

- The Beast Out of the Bottomless Pit (Rev 11:7,10, 13:1,7, 17:8, Isa 57:20)

#1. Antichrist, Whereof Ye Have Heard (1John 4:3, 2Thes 2:1-4)

- The Man of Sin Is Revealed (Isa 14:11-17)

- The Great Apostasy (Dan 7:8,25, 8:23-24, 11:31,36)

#2. Many Antichrists (2Tim 2:26, 1John 2:18,22, 4:3, Rev 21:8)

- But Many Manifestations of Antichrist (2John 7, Mat 24:24, Phil 2:13, 2Thes 2:4)

#3. Amazing Grace (Mat 24:24,31, 2Cor 5:7, 1Thes 4:17)

Please open your Bibles to the Revelation of Jesus Christ, Rev 11:7 (2X). The two witnesses are not mentioned anywhere in the Bible other than in Rev 11. But before we leave the two witnesses I would like to clarify one thing that we came across in Rev 11:7. There we saw the beast that comes out of the Bottomless Pit and since this beast needed no introduction we understood that this is Antichrist, who shall make war with the saints and shall overcome them. The question that comes up repeatedly is this: **Who Is Antichrist?** In this present sermon I would like to give you a fairly complete picture of who Antichrist really is, although in this topic there are more verses than I can fit into a 50 minute sermon. And thus the title of this sermon is: **Who Is Antichrist?** Let us begin here in Rev 11:7,

- **The Beast Out of the Bottomless Pit** (Rev 11:7,10, 13:1,7, 17:8, Isa 57:20)

Re 11:7 And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.

And now drop down to verse 10, Rev 11:10,

Re 11:10 And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth.

Not only do we see the beast that ascends out of the Bottomless Pit, but we also see the nations of the world pitted against the two witnesses. The nations of the world would rather be associated with the beast than with the two witnesses of Christ. And if you think this is strange, just think of the present attitude of people in the world today toward Christ and the Christian religion. They will use the name of Christ as a curse, but they will not use the name of Buddha, or Shinto, or Mohammed, as a curse word. In schools they teach children about the gods of Greek mythology, or the gods of German mythology, or the gods of the Indians, and so on. In National Geographic Magazine people are taught about the gods of the Egyptians, or the gods of the Incas, or the gods of the Aztecs, and so on, but nothing about the God who created the universe out of nothing, and nothing about the many artifacts that have been found that confirm the historicity of the Bible. The prevailing attitude in this country is that discussions about Christ or the Bible are shunned, but discussions about other gods are interesting. The beast that ascends out of the Bottomless Pit here in Rev 11:7 is the same beast that comes up out of the sea in Rev 13:1. Please turn to Rev 13:1 (2X). And there we read,

Re 13:1 ¶ And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.

And now drop down to verse 7, Rev 13:7,

Re 13:7 And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.

So we see that this is the same beast that shall make war with the two witnesses, he shall make war with the saints, and shall overcome them. This beast is described as having come out of the sea, but in Rev 17:8 he is described as having come out of the Bottomless Pit. Please turn to Rev 17:8, (2X)

Re 17:8 The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.

And since we know that the Bottomless Pit is this world of unsaved mankind, the only way the sea and the Bottomless Pit are identical is if the sea in Rev 13:1 is not the literal sea, but is the sea of unsaved mankind, as we find it in Isa 57:20, where we read, "But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt." And thus we realize that the beast with seven heads and ten horns, which appears only in the prophecy of Revelation, is the Antichrist who shall rise up out of the world of unsaved mankind. Please turn about 30 p. (→) to the Epistle of 1 John 4:3 (2X).

