

1 And he stood on the sand of the seashore.

And I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns were ten diadems, and on his heads were blasphemous names. 2 And the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and his feet were like those of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. And the dragon gave him his power and his throne and great authority. 3 And I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed. And the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast; 4 and they worshiped the dragon, because he gave his authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?" 5 And there was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies; and authority to act for forty-two months was given to him. 6 And he opened his mouth in blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle, that is, those who dwell in heaven. 7 And it was given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them; and authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given to him. 8 And all who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain. 9 If anyone has an ear, let him hear. 10 If anyone is destined for captivity, to captivity he goes; if anyone kills with the sword, with the sword he must be killed. Here is the perseverance and the faith of the saints.

11 And I saw another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spoke as a dragon. 12 And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence. And he makes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose fatal wound was healed. 13 And he performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down out of heaven to the earth in the presence of men. 14 And he deceives those who dwell on the earth because of the signs which it was given him to perform in the presence of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who had the wound of the sword and has come to life. 15 And there was given to him to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast might even speak and cause as many as do not worship the image of the beast to be killed. 16 And he causes all, the small and the great,

and the rich and the poor, and the free men and the slaves, to be given a mark on their right hand, or on their forehead, 17 and he provides that no one should be able to buy or to sell, except the one who has the mark, either the name of the beast or the number of his name. 18 Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for the number is that of a man; and his number is six hundred and sixty-six.

We've said that Chapters 12 - 13 are about the tribulation from Satan's point of view.

Remember that Satan and his host have been cast out of heaven, cast down to earth, and his time is very short. 3 1/2 years.

Well, he's got a problem. Nobody on earth can see him. He's a spirit being. He wants the whole universe to worship him. Not doing too well. All he's got left of the universe is earth, and nobody here can see him.

So, what we'll see in chapter 13 is Satan sets up a satanic copy of the Trinity . . on earth. Satan. The beast. The false prophet.

Think about this though. God is omni-present. Satan can only be one place at one time. The real Holy Spirit can inhabit every christian, and does, all at the same time. Satan can't counterfeit that, at all. He needs a network.

Something to tie all that are *his* together somehow. I think we'll see that near the end of Chapter 13. The image. Electronic? Satan has had a steady role in the electronic leaps we've seen since the 1960's. Xerox?? Just saying . . .

He and his host can enter into humans and use their personalities and bodies to accomplish his ends. And his end is to have the whole world worship him. How will he do that? Fascinating stuff!

This is nothing new. The prophets have been talking about this event for centuries . . in detail! And the church fathers talked about this. When Paul said to the Ephesian elders I did not fail to declare unto you the full council of God, this doctrine of the 'man of lawlessness' was included in that catalog.

Yet in our time, most christians are either ignorant, or confused about this. It was doctrine 101 in the early church, now it's doctrine for the dusty shelf because it might cause an argument. How did that happen.

First of all, let me say, Satan is thrilled that it did, and in fact has had much to do with getting us where we're at right now.

Now, I'm not a trained theologian, so I'm out on a limb, in over my head etc, to mix my metaphor's. I'm no expert, but let me give you a quick seat of the pants history of how the church got to the point where we're at.

If we were, say, 30,000 strong at a Billy Graham conference of different denominational evangelicals and did a survey that went something like this;

Have you ever heard of or been taught anything about the anti-christ?

What about the rapture? OK, what about the jews and any significance their presence in the world may have?

Hmmm, ok what about a physical return of Jesus and a millennial reign on earth of a thousand years?

What you would find is blank looks on perhaps 90% of the faces of the folks who claim to constitute "the church". Then of the 10% that did have answers you'd be all over the map.

Most of the church that does pay any attention to "doctrine" is what we call A-millennial. That A in front of a word cancels out the word. A-theist. No God. A-millennial. No millenium.

Satan is pleased!

Do a careful study, and you'll find that the old testament prophets are not a-millennial. Jesus is not a-millennial. The apostles are not a-millennial! The early

church fathers are not a-millennial . . until about 400 AD or so, beginning with Augustine.

