

Epistles to the Thessalonians IV The Beast, the False Prophet & the Two Witnesses

(2-Thessalonians 2)
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We just read from Texe Marrs' *Flash Point* newsletter, and I think he takes it too far too fast, though ultimately it may reach the point that he says. There are many plans and schemes in action, and Satan has many of them working:

- economic front
- technology front
- government front
- religious front

all working within the organizations, businesses and so forth. It is coming, but what is it going to be?

We have had a lot of false alarms on prophecies. Not that the Scriptural prophecies were not true. *The Scriptural prophecies are always true!* What happened? *It was the interpretation of those prophecies!* Everyone was wanting to make the Day of the Lord come *in their way* of looking at it, and *in their version* of doing it.

That's led to a lot of problems, but they've overlooked something very major. They have overlooked because of misunderstanding and misapplying Scriptures that would have helped them to understand what was happening.

Let's look at 2-Thess., again. Let's get rid of the misapplied interpretations and let's see what it is really actually telling us. Let's look at and read what it says from the Greek.

2-Thessalonians 2:1: "Now, we beseech you, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, that you not be quickly shaken in mind, nor be troubled—neither by spirit, nor by word... [message] ...nor by epistle... [letter] ...as if from... [written by] ...us... [and actual *forged* letter] ...saying that **the day of Christ is present**" (vs 1-2).

That is entirely different than the *King James Version*:

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

What does it mean "...at hand" to you? What does it mean to you if I had not read from the *Faithful Version* "...is present"? *Real close!* Is present means something entirely different.

Notice that this does not say *the Day of the Lord*. "...the day of [the] Christ..." It is significant that it does not say *the Day of the Lord*. Why should it be translated "...is present"? "...the day of Christ is present"—what does that mean?

It doesn't mean that God has already come. In their opinion that qualifies it. It means the messiah is here. *The Christ* means *the Messiah*. Let's see what Jesus said. I don't think we have a clue—compared to what we understood in the past—I don't think we really understood anything.

Matthew 24:23: "Then if anyone says to you, 'Behold, here *is* the Christ,' or, '*He is there,*' do not believe *it*... [here's why you're not to believe it]: ...For there shall arise **false Christs**..." (vs 23-24)—plural; more than one. What does this means other than more than one? Could it be that we will have 'messiah competition'? Each one proclaiming that *their man* is the messiah and the day of God's rule on earth has come?

On the back of this text, Texe Mars Is saying:

In April 1982 Los Angeles, New York, London, Tokyo and other cities were shocked by a full page ad proclaiming "the Christ is in the world."

Just what Paul was writing about, that it is present.

The ad described the Lord Maitreya is the great world teacher for people of every religion and no religion.

Isn't that wonderful?

Readers were told that the Christ—Lord Maitreya—was in hiding, but was ready to assume his rightful place on the throne of global power. Soon the ad assured that Maitreya would make himself known to the whole world and every eye would behold him.

In 1987 news reports came out of Africa and trumpeted mystic healings. The mystic heals thousands and then vanishes into thin air.

Even magicians can make that happen before people's eyes; this is no great thing.

Benjamin Crème head of the Share International—claimed that Lord

Maitreya—the Christ and messiah for the New Age—appeared before 6,000 worshipers at the Church of Bethlehem near Nairobi, Kenya, addressing the crowd in perfect Swahili, their native language and announcing that he was Jesus Christ returned to the earth in another form.

Maitreya is said to have healed 20 cripples, then POOF! he vanished into thin air. Who is the mysterious Lord Maitreya? Why does Benjamin Crème, his forerunner and spokesman, claim that he is the messiah long expected by Jews, Christians, Muslim, Buddhists and the like? Is Maitreya a real person or a mystical concoction from the fertile mind of Mr. Crème? Is the antichrist about to be revealed?

In 1988 Texe Mars debated Benjamin Crème on radio in Austin, Texas; phone lines were jammed.

It's going to happen again. What if the Catholics have *their* messiah? and the Jews have *their* messiah? and the Muslims have *their* messiah? and the Buddhists have *their* messiah? There's going to be competition; who is the greatest? But it will come down to one person, one man!