#1. Antichrist, Whereof Ye Have Heard (1John 4:3, 2Thes 2:1-4)

When the Apostle John speaks of Antichrist, he also does not give his hearers any introduction. It is as if they have heard it all several times before. Where have they heard it before? They heard it from the Apostle Paul, in 2Thes 2, and they have heard it from Dan 7 and 8. We read in 1John 4:3,
1Jo 4:3 And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that *spirit* of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

The anti-Christian heresy that John warns us of is the Gnostic heresy. The Gnostics were a cult of intellectuals, those who knew it all. They were the liberals who proclaimed that Jesus Christ was not God incarnate in human flesh. Today the Gnostic heresy is voiced by those who question the Virgin Birth of the Lord Jesus Christ. They are the intellectuals and liberals of our days, who do not believe in miracles. They are deliberately taking away from the Word of God, for God says clearly that Christ was born of a virgin. John says, this is the spirit of Antichrist. On the other end of the spectrum we have those who claim to believe the whole Bible, but they also believe that God is still bringing divine messages today. They too are bringing a gospel that is a deadly heresy, for God says that we may not add to the words of the Book of this prophecy, neither may we take away from the words of the prophecy of this Book. "This is the spirit of Antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come." Please turn now about 40 p. to your left (→) to the 2nd Epistle to the Thessalonians, 2Thes 2:1 (2X). This 2nd letter to the church at Thessalonica was written in about 50 AD, whereas the first letter of John was written about 40 years later. That was one of the reasons why John wrote, "Antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come." Here in 2Thes 2:1 we read,

2Th 2:1-2 Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and *by* our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.

2Th 2:3 ¶ Let no man deceive you by any means: for *that day shall not come*, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, (the son of Hell);

2Th 2:4 Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

According to verse 3 there are two things that must come to pass: A great falling away from the Biblical faith, and the man of sin, Antichrist, must be revealed. Then the Apostle continues in this chapter to show us the manifestation of Antichrist. One way he manifests himself is in the charismatic gospel, which comes "with all power and signs and lying wonders." This is how Satan wants to be worshipped in our days. Please turn in your Bibles to the prophecy of Isaiah, Isa 14:10 (2X).

- **The Man of Sin Is Revealed** (Isa 14:11-17)

In Isa 14 beginning at verse 3 God takes up a proverb, or a parable, against the king of Babylon. And in this parable God switches back and forth from the king of Babylon, to the angel Lucifer, and back to the king of Babylon. In other words, the king of Babylon is representing Satan, and Satan is called "a man". And thus we see that Nebuchadnezzar was the embodiment of Satan in 600 BC, and according to 1John 4:3 the Gnostics were the embodiment of Satan in about 90 AD, and according to 2Thes 2:9 the preachers of the Charismatic gospels are the embodiment of Satan in our days. We read

Isa 14:11-12 Thy pomp is brought down to the grave, *and* the noise of thy viols: the worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee. How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! *how* art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!

Isa 14:13 For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north:

Isa 14:14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.

Isa 14:15 Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.

Isa 14:16-17 They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, *and* consider thee, *saying*, *Is* this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms; *That* made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; *that* opened not the house of his prisoners?

Lucifer has said in his heart, "I will exalt my throne above the stars of God". How does anyone know what Lucifer, the light bearer, the shining one, has said in his heart? O, but God knows. God knew what was in his heart. And God knew that Satan's greatest desire was to be worshipped as God in the place where only God is worshipped. And herein we can see that the man of sin is revealed. Antichrist, or the man of sin, has appeared in the churches in the days of the Apostle John, and he has, or will appear in most churches of our time, with the intent that the people in the churches will worship the false gospels that are brought by the false teachers of our days. They bring gospels characteristic of our time. These are not the freewill gospels, typical of Jacob Arminius, for these freewill gospels have been in the world since the 3rd or 4th century AD. But the Charismatic gospels who claim that God is still bringing divine revelations today, are the deceptions that are brought in our days, with the intent to lure people away from the old time religion that has served to save many. These false teachers and preachers are indwelt

by the spirit of Antichrist. And so, when we read in Ezek 38 and 39, where God speaks to Gog, of the land of Magog, God says that He will put hooks in the jaws of Gog, and God will draw him to whoever God wants him to attack, we understand that this is again speaking of Antichrist. Satan is a spirit; Satan does not have jaws. But the embodiment of Satan has jaws, and God will draw him to successfully attack the churches with gospels that are so close to the true Gospel. Secondly, can we see that the great falling away whereof the Apostle Paul spoke shall come to pass, or perhaps has already made great strides today? Please turn in your Bibles to the prophecy of Dan, Dan 7:8 (2X).

