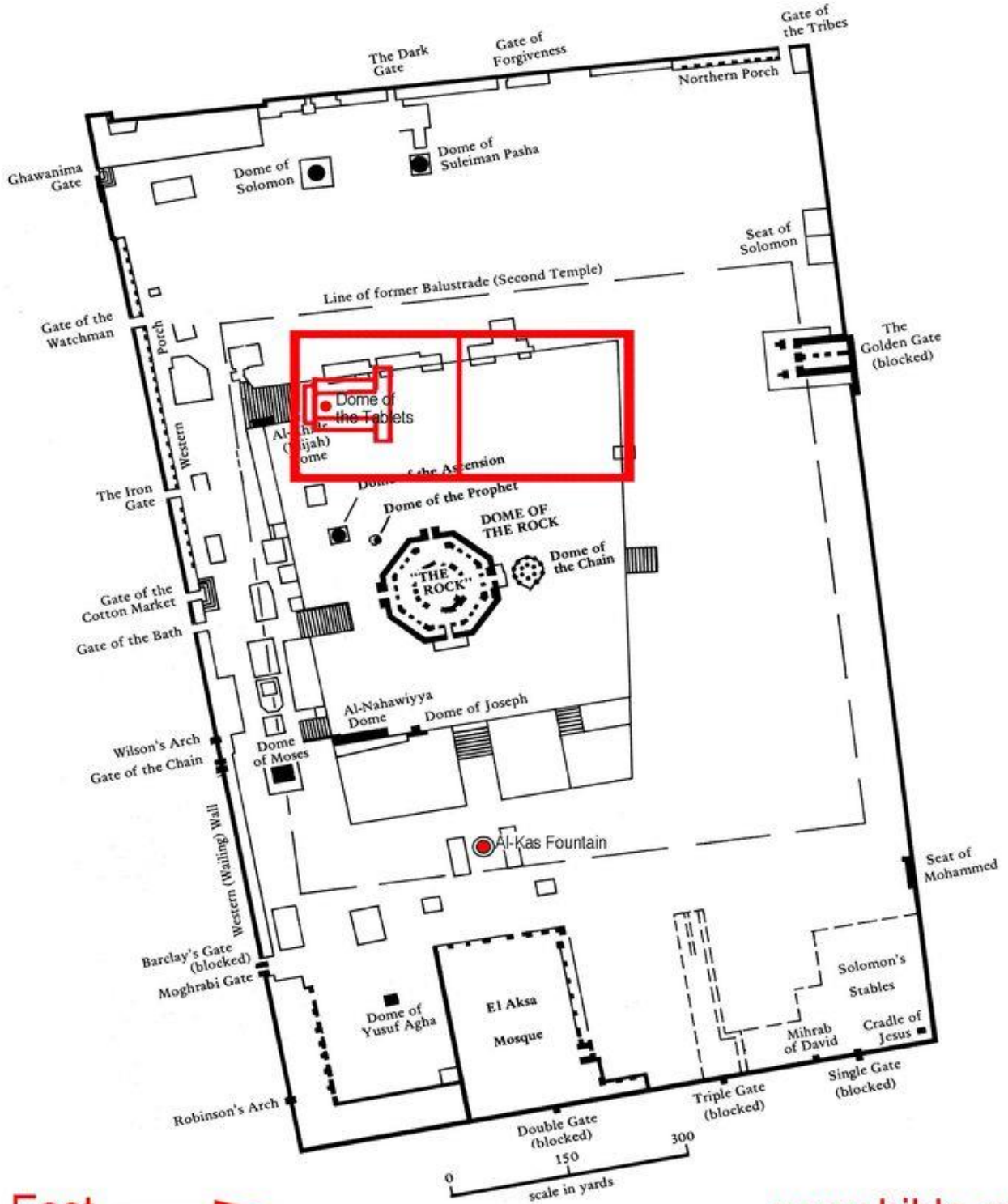








# Herodian Temple: Holy of Holies over Dome of Tablets (Asher S. Kaufman's view, 1983 AD)







Dome of the Spirits or the Dome of the Tablets with the Dome of the Rock in the background.