Verse 24: "For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and they shall present great signs and wonders..." It's going to be something! I don't think we've seen anything like it! I don't think we have seen or have an inkling as to the magnitude of the great occult society that is coming on this world.

"...in order to deceive, if possible, even the elect. Behold, I have foretold *it* to you. Therefore, if they say to you, '*Come and see! He is in the wilderness*'; do not go forth. '*Come and see! He is in the secret chambers*'; do not believe *it*' (vs 24-26). That's not how Christ is going to come.

There are some people who said that the Great Tribulation is going to start in 1997. Didn't happen! An event must first take place. So, we can look into the Scriptures and know when the Great Tribulation begins.

2-Thessalonians 2:2: "...the day of Christ is present. Do not let anyone deceive you by any means because **that day will not come unless the apostasy shall come first...**" (vs 2-3)—finished, completed, *first*.

In the *King James* it says that there is a 'falling away first,' which is interpreted as *all who leave the Church have fallen away, therefore, 'if you stay with the Church you won't fall away.* How are you going to square that with the fact that most of

the Church has fallen away? That was misapplied.

What we're talking about here is not just a falling away from Truth; it's a falling away from anything of God to everything from Satan. That is the *great apostasy!* What is the ultimate of the apostasy going to be? *It is going to be the worship of Satan the devil openly and willingly!* It's going to be something! Let's see what's going to happen and how these events come up to it.

Revelation 13:1: "And I stood on the sand of the sea; and I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads *the* name of blasphemy." Are there going to be seven major religions involved? *I don't know!*

Verse 2: "And the beast that I saw was like a leopard, and his feet like *the feet* of a bear, and his mouth like *the* mouth of a lion; and the dragon... [the devil] ...gave him his power, and his throne and great authority." He gets all three from Satan the devil! This is the whole system that has to develop. This is bringing together the best of all the civilizations of the world.

Read Dan. 7 and see how these are parts of all of them together. The beast is the one whom Satan sends; it ends up being one man. Out of all the false Christs it's one man!

Verse 3: "And I saw one of his heads as *if it were* slain to death, but his deadly wound was healed..." There have been many interpretations of this, but I believe that it is actually a wound to a physical man, which then 'proves' that he is God because he's brought back to life.

- How about if it's after three days?
- How about if he's resurrected on an Easter Sunday morning?
- Why does he get the wound?

A lot of people think that *the beast* is going to be the pope. *It's not!* He's going to be the *false prophet*. Will this wound be the result of competition between *the beast* and Judaism, and Judaism's false messiah? *I would say, yes!* You have to make some guesses in it, but you can't be dogmatic in it.

{note sermon series: Dan./Rev.} When I did the chart and counted back 1,290 days from the stopping of the sacrifices, and the day that *the beast* and *false prophet* are cast into the Lake of Fire—assume it was the Feast of Trumpets. You count back 1,290 days, what day do you come to? *To the 10th of Nisan!* What day is the 10th of Nisan? If there is a temple in Jerusalem, which there will be, and

they're going to offer sacrifices again, which will happen, what will the 10th of Nisan represent to the Jews? *The day when the Passover lambs are selected!*

If the sacrifices are stopped then, what do you think the Jews are going to do? Roll over and play dead? *No!* We'll add a little more to it with this 'messiah competition,' Remember, what has to happen is this:

"...but his deadly wound was healed, and **the whole earth** was amazed..." (v 3). This is going to be a worldwide occurrence. This is a huge and gigantic event.

"...and followed the beast. And they **worshiped the dragon**... [That's where the apostasy is going to come. They're going to openly worship Lucifer!] ...who gave *his* authority to the beast. And they worshiped the beast, saying, 'Who is like the beast? Who has the power to make war against him?'" (vs 3-4). The deadly wound was healed!

How do I think that this is going to happen? We have go by events; we cannot go by setting a date:

1-Thessalonians 2:3: "Do not let anyone deceive you by any means because *that day will not come unless **the apostasy shall come first**...*"

Let's see what happens right after that. As we see, there's going to be no doubt about it. We're going to see a whole union of all religions. That will come *first!* There is going to be an element of Judaism here that is mixed into the whole thing.

"...and the man of sin shall be revealed—the son of perdition" (v 3). He's going to be revealed! There's going to be no doubt about it!

