

Two major signs

Jesus had an important and strategic discussion with His disciples on the Mount of Olives. Shortly before this interaction, the Gospel of Matthew records that Jesus exposed the hypocrisy of the Scribes and Pharisees, and then declared, 'Your house is being left to you desolate!' He told the disciples that the temple in Jerusalem would be completely destroyed. This prediction by Jesus provoked the disciples to ask three questions. Once they were in private on the Mount of Olives, they said, 'Tell us, when will these things happen, and what will be the sign of Your coming and of the end of the age?'

We know the temple in Jerusalem was destroyed by the army of Prince Titus in AD70. It will never be rebuilt as a temple on earth again because Jesus Christ has become the chief cornerstone of the true temple. The true temple is the body of Christ. In our present day, the most important part of this interaction is the way Jesus answered the next two questions. In this strategic discussion, Jesus clearly identified *two major signs*. He described the sign of the end of the age and the sign of His coming.

In response to their questions, the first thing Jesus said to His disciples was, 'See to it that no one misleads you'. Throughout the course of church history, there have been many predictions about the end of the age that have proven to be false and misleading. The Scripture does not predict a date for the second coming and it would be foolish to speculate on this. However, God does have a prophetic timetable for the fulfilment of His covenant purpose. The Scripture does identify specific waypoints and time periods in His prophetic timetable. These waypoints and time periods are called 'appointed times'.

References:

Mat 23:38 Joh 2:19-21
Mat 24:3-4 Gal 4:4
Act 4:11-12 Psa 31:15

Further Study: Deuteronomy 32

Daily Proverb: Proverbs 29

The sign of the end of the age

Jesus referred to the *sign of the end of the age* by saying, 'When you see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (the one reading, let him understand), then let those in Judea flee into the mountains'. Jesus encouraged every person who reads the Scriptures to understand the meaning of this prophecy in the book of Daniel. The 'abomination of desolation' is more accurately translated as 'the abomination *which makes desolate*'. It is the corruption of offering and the violation of fellowship and first love among God's people. This corruption of offering is also called the 'transgression which causes horror'.

The book of Daniel reveals that there will be an 'abomination which makes desolate' standing in the holy place for 2300 years. The significant point concerning the 2300 year prophecy is that it began during the reign of the Greek empire and will conclude at the beginning of the time of the end. The angel Gabriel declared to Daniel, 'Son of man, understand that the vision pertains to the time of the end'.

If the desolating abomination is 2300 years' long, how does it become the sign of the end of the age? Jesus identified that the transgression which causes horror will increase within the church as we approach the end of the 2300 years. He said, 'Lawlessness will abound and the love of most people will grow cold'. Christians will hate and betray one another. Lawlessness in the church, and the opposition of the spirit of antichrist in the world, will reach their climax. The transgression which causes horror will reach its fullness! In this context, Jesus said, 'Learn the parable of the fig tree'. When the transgression reaches its fullness, we will know that we are in the fullness of times and the time of the end is near.

References:

Mat 24:12, 15-16, 32
Dan 8:13,17
Mar 13:12

Mic 7:4-6
Jer 9:4

Further Study:

Matthew 10

Daily Proverb:

Proverbs 30

Understanding the distinction between terms

When we consider the *end of the age*, it is important to understand the distinction between the 'fullness of times', the 'time of the end', and 'the end'. These are not interchangeable terms. The 'fullness of times' is the last period of the 2300 year prophecy in the book of Daniel. It is the period leading up to the 'time of the end' when the corruption of offering within the church will reach its fullness. Jesus referred to the 'fullness of times' when He said, 'Learn the parable of the fig tree: when its branch has already become tender and put forth its leaves, you know that summer is near'. The *sign of the end of the age* will occur in the period called 'the fullness of times' as the indicator that the 'time of the end' is about to commence.

The time of the end is a period of almost forty-two years in which the covenant purpose of God will be fulfilled in heaven and on earth. The *sign of His coming* will appear in heaven immediately before the fulfilment of the great Day of Atonement; that is, the marriage of Jesus Christ to His church. This will occur *in the time of the end*. The time of the end will also be the period when the Father activates an administration to put all enemies under the feet of Christ. The last enemy which will be destroyed is death. The time of the end will conclude with the physical second coming of Jesus Christ and the resurrection of all believers. The end is when the ungodly are judged and this present heavens and earth are destroyed by fire. Understanding the distinction between the 'fullness of times', the 'time of the end' and 'the end', is essential before we can interpret the events that are beginning to unfold before us in the church and in the world.