Augustine is one of the earliest fathers that replaced the Jews with the church. Replacement theology. God abandon's his people the Jews and the church gets all of the promises.

And since much of end time prophecy, all of it really, is about Israel, and the church has jettisoned Israel, prophecy gets hopelessly muddled. You have to spiritualize most of it away. It becomes meaningless if it's not the story of God dealing with His nation Israel.

The millennial kingdom is lost. All of the promises of God reigning with His people on earth, lost. It's just a hopeless muddle of confusion. Allegorize it to mean anything you want!

After 15 centuries of that kind of confusion, prophecy has become the butt of jokes in so-called Christendom.

And all of the heroes of the reformation that rescued soteriology, ok, so-ter-i-ology. I think Christians are smart enough to learn a few big words. Soteriology is the study of salvation. The reformers, Luther, Calvin, Tyndale, and the puritan generation that followed, rescued real salvation doctrines of grace alone by faith alone with the authority of scripture alone for the glory of God alone by the completed work of Christ alone.

They did that for us! And they are my heroes! But that's where they stopped. All of the reformers and all of the Puritans including fairly modern heroes like Jonathan Edwards did not rescue eschatology from its muddle.

And now, with so-called reformed theology on the rise, and don't get me wrong, I consider myself a complete 5 point Calvinist, I'm comfortable with all the points, but I think we've got a bit of reformer worship going on.

If the only reason to jettison a clear literal approach to eschatology is because

that isn't what your heroes believed, Calvin wouldn't have taught it that way, Edwards didn't understand it that way, if that's all you've got . . then you need to get over your reformer hero worship and get back in line with the apostles and the first century church fathers, and Jesus. None of them were a-millennial.

All of that to say, I believe that's why most of the church has no concept of a 7 year post rapture return to God's timeclock of jewish history. No concept of a literal 7 year tribulation period ~ 3 1/2 year GREAT tribulation period immersed in Satanic influence and worship of a false trinity.

The christians at Thessalonica could give you a 5 point overview of anti-christ. The christians at Los Angeles, and the rest of the USA, not so much.

So here we go. I want you to know about anti-christ!

1Jn. 2:18 *Dear children, this is the last hour; and as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come. This is how we know it is the last hour.*

1Jn. 4:3 *and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world.*

The *spirit* of anti-christ. Let me show you who John the apostle is talking about. This is a wide category;

Luke 19:14 *But his citizens hated him and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We do not want this man to reign over us.'*

If ever there was a world who did not want anything what-so-ever to do with Jesus, it is this one. *'We do not want this man to reign over us.'*

We've invented a ridiculous make believe story about origins. Evolution. *"The whole universe was in a hot dense state when nearly 14 billion years ago...etc!"* The whole what? What? Oh, where'd the universe come from?

It's just ridiculous, and any thinking person should realize that, except, at this point, we'll believe ***anything*** in order to not have Jesus reigning over us.

Satan, who *deceives the whole world* Rev 12:9 And the whole world already has the spirit of anti-christ. They hate Jesus. They hate God. They hate any authority over their sinfulness. They hate it!

But beyond that concept, there is one person who embody's this hatred, who is ***the*** anti-christ, who the world is going to embrace! He's going to be a perfect fit . . with the world . . who hates God, and Jesus. They're going to adore him. A better word . . . worship.

God gives him free reign on earth for 3 1/2 years.

Let's look at some of the old testament references in Daniel that Paul and James and Peter would have been teaching from, and then we'll get busy in Chapter 13.

I'm going to be reading first in Daniel 7, starting with vs 19. You can go back and read the whole chapter later if you want but it's about 4 diverse beasts that represent the 4 kingdoms starting with the one present when Daniel writes. Babylon, Medo Persia, Greece, and Rome. And as usual, the fourth morphs into 2 parts, that we now know has a 2,000 year parenthesis in the middle which is the church.

19“*Then I desired to know the exact meaning of the fourth beast, which was different from all the others, exceedingly dreadful, with its teeth of iron and its claws of bronze, and which devoured, crushed and trampled down the remainder with its feet, 20and the meaning of the ten horns that were on its head and the other horn which came up, and before which three of them fell, namely, that horn which had eyes and a mouth uttering great boasts and which was larger in appearance than its associates. 21“I kept looking, and that horn was waging war with the saints and overpowering them 22until the Ancient of Days came and judgment was passed in favor of the saints of the Highest One, and the time arrived when the saints took possession of the*

kingdom.