The Tribulation cannot start until after the deadly wound is healed. There's going to be a time of great peace and prosperity leading up to it. How are you going to have *the day of the Christ present* if you don't have peace and it looks like the world is finally going to get along? *There's going to come that great peace!*

1-Thessalonians 5:1: "Now then, concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, there is no need that I write to you; for you yourselves understand perfectly that the Day of *the* Lord will come exactly as a thief *comes* by night. For **when they say, 'Peace and security,'** then sudden destruction will come upon them, as travail *comes* upon a woman who is with child..." (vs 1-3). There's going to be peace and prosperity. Watch the economic reports. What do they say? *Peace and prosperity!* How long

will it be? *I don't know!* But how about if we end up with so many year after year of peace and prosperity, that it's going to seem like, yes, they're really right.

The apostasy is much bigger. All the religions together, it's going to be humongous! This is going to be Satan's grand finale; it's going to be marvelous to be old. If you don't know the Truth, you're going to be deceived.

If there's going to be so much peace and happiness, why is the Tribulation going to come? *I'll see if I can answer that!*

The apostasy, all the world's religions functioning together, which will be under the *false prophet without a doubt*... By the way, the Catholics are already paving the way for this by accepting evolution. They've already said that men can, in these other religions, have a part of Christ, so they can be led to salvation. Things are being twisted and turned so much so that it's amazing!

Here's the man of sin, the son of perdition, meaning a particular person. Who is the only other one in Scripture called 'the son perdition'? *Judas Iscariot!* He betrayed and resisted Christ. He was possessed by Satan the devil.

Notice what he's going to do, and a time when he's going to do this. Let's put this together, and some thoughts into it, to suppose to bring it together, but I think you will see how it possibly can be that way.

2-Thessalonians 2:4: "The one who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God..." Greater than any other god that has ever been; greater than **GOD!** (Isa. 14) It was Lucifer who said, 'I will ascend into the heights and I will become like the Most High.'

"...or that is an object of worship..." (v 4). That's why they're going to make an image **for the beast**. They'll now have a new one.

"...so that he... [as God] ...comes into the temple of God and sits down as God, proclaiming that he himself is God" (v 4). How is he going to get into the temple of God?

What temple was Paul referring to? *The one in Jerusalem, because the temple at that time had not been destroyed!* There will be another temple built in Jerusalem. They already have many of the artifacts made. They have the uniforms and the Urim and Thummim made. They have the lots for the goats of Azazel. They are looking for the red heifer so they can have the ashes to clean it. The Temple Mount Institute is all ready to go with it, but it's not God's time to do so. That will come! And there will

be a temple that will be built! They will offer animal sacrifices! When the temple is built, that's when the Jewish messiah is to come. Every prophecy of Judaism says that when they rebuild the temple, 'the messiah will come.' All of the 'stupid Christians' say, 'Well, isn't that wonderful, they're waiting for Christ.'

No they're not! They're looking for a man! They're looking for a human messiah! They're not waiting for Christ; they hate Christ.

Let's look at the 'messiah competition' for just a minute. Let's see something in Dan. 11. I have to put a little 'what if' in here, but I think it will make sense. Let's see what's going to happen at the end-time.

I want you to imagine what's going to happen with say three years of offering sacrifices, pilgrimages by many people in the world coming to Jerusalem to offer sacrifices. The spread of Judaism will spread like wildfire. What is that going to do for the Catholics? *It's going to dawn on them, because there's great hostility between them!*

Let's suppose there's a Jewish messiah in Jerusalem. Now creating all kinds of problems.

Daniel 11:40: "And at the time of the end, the King of the South shall push at him. And the King of the North shall come against him like a whirlwind..." I'm sure this is coming out of Europe. The King of the North, I believe, will be the Catholic messiah. A messiah is always king.

"...with chariots and with horsemen and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries and shall overflow and sweep through. He shall also enter into the glorious land..." (vs 40-41).

- What is he going to do in the "...glorious land..."?
- What is he going to do in Jerusalem?
- *He's going to come and get rid of the messiah!*
- How is he going to prove that he's 'God' and the Jewish messiah is not 'God'?
- *He's going to kill him and then enter into the temple and say that he is 'God.'*

'Obviously, I have to be 'God' because I killed the Jewish messiah.' Whoa! Now then, the 'suicide squads' go after *the beast*. In this case, the Jewish messiah is not resurrected.