References:

Mar 13:28 1Co 15:25-26
Dan 12:13 2Pe 3:7
Eph 1:9-10 Mat 13:39-40

Further Study: Daniel 8

Daily Proverb: Proverbs 31

Seven days

God revealed a key part of His prophetic timetable when He instructed Moses and the children of Israel to maintain a seven-day week. We know that days, months, seasons and years on earth are governed by the sun and the moon. They have been fixed by the rotation of the earth on its axis, the rotation of the moon around the earth, the tilt of the earth, and then the rotation of the earth around the sun. However, in contrast to this, there is no natural or scientific explanation for a seven-day week. It is not governed by the natural creation. The seven-day week is the order that God has established to reveal the structure of His 'appointed times'. The Lord declared to Moses, 'My *appointed times* are these', and then He immediately continued by saying, 'For six days work may be done, but on the seventh day there is a Sabbath of complete rest, a holy convocation'.

The first and most obvious example of this 'seven-day cycle' is the creation of the world. We know that God created the world in six days and on the seventh day He rested from all His labour. God created this present heavens and the earth to be the context in which He would bring forth the new creation for the age to come. There were six days' work in bringing forth the first creation; and God has also ordained six days before the new creation is fully revealed in a multitude of sons on the day of resurrection. Each of these days in heaven will be one thousand years on earth. In the context of the second coming of Christ, the apostle Peter declared, 'Do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day'.

References:

Exo 23:12 2Pe 3:8
Gen 2:2 Psa 90:4
Isa 58:13

Further Study: Leviticus 23

Daily Proverb: Proverbs 1

Resurrection on the last day

The resurrection of all believers will occur on 'the last day'. Jesus said, 'This is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day'. Likewise, He said, 'He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day'. The book of Revelation clearly identifies that the 'last day' is a literal thousand-year period on the earth. All believers will be raised with an incorruptible and immortal resurrection body at the beginning of the thousand years. Our resurrection body will be composed by the word of Jesus Christ when He returns with a shout from heaven. The dead in Christ will rise first, and then those who are alive and remaining will be caught up to meet Him in the air. Paul declared, 'We shall all be changed for this corruptible must put on incorruptible and this mortal must put on immortality'.

This will be the first resurrection at the beginning of the 'last day'. It will be the resurrection to eternal life. Death will be swallowed up in victory and the saints from all ages will reign with Christ on this earth for a thousand years. At the end of this thousand year period, the ungodly will be raised, judged, and cast into the lake of fire. This will be the second resurrection at the end of the 'last day'. It will be the resurrection to damnation, and is also called 'the second death'. At this time, the present heavens and earth will be destroyed by fire and the Son of God will hand the kingdom back to the Father for all eternity. Paul declared that this is 'the end'.

References:

Joh 6:44, 54

1Co 15:24, 42, 52-53

Rev 20:5-6, 14-15

Further Study: 1 Thessalonians 4

Daily Proverb: Proverbs 2

The end of all flesh

The most important statement about 'the end' was made by the Lord in the days of Noah. In those days, the wickedness of man was great on the earth. The thoughts and intentions of every man's heart were continually evil. The Lord saw this great wickedness and was grieved in His heart. He repented that He had made man. The Lord declared to Noah, '*The end of all flesh has come before Me; for the earth is filled with violence because of them; and behold I am about to destroy them with the earth*'. This is an absolute statement. There will be an end of all flesh. God has pronounced judgement on the entire old creation.

The apostle Peter said that in the last days there will be many mockers who say, 'Where is the promise of His coming?' They will declare that all things continue just as they have since the beginning of creation. The mockers will refuse to believe that God created the present heavens and earth by His word. And further to this, they will refuse to believe that God destroyed the world by a flood in the days of Noah. We can expect that the subject of Noah and the world-wide flood will become the subject of derision and ridicule in the days ahead of us. Men will seek to discredit the account of Noah's flood so they can ignore the fact that God has pronounced judgement upon all flesh. Peter declared that the flood which destroyed the world in the days of Noah is a forerunner, or harbinger, of the destruction which will occur at the end of the age. The present heavens and earth are reserved for judgement by fire. The heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat. The earth and its works will be burned up.