23 "Thus he said: 'The fourth beast will be a fourth kingdom on the earth, which will be different from all the other kingdoms and will devour the whole earth and tread it down and crush it. 24 'As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings will arise; and another will arise after them, and he will be different from the previous ones and will subdue three kings. 25 'He will speak out against the Most High and wear down the saints of the Highest One, and he will intend to make alterations in times and in law; and they will be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time. 26 'But the court will sit for judgment, and his dominion will be taken away, annihilated and destroyed forever. 27 'Then the sovereignty, the dominion and the greatness of all the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to the people of the saints of the Highest One; His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all the dominions will serve and obey Him.'

10 kings;

10 nation confederacy. New europe. G8 but it's 10 then. 10 world zones that encompass all of the territory of the old Roman empire, including eastern europe, arab nations, North Africa nations and Israel.

I don't think this will be as "western" as most of the modern eschatological teachers thought during the last 40 years. Rome gobbled up the whole earth. I believe these 10 whatever they are's encompass, the whole earth.

another, different;

This horn is set apart from all the other horns. Different. Why? He has all the power of Satan at his resource. And, he just is. He's immediately SuperStar horn. The world will perceive him that way. You look accross the sea of heads and this guy stands head and shoulders above all the others.

overthrows 3 of the kings;

Did they oppose his worldwide take-over? Probably a best guess. He crushes them and takes over. The other 7 defer!

Blasphemes God;

This is his most obvious and always seen trait. He has a big mouth. Huge. And that mouth says every kind of foul blasphemy against the God of everyone else's fathers who he wants to replace. Part of his method to set himself up as god is to blaspheme the real God of history. The judeo christian God must go.

overpowers, murders, wears down the saints;

The real saints will oppose him and his blasphemy. And in return he'll crush them. All day long. He wears down the saints like a lawn mower wears down the tall grass. He'll be seeking them out with such pressure that your family members will rat you out to him to save their very lives.

alters time and law;

This one fascinates me. I've got a pretty vivid imagination. Let me throw out what I think this may mean. What year is it? 2013 year of our Lord. Ouch. That's gotta go. What day do we worship that Lord? 1st day of the week. Sunday. the Lord's day. That's gotta go too.

My guess is as good as anybody's but I would not be surprised if this new god doesn't start all the calendars over with a 6 day week. Maybe a year will be 666 days. Just throwin' that out.

My guess is that he will seek to blot all remembrance of the God of God's, the God of our fathers, by changing the calendar and starting over, with the year of our new lord. 6 day weeks. 66 day months. 666 day years. Starting NOW, by his decree.

Perhaps that's why this time period is stated so many different ways. Time times and half a time. Oops, he's powerless to do anything about the 4 seasons, even if he changes the calendar. 42 months. That one is easily confused. It already is. Those were 30 day months in a 360 day year when that was written.

1260 days. Not much he can do with that. God has decreed the days to begin at sunup and end at next sunup. Change what you want, 1260 days is 1260

days, until God steps in and turns the lights out.

Take my guess and \$3.60 cents and get a Starbucks.

kingdom judged and removed;

When his time is up . . God will step in and remove his kingdom from him.

I love Isaiah 14. So great is his fall that the speaker in that passage is scratching his head and saying; "really?" "REALLY?" Him? as if he's reduced to less than nothing . . which he is.

Isa. 14:15 *“Nevertheless you will be thrust down to Sheol,
To the recesses of the pit.*

16 *“Those who see you will gaze at you,
They will ponder over you, saying,
‘Is this the man who made the earth tremble,
Who shook kingdoms,*

17 *Who made the world like a wilderness
And overthrew its cities,
Who did not allow his prisoners to go home?’*

given to people of the saints of the most High;

The authority to reign is taken away from Satan and the Anti-Christ, and given to who? Who? That's us folks. We are going to reign WITH Jesus, and His reign is...

His Kingdom is forever.
forever and ever.