The Jewish 'suicide squad' goes after *the beast* and they wound him unto death. When that happens, guess how he's going to come when he comes back to life. Let's see what happens. This is going to be something! We need to get the two

witnesses in the mix, too. I'm sure that the two witnesses are going to witness even against the Jewish messiah.

Revelation 13:5—after the deadly wound was healed: "And a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies was given to him ..." That's exactly what the man of sin, the son of perdition, does when he goes into the temple. He's saying that he is God. There can't be any more blasphemous statement than a Satan-possessed man claiming he is God.

"...and authority was given to him to continue *for forty-two months*" (v 5)—after what? *After the deadly wound was healed!* This is the beginning of the Tribulation, right here!

Daniel 12:1: "And at that time Michael shall stand up, the great prince who stands for the children of your people. And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even until that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered—every one who shall be found written in the book." There's going to be the Great Tribulation.

Revelation 6:1—the second seal; notice the same identical parallel that I just covered: "And I looked when the Lamb opened one of the seals; and I heard..." Who is going to make these things occur? *Christ is! No man! No misinterpretation of prophecy! Christ is going to do it!*

Notice what comes first, "...one of the four living creatures say, like the sound of thunder, 'Come and see.' And I looked, and behold, *there was a white horse...* [a counterfeit Christ] ...and the one who was sitting on it had a bow, and a crown was given to him; and he went out conquering, and to conquer. And when He opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, 'Come and see.' And another horse went out *that was red*; and *power* was given to the one sitting on it to take peace from the earth..." (vs 1-4).

Remember? *Peace, peace, then sudden destruction!* The beast comes back to life and there is 43 months of...

"...and *to cause* them to kill one another; and a great sword was given to him. And when He opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, 'Come and see.' And I looked, and behold, *there was a black horse...*" (vs 4-5)—famine and death with plagues and things that come right on the heels of war.

Then who are they going to blame? *All the Christians who never went along with the system and received the mark of the beast!* They are the enemies that are causing all of this and must be

executed. That's when the martyrdom of the saints occurs.

Revelation 13:6: "And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, and His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven. And he was given *power* to make war against the saints and to overcome them..." (vs 6-7). That means WAR! A physical war to overcome them.

"...and he was given authority over every tribe and language and nation" (v 7). When is he given this exclusive dictatorial authority over the whole earth?

- after he's revealed
- after he receives the deadly wound—which is healed
- after he sits in the temple of God and says, 'I am God!'

Then all the nations come and give all their power and authority to *the beast!*

Verse 8: "And all who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from *the foundation of the world*. **If anyone has an ear, let him hear**" (vs 8-9).

- hear the events
- hear the Word of God

I think it's interesting that wherever you go in the New Testament where it says, 'He who has an ear let him hear' God has some pretty powerful messages.

Who are the saints? *The only ones who have the Holy Spirit!* There will be no such thing as a 'professing Christian' as we know it today. All the Protestant churches are going to change and conform. All of the Catholics are going to change and conform. We are talking about a tremendous 'religious' revolution that is coming, the likes of which I don't think we are even prepared to understand; though we do understand a little bit of it.

When we read *The Shofar* from Bethel Temple, the Jewish community center in Santa Cruz, California, here is a rabbi who comes back and says, 'What I have learned from Buddhism and how to save Buddhism.' He learned it from going to be a Buddhist! I don't think we understand how far these 'religions' are going to go to come together.

Remember the Catholics that are working with the Buddhists. This is going to be awesome stuff! Huge! If Satan makes war against the saints, should the saints fight back? *There's a message!* That's why God says, 'He who has an ear let him hear.' What did Jesus say that you are to do to your

enemy? *Love your enemy!* What did Jesus do when He was taken? *He didn't resist!* He was killed! We are, however, to give a witness to them, which will hasten our death!

I don't think God is going to put a lot of seniors through this, because they won't have the strength to do it. I think God is going to take a lot of them, tuck them safely in the grave, and then the rest of us who are alive are going to have to face this. Here's what's going to happen:

Matthew 10:17: "But beware of men..." This happened to the apostles immediately when they started preaching, and it's going to happen again. We're going to have a repeat of the first century, again.