- **The Great Apostasy** (Dan 7:8,25, 8:23-24, 11:31,36)

Why is it that so many pastors refuse to preach about the great apostasy? Is it not because they pick and choose from the Bible those things that are nice, and smooth, and pleasing, to the ears of their congregations? The great apostasy is 100% sure from the prophecy of Daniel. We read in Dan 7:
Da 7:8 I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things.

Here is the embodiment of Satan. Please drop down to verse 25, and see how successful he is:

Da 7:25 And he shall speak *great* words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.

This number 3½ refers to the FTP. Antichrist shall make war with the saints and shall prevail against them. How is he going to do that? He is not going to persecute the church and try to kill them. The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church. This has always been an operating rule in God's Kingdom. No, Satan is going to join the church with gospels that are O-so-close to the true Gospel. And then he will sway the church away from Christ. Does this not speak of a great falling away? Dan 7 speaks of the beast, and the little horn as the embodiment of Satan, like the beast that comes up out of the Bottomless Pit. But Dan 8 speaks of the little horn as coming out of the nations of the world, like the beast that comes up out of the sea of mankind. Please turn the page to Dan 8:23 (2X). There we read,

Da 8:23 And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up.

Da 8:24 And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practice, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people.

Does this speak of one individual, one king, or many individuals? It seems to speak of one individual. But we must harmonize this with what we find in Dan 11:31. Please turn to Dan 11:31 (2X).

Da 11:31 And arms (or power) shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily (~~sacrifice~~), and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate. When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand

in the holy place (Mat 24:15). Where is this holy place? It is not Jerusalem, neither is it the temple in Jerusalem, but it is the church, the local congregation. The abomination that makes desolate shall stand in many local congregations throughout this world. It shall stand in the person of the preacher, or the teacher, who has been swayed by the spirit of Satan, or by the spirit of one of his demons, to bring gospels that are so close, but that are an abomination to God. And then we read in Dan 11:36 (2X),
Da 11:36 And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done.

He "shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished", which means until the end, and he shall prosper all over the world. This is the great apostasy. Most importantly we must harmonize the passages in Daniel where apparently one person appears as Antichrist, with those passages in the NT where Antichrist appears in many manifestations throughout this world. There are in fact:

#2. Many Antichrists (2Tim 2:26, 1John 2:18,22, 4:3, Rev 21:8)

Please turn to the 1st Epistle of John, 1John 2:18 (2X). You find 1st John, and 2nd John, and 3rd John in the end of your Bibles, just before Revelation. John is warning the NT churches of the Gnostic heresies. But John also tells us here in these passages what the nature of Antichrist is. Antichrist is the embodiment of Satan or of any of his fallen angels. Satan and his demons are not bound by one place or one time. They possess the souls of all the unsaved. God says in 2Tim 2:26 that the unsaved are "in the snare of the Devil, and are taken captive by him at his will." And so, the Devil has many workers, human beings who are working for him as many antichrists. We read in 1John 2:18,
1Jo 2:18 ¶ Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.

Twice does the Apostle say, "It is the last time". What does that mean? It means that the Last Days were upon the earth already at the time John wrote this letter. According to Acts 2:17 the Last Days started at Pentecost in AD 33 and go all the way to the end of time, and before the end of time there will be no other last days than these Last Days. People who believe that there will be another period of last days, lasting 1000 years, are not taking these passages of Acts 2:17 and 1John 2:18 into account. But here we see that already in the 1st century AD there were many antichrists. Drop down to verse 22,
1Jo 2:22 Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son.

Anyone who denies that Jesus is the Messiah, who was promised from of old, is a liar. This means that all the people of all the religions of the world, who do not believe in Jesus as their Savior, are liars, and all those liars go to Hell, according to Rev 21:8. Anyone who denies the existence of God the Father and God the Son is one of the Antichrists, and they too are on the way to Hell. These are not rules that can be bent once in a while, but these are rigid unforgiving rules regarding honoring and glorifying Christ.

When the Lord Jesus said, “No man cometh unto the Father but by Me”, He was not joking. It means no human being, not even an aborted baby, can come into heaven except through the Lord Jesus Christ. Please drop down to 1John 4:3 (2X). We have already seen this verse:

1Jo 4:3 And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that *spirit* of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

- **Many Manifestations of Antichrist** (2John 7, Mat 24:24, Phil 2:13, 2Thes 2:4)

Is the spirit of Antichrist only in one person, or is it in many? From 1John 4:3 we can see that the spirit of Antichrist is in many persons. Please turn the page to the Epistle of 2nd John, 2John 7 (2X).