IN Daniel 8 we want to look at 3 verses;

23 *“In the latter period of their rule,
When the transgressors have run their course,*

*A king will arise,
Insolent and skilled in intrigue.*

24 *“His power will be mighty, but not by his own power,
And he will destroy to an extraordinary degree
And prosper and perform his will;
He will destroy mighty men and the holy people.*

25 *“And through his shrewdness
He will cause deceit to succeed by his influence;
And he will magnify himself in his heart,
And he will destroy many while they are at ease.
He will even oppose the Prince of princes,
But he will be broken without human agency.*

Insolent and skilled in intrigue;

He is fierce. The hebrew word translated insolent is the word for a face of a man that is fierce. Skilled in intrigue. Easy. He's a spectacular liar. A politician, but more spectacular even than the ones we're used to.

His power will be mighty, but not by his own power;

He has awesome authority . . given to him . . by Satan.

Until that connection happens, this could be anybody. Nobody looked at Judas Iscariot and thought much about him . . until satan entered into him.

We like to look around us and guess who this might be. And we're looking at people who have religious and political power that we think portray some of these personality traits, but we forget that this person could be anyone from anywhere or no one from no where until Satan enters in, then he rises immediately up to be this person

he prospers, he gets what he wants, and he destroys, wonderfully...;
Daniel 11 calls him the 'willful king'. He conquers. He destroys. He overcomes. The whole world falls in line. He doesn't just destroy the saints, he crushes mighty men. Anyone that gets in his way is crushed.

And through his shrewdness

He will cause deceit to succeed by his influence;

How does he do it? Paul helps us here I think.

2Thess. 2:1 Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, 2that you not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. 3Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, 4who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God. 5Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things? 6And you know what restrains him now, so that in his time he will be revealed. 7For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way. 8Then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming; 9that is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, 10and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. 11For this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false, 12in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness.

There's 2 things listed there that work together for this deception to be mortal.

Do you see them. Power and signs and false wonders in accord with the activity of Satan. People are going to believe because of miracles and wonders.

And more devastating, as if that weren't enough, God is going to send a deluding influence so that people will believe what is false.

They hated the truth. They did not want Jesus to reign over them. They get their way. God sees to it.

This man is going to deceive the whole world with his miracles and signs and wonders.

Isn't it pitiful that Jesus came with real signs and real wonders, and the whole world looked on, and no one believed. Few. Now Satan gives this guy false signs and false miracles and the world can't get enough of it. Ouch.

Back to Daniel 8:25; *And he will magnify himself in his heart,
And he will destroy many while they are at ease.*

He gets puffed up. He thinks he IS god.

Then look at that phrase *at ease*.

I don't know why I got interested and read again the account of the Saint Francis dam that William Mullholland built in San Francisquito canyon above Saugus. My old stompin' grounds.

Built in 1924 - 26 it held 38,000 acre feet of water. On March 12 1928 2 minutes before midnight, it burst. All of the water was out in less than an hour. A wall of water started sweeping away everything in it's path. Before it reached the sea, 55 miles away, about 600 people, people who were "at ease", most of them asleep in their beds, were engulfed in a wall of water, and their lives were over.

That's how God's judgement hits people. At ease. business as usual. Nothing to worry about. Or, as paul says, *While they are saying, "Peace and safety!" then destruction will come upon them suddenly like labor pains upon a woman with child, and they will not escape.*

He will even oppose the Prince of princes,

But he will be broken without human agency

Daniel has foretold history. This phrase hearkens back to his original explanation of the vision that king Nebuchadnezzar had;

44“In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and that kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever.45“Inasmuch as you saw that a stone was cut out of the mountain without hands and that it crushed the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver and the gold, the great God has made known to the king what will take place in the future; so the dream is true and its interpretation is trustworthy.”

Anti-christ will even oppose the Prince of princes. But the stone cut out without hands will crush him. *But he will be broken without human agency*

8Then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming;

Well, I never dreamed I'd have so much to say about anti-christ. But this is a fascinating topic. Next week we'll look at a couple more pieces to the puzzle in Daniel and get into Revelation 13 where we're supposed to be.