"...for they will deliver you up to councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues; and you shall also be brought before governors and kings for My sake, for a witness to them and to the Gentiles" (vs 17-18). You tell them exactly a message from God.

Verse 19: "Now, when they deliver you up, do not be anxious *about* how or what you should speak; for in that hour it shall be given to you what you shall speak." That's why it's imperative to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Verse 20: "For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaks in... [or through] ...you." It's going to be a powerful testimony. This is going to be so awesome and great, and so satanic a thing that's going to come. Even the smallest, most insignificant saint who is hauled before one of these councils is going to give a dynamic and powerful witness, just exactly like Stephen did (Acts. 7). The Father *in us* is going to do it.

- Do you think He's going to give a little 'I'm ok, you're ok' thing? *No way!*
- How bad is it going to get?

Verse 21: "Then brother will deliver up brother to death; and *the* father, the child; and children will rise up against *their* parents and *have* them put to death. And you shall be hated by all for My name's sake..." (vs 21-22). Unless you understand how much they hate Christ...

"...but the one who endures to *the* end, that one shall be saved" (v 22). Then it talks about persecution. You're going to be chased around before you're delivered up, but eventually they will get you.

- Should we protect ourselves?

- What about those ‘professing Christians’ who have guns and weapons stashed away?
- Do you think you can kill someone in the name of Jesus Christ, even your enemy, and enter into the Kingdom of God?

Some may try!

Revelation 13:9: “If anyone has an ear, let him hear. If anyone gathers *into* captivity, he shall go into captivity.... [that’s going to happen] ...If **anyone kills with the sword**... [here is the endurance and faith of the saints]; ...**he must be killed with the sword**. Here is the endurance and the faith of the saints” (vs 9-10). What does that mean? *It means they don’t do it!* You don’t threaten back! When Christ was reviled, reviled back not again. When He was threatened against, He did not threaten.

That’s what we are to do. We are to give a witness! That’s it; let God take care of the rest.

(go to the next track)

Let’s come to the second part of the story: *the false prophet!*

Verse 11: “And I saw **another beast** rising out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb...” A *horn* symbolizes a king or person; this has two horns.

Could this mean that while *the beast* is on the rise, there will be the first one who endorses him and then dies in office and another one comes on the scene? Is that what it means? *I don’t know!* Even the Catholics are in a quandary. Is there one or two more popes to come? They have a little spot in St. Peter’s Basilica where they have a picture of every pope. When he is put in office they put a little round picture in this blank space. The pope is buried in a red Santa Claus suit: red and black belt. While he lies in state, however, he has on his vestures.

Do you know how they verify that a pope is dead? *They have a special ceremonial hammer!* A small one. They don’t bludgeon his head in. Don’t misunderstand what I’m saying. They take this little hammer and they tap him on the forehead: ‘Are you in there?’ They do this three times, and with no answer they pronounce him dead.

I’ve often thought that this would be something if there are two popes who overlap the final beast power. One who assures the world that he’s a wonderful man and he is really the one from God. Then this pope dies and another one comes on the scene and he starts performing great and wonderful miracles. Maybe both of them perform miracles. But notice what he does:

“...but spoke like a dragon... [speaking Satan’s words] ...and he exercises all the authority of the first beast before him; and he causes the earth and those who dwell therein to worship the first beast...” (vs 11-12).

This has to happen at a time when the world is worshipping the first beast. But you have to, in writing put those in sequence, because you can’t crowd the words all together to make them fit in one. They cause them to.

“...to worship the first beast whose deadly wound was healed. and he exercises all the authority of the first beast before him; and he causes the earth and those who dwell therein... [in the sight of men that they can see it] ...to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by means of the wonders that were given to him to perform in the sight of the beast, saying to those who dwell on the earth (vs 12-14).

It deceives those on the earth by reason of these signs, miracles or wonders that it gives, and that it works in the presence of the first beast. This is going to be something!

What happened to some of Job’s possessions? *Fire came down from heaven and devoured it!* This is not going to be a high-tech virtual reality kind of thing. This is going to be the *real* thing.

“...that they should make an image for the beast, which had the wound by the sword, yet was alive” (v 14). That’s going to happen!