2Jo 7 ¶ For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.

Clearly there are many deceivers, and each one of them is an Antichrist. There is only one FTP, but there are many manifestations of Antichrist. Please turn to the Gospel according to Matthew, Mat 24:24 (2X). This entire chapter deals with end time events. The Lord Jesus Christ warns us here of the FTP, and He describes for us the character of the FTP. The Lord Jesus says in Mat 24:24,

Mt 24:24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if *it were* possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

The result will be that many will be deceived and run after these false prophets. Each one of these false Christs and false prophets can be called an Antichrist, for they exhibit the spirit of Antichrist. But this will be a worldwide phenomenon. In churches all over the world shall these false preachers appear. This is the great falling away. This is the time that the beast that comes out of the Bottomless Pit shall make war with the saints and shall overcome them. This is the FTP. It is a tribulation for all those who remain faithful, for they only shall see the full impact that these false gospels have on those that will be cast into Hell. They only shall have the discernment to see which gospels are false. They only shall recognize that the spirit of Antichrist is at work all over the world. The Spirit of Antichrist is Satan. He is the man whom we need to identify with the one-person-Antichrist. But Satan is not omnipresent like God is, and thus Satan needs assistance from his fellow demons. Like Christ works in and through His elect to will and to do of His good pleasure (Phil 2:13), so Satan and his demons are doing their work in and through their willing human slaves. Moreover, from 2Thes 2:4 we also see that Antichrist must be in many places all at once. Allow me to read this verse to you again,

2Th 2:4 Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

If Satan wants to sit in the temple of God, and wants to be worshipped as God, then he must have many Antichrists sit in the churches all over the world pointing to whom they must worship.

#3. Amazing Grace (Mat 24:24,31, 2Cor 5:7, 1Thes 4:17)

Let us read again Mat 24:24, for it reveals to us God's amazing grace.

Mt 24:24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if *it were* possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

Wonderfully, the elect will not be deceived. God will give His elect sufficient understanding of the true Gospel so that they will not be deceived, no matter how clever the deceiver will be. It also means that all the non-elect will be deceived, and they do not know that they have been deceived, for they were deceived by the master-deceiver. Moreover God has shown us in the entire arrangement of many Antichrists how "we shall walk by faith, and not by sight" (2Cor 5:7). Since we must harmonize all passages concerning Antichrist with the four verses in 1John and 2John, we know that we should not be looking and waiting for one human individual who is the Antichrist. It is true that Satan seeks to rule the world, but he does not need to do that through one person. All Satan needs to do is to convert every single Christian to a gospel of his own making. Once they are in his camp he can do with them as he pleases. And thus, while other churches scour the political arena to spot an Antichrist as soon as he makes a wrong move, we continue to look in the Bible for other clues of the wiles of Satan, and for other warnings of his deceptions. While other churches seek for evidences of Antichrist outside the Bible, they are in principle believing that they should walk by sight. On the other hand, since God has directed us to watch and pray that we be not deceived, and since God has revealed to us that we should not seek Antichrist out there in the world but here in the church, we realize that this could only come to pass by God's amazing grace, and we walk by faith. By His amazing grace He led us to recognize that the Bottomless Pit is this world of the unsaved. By His amazing grace He directed us to see that the man of sin is Satan. By His amazing grace he made us recognize that the Charismatic gospel is a satanic gospel, since they violate God's commands of Rev 22:18-19. By His amazing grace He made us see that the Great Apostasy is in full swing at the present time. We need to sit still and see the salvation of the Lord. And our hearts are lifted up when we read the promise in verse 31. We read i.

Mt 24:31 And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

The angels shall gather His elect from the four winds. Why the four winds instead of the four quarters of the earth? It is because we will not be on the earth. When Christ comes with all His saints, we read in 1Thes 4:17, "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." This is why the angels shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. O, what a glorious day that will be. Praise God through all eternity for His amazing grace.

AMEN.

Let us turn to the Lord in prayer.