They are going to change the societal way of doing things at this time. This is when the *mark of the beast* is going to be put into effect. It will require choice to commit idolatry. Everyone is going to have to worship the image for the beast, which will probably be an image of the mother goddess; always has been! You won’t receive *the mark of the beast* unless you worship the image, or bow down to it.

Notice that it follows right after it. There’s going to be a special central image that’s going to be made. This second beast makes it come alive. It’s an idol, because image is from the Greek ‘icon,’ meaning *idol*. That’s going to be a real bona fide miracle. It’s not going to be a high-tech thing, I do not believe. Someone would come along and say, ‘That’s high-tech; we’ve proved it. We picked up the transmissions that made it move and speak.’ They’re going to make the thing really do it.

Verse 15: “And he was given power to give life to the image of the beast, **so that the image of**

the beast also could speak; and he causes everyone who will not worship the image of the beast to be killed. And he causes all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free and the bond, **to receive a mark...**" (vs 15-16).

The beast was not, yet, is—that is healed—is going to give a mark "...in their right hands, or in their foreheads" (v 16). It's not going to be a thumb-print or an eye-print—God put those there. It's going to be *put upon!*

Verse 17: "So that no one may have the ability to buy and sell unless he has the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name." It's going to be an airtight system. There's going to have to be idolatry first.

Verses 7 & 17 should be in parallel, if you put them together properly. That's correct because that's when it will take place. It's not one of these things that all of a sudden, in the dark of night, that they change the economic system and now you must have this card. That is all leading to it. It's identifying the system.

Verse 18: "Here is wisdom. Let the one who has understanding count the number of the beast; for it is a man's number, and his number is 666."

- Who is going to understand?
- When are we going to understand this?
- How are we going to understand it?

I submit that every thing, in the past, of trying to understand who the beast and what 666 really is and how it's going to come about has been a failure. The "...one who has understanding..." let him "...count the number of the beast..." Who is going to understand?

Daniel 12:8: "And I heard, but I did not understand. Then I said, 'O my lord, what shall be the end of these things?' And he said, 'Go your way, Daniel, for the words *are* closed up and sealed until the time of the end'" (vs 8-9). Who is going to open the seals? *Christ!* That's Who is going to open.

Verse 10: "Many shall be purified, and made white and refined. But the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand, **but the wise shall understand.**" When will we understand? *When God is ready and the time is right, He will make it known!* Two hundred years ago it couldn't be known because it wasn't the time. The man of sin, the son of perdition, must have come first, **before** we can understand the number of his name. He shall be revealed. God always has a few surprises in store.

2-Thessalonians 2:5: "Do you not remember that when I was still with you, I told you these things?" Paul understood it by *event*. That's how we are to understand it.

Verse 6: "And now you understand what is holding *him* back in order... [those events must come first **before** he goes into the temple of God] ...for him to be revealed in his own set time." There is a particular time when *the man of sin* is going to be revealed. God is going to make it known, and then we are going to have to preach it.

Verse 7: "For the mystery of lawlessness is already working..."—already working back then. How many people know that Judaism has wanted to set up a one-world religion headquartered in Jerusalem?

Let me tell you a little bit about the Bar Kokhba Revolution: The city of the Jerusalem was destroyed and virtually the face of the earth was scraped, the temple was demolished and all the Jews vanished from Jerusalem. If you were a Jew sitting out here in the hinterland, what could you look to in the Scriptures that would kind of give you a sign that maybe you would be coming back?

How long was the Babylonian captivity? *70 years!* 70_{A.D.} plus 70 years is 140_{A.D.} Some of the Jews were starting to come back in preparation for the 140_{A.D.} event, but the Emperor Hadrian of the Roman Empire banished all Jews from even entering from 130_{A.D.} They couldn't get there, so then Bar Kokhba with Rabbi Akiva—an Edomite—said that Bar Kokhba was the 'messiah' and he was going to recapture Jerusalem and rebuild the temple and usher in the Kingdom of God on earth.

They came against the Romans very swiftly and it looked like they were going to succeed. They even came up and it looked like they were going to take Jerusalem. Then the Roman Empire—because it was not time—sent troops in and killed, slaughtered, destroyed, and to this day the Jews view this as one of the worst setbacks they have ever experienced, which is true.

The remnant of the army escaped to what is called Masada, a fortress way up on the cliffs. The mountains are just straight up and it's very difficult to get up there and never conquered. The Romans were determined to get rid of every Jew that was up there. Hollywood made a movie of this and they showed how the Roman army spent two years building their causeways so they could get up to the top of Masada. They finally did it, but the Jews said they were going to deprive the Romans of their victory: 'We're all going to commit suicide. They drew lots as to who would make sure that everyone

was dead. I think a woman and a couple children lived and got away.

Every officer of the Israeli army must go to Masada and go through a special ritual and vow to never let the Holy Land to be taken out of the hands of the Jews again. We're talking about some pretty heady stuff that's going to happen. ***This man of sin must be revealed in his time!***

"...only *there is* one Who is restraining at the present *time* until it arises out of *the midst*" (v 7). Whoever this beast is going to be is going to come out the midst of the mystery Babylonian system.

Verse 8: "And then the lawless one will be revealed... [it's going to be known; God will reveal it] ...whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth, and will destroy with the brightness of His coming); *even* the one whose coming is according to *the* inner working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders" (vs 8-9).

This is going to be awesome! We're talking about a jaded, cynical generation. It's going to take something to really move them.

Verse 10: "And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness... [every trick in the book, every lie and twisting of Scripture and everything] ...in those who are perishing... [Why?]: ...**because they did not receive the love of the Truth, so that they might be saved.**"

That's a real key, "...the love of the Truth..." That's something that we always need to have.

- the love of the Truth—God's Word
- the love of the Truth—Jesus Christ

Jesus said, 'I am the Way, the Truth and the Life.'

Verse 11: "And for this cause, God will send upon them a powerful deception... [working in their mind] ...that will cause them to believe *the lie*"—that *that man* is God on earth.

Verse 12: "So that all may be judged who did not believe the Truth, but who took pleasure in unrighteousness." That may include some brethren that *we thought* were brethren. I pray that whomever can repent will repent. I don't want to try and preach any of the brethren into eternal death. I pray they all repent.

God is going to give His witness, and it's going to be a powerful witness. It is going to be something! I believe that the two witnesses are going to be the high priest of the coming temple, and the governor of Judea at that time—maybe a past governor of Judea. Their conversion is going to be

just like the Apostle Paul's conversion—BAM!

Remember how Paul was called right in the middle of going out with the authority of the high priest to arrest, imprison and bring back to torture and kill Christians. God took care of him, and it's going to be the same way with the two witnesses. Notice what they're going to do:

Revelation 11:1: "Then *the angel* gave me a measuring rod like a staff, saying, 'Arise and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and those who worship in it.'" There's going to be the temple that is built. They have discovered that the Mosque of Omar does not sit where the altar of burnt offerings was. It is to the south, so there is room to build the temple, a small one. It's not going to be like the Temple Institute wants. They want to get rid of the Mosque of Omar and make a grand, huge and big temple like Rabbi Solomon wants.

In the area of the Temple Mount there is a tunnel underneath, and the Jews temporarily closed it down and Netanyahu opened it up. They say that's as close as they can get to worship. That's why Jesus said to the woman at the well:

She said, 'You said that Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.' Jesus said to her, 'Verily, verily, I say to you that the hour is coming and now is that you shall neither worship in this mountain—Samaria—nor yet in Jerusalem. For the Father seeks those who worship Him in Spirit and in Truth. For God is Spirit and those who worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and in Truth.'

The little room that they have under there has nothing to do with God. But the Jews feel that they must physically get there. That's why the deception is going to come. There will be eventually be a compromise. The Jews will understand that they can't get rid of the Mosque of Omar and the Arabs will understand that they can't get rid of the Jews, and they would have greater peace if they allowed them to build a small temple next to it. After all the Arabs would also benefit from it. There will be a temple.

Verse 2: "But leave out the court that *is* within the temple *area*, and do not measure it because it has been given *up* to the Gentiles; and they shall trample upon the Holy city *for* forty-two months. And I will give *power* to My two witnesses... [converted instantly and given that power] ...and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred *and* sixty days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees... [see Zech. 3-4] ...and *the* two lampstands that stand before the God of the earth" (vs 2-4). There is going to be no one greater

in power on the earth than those two!

Notice what they're going to do, I believe, that they come on the scene just before the stopping of the sacrifices. They're going to be witnessing, first of all to the Jews. They're probably going to say to the Jews that 'this man is not the messiah,' referring to *their physical messiah*. They're going to witness for God.

Verse 5: "And if anyone attempts to harm them, fire will go out of their mouths and devour their enemies.... [this is awesome stuff] ...For if anyone attempts to harm them, he must be killed in this manner. These have authority to shut heaven so that no rain may fall in *the* days of their prophecy; and **they have authority over the waters, to turn them into blood, and to smite the earth with every plague, as often as they will**" (vs 5-6).

Can you see the intense battle that is going to happen here? I imagine that the King of the North is going to come against the King of the South, go into the Holy Land and kill the Jewish messiah and then he's going to try and do something to the two witnesses. He's not going to be able to lay a hand on them.

Verse 7: "And when they have completed their testimony, the beast who ascends out of the abyss will make war against them, and will overcome them, and will kill them. And their bodies *will lie* in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified" (vs 7-8)—right there in Jerusalem. These are events that are just mind-boggling!

Verse 9: "Then those of the peoples and tribes and languages and nations shall see their bodies three and a half days, for they will not allow their bodies to be put into tombs. And **those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them, and will make merry**... [finally, we've gotten rid of them after all this time] ...and will send gifts to one another, because these two prophets had tormented those who dwell on the earth" (vs 9-10).

They're going to have a heyday for three and a-half days, v 11: Then after the three and a half days, *the* spirit of life from God entered into them and they stood on their feet; and great fear fell upon those who were watching them. And they heard a great voice from heaven, say, 'Come up here!' And they ascended into heaven in a cloud; and their enemies saw them *rise*. And in that hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell; and seven thousand men were killed in the earthquake. And the rest were filled with fear, and gave glory to

the God of heaven" (vs 11-13).

We have literally here *the last shall be first!* That's something! ***None of these events are going to take place until the man of sin, the son of perdition, is revealed.*** It hasn't come, yet. You can take all of these prophecies that men write, you can read them, you can understand where they're wrong. They are misapplying Scriptures to make it fit their scenario.

There's one man who said that in 1997_[corrected] the Great Tribulation would begin. It didn't happen, because the man of sin, the son of perdition was not revealed. We thought at one time that it was going to 1972. There was a man who wrote *88 Reasons Why Christ is Going to Return in 1988*. It didn't happen! He wrote a sequel: *89 Reasons Why Christ is Going to Return in 1989*. It didn't happen! After that he gave up.

No man is going to schedule God's plan; He's going to do it! The beast will be revealed before he goes to sit in the temple. The great apostasy will happen first—the one-world religion.

2-Thessalonians 2:13: Now, we are duty-bound to give thanks to God always concerning you, brethren, who are beloved by *the* Lord, because God from *the* beginning has called you unto salvation through sanctification of *the* Spirit and belief of *the* Truth unto which He called you by our Gospel to *the* obtaining of *the* glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. So then, brethren, stand firm, and hold fast the ordinances... [teachings] ...that you were taught, whether by word or by our epistle. Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God—even our Father, Who loved us and gave *us* eternal encouragement and good hope through grace. Encourage your hearts and establish you in every good word and work" (vs 13-17).

May He do that with us, that we are not the children of darkness, but the children of light!

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) 2 Thessalonians 2:1-2
- 2) Matthew 24:23-26
- 3) 2 Thessalonians 2:2-3
- 4) Revelation 13:1-3-4
- 5) 2 Thessalonians 2:3
- 6) 1 Thessalonians 5:1-4
- 7) Daniel 11:40-41
- 8) Revelation 13:5
- 9) Daniel 12:1

- 10) Revelation 6:1-5
- 11) Revelation 13:6-9
- 12) Matthew 10:17-22
- 13) Revelation 13:9-18
- 14) Daniel 12:8-10
- 15) 2 Thessalonians 2:5-12
- 16) Revelation 11:1-13
- 17) 2 Thessalonians 2:13-17

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Daniel 7
- Isaiah 14
- Acts 7
- Zechariah 3; 4

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