References:

Gen 6:5, 13 Joe 1:15
Eze 7:2-6 Psa 102:25-27
Isa 51:6 Rev 21:1

Further Study: 2 Peter 3

Daily Proverb: Proverbs 5

Escaping the judgement to come

When the present heavens and earth are judged by fire, the old creation will become the 'lake of fire'. At the conclusion of the last day, the ungodly will be raised from their graves in mortal, corruptible bodies. Jesus said that they will be bound hand and foot and cast into outer darkness. They will be alive, but their bodies will not be able to move; like a corpse. Nor will they have any capacity to communicate. The ungodly will be preserved forever in a state of continual decay and corruption that never ceases. In this way, the destruction of the ungodly will be much worse than annihilation; it will be eternal judgement!

When the apostle Paul said that there is no longer any condemnation for those in Christ Jesus, he meant that we are no longer under the judgement of God's wrath. It means that we are part of a 'new creation' and, therefore, no longer destined to be cast into the lake of fire. The apostle Paul declared, 'If any man is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new!' This is better translated, 'If any man is in Christ, behold, new creation!' The new creation is the only thing which will endure into the new heavens and new earth.

In the days of Noah, the ark was a type of Jesus Christ. Noah and his family were saved from the judgement of God because they entered the ark. In the same way, everyone who comes into Jesus Christ to be part of the new creation will escape the judgement of God in the end of the age and enter the new heavens and new earth. Peter tells us that the ark was a type, and the antitype which now saves us is baptism into the Lord Jesus Christ.

References:

Mat 22:13 Isa 14:11
 2Co 5:17 Rev 14:10-11
 1Pe 3:21 Mat 3:12

Further Study:

Isaiah 66

Daily Proverb:

Proverbs 16

The time of the end

The 'time of the end' is an extensive theme in the Scriptures. There are many references to the 'time of the end' in the book of Daniel. For example, we read that those with insight will fall and be refined, purified, and made white until the 'time of the end'. The 'time of the end' is the specific period of time when the seven-sealed book is opened which reveals the fulfilment of God's covenant purpose in heaven and on earth. It commences when the Lamb stands to begin opening the seven-sealed book. The Lord instructed Daniel to 'seal up the book until the time of the end'. The beginning of the time of the end is a major waypoint in the book of Revelation. The events of the time of the end will be initiated when the twenty-four thrones are set in heaven and Michael, the strong angel, stands up to proclaim, 'Who is worthy to open the book and to break its seals?'

Immediately before His ascension, the disciples asked Jesus, 'Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?' He replied, 'It is not for you to know the times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority'. At the beginning of the time of the end, the Father will activate the administration which will restore the kingdom of God on earth. This is the time when the saints will begin to receive and possess the kingdom. They will begin to reign upon the earth. The administration of the kingdom of God will make all the enemies of Christ a footstool for His feet. The last enemy which will be destroyed is death. The time of the end will conclude with the physical second coming of Christ and the resurrection of the righteous, when we receive our incorruptible and immortal resurrection bodies for the age to come.

References:

Dan 12:4 Psa 110:1
Dan 11:35 Act 1:6-7
Rev 5:2, 10 Dan 7:18
Rev 4:4 1Co 15:26

Further Study: Revelation 6

Daily Proverb: Proverbs 7

The last hour

The time of the end is also called the 'last hour'. There are a number of references to the 'last hour' in the Scriptures, particularly in the book of Revelation. Jesus said to the church in Philadelphia that if they kept the word of His perseverance, then He would keep them from '*the hour of trial* which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth'. The last hour is the hour of judgement. It is the hour when all rule, all authority and all power which opposes the kingdom of God is destroyed. Part of the everlasting gospel that will be preached in the time of the end will be to 'fear God and give glory to Him, for the *hour of His judgement* has come'. The kings of the earth and the merchants will lament over Babylon, saying, 'Woe, woe, the great city, Babylon, the strong city! For in *one hour* your judgement has come.'

How long is the last hour? We know that the judgement of the little horn, Gog and Magog, Satan, Babylon, and the final Antichrist, will not happen in 'one hour on earth'. For example, after the destruction of the Gog and Magog army at the opening of the sixth seal, the book of Ezekiel tells us that it will take seven months to bury all the dead bodies and seven years to destroy all the weapons. The book of Revelation also nominates a number of specific periods of time which occur during the last hour. If one day is a thousand years, then one hour in heaven will be almost forty-two years on earth. This is also the time period of one generation. Speaking of the time of the end, Jesus said, 'This generation will by no means pass away until all these things take place'.

References:

Rev 3:10 Eze 39:9, 14
Rev 14:7 Mat 24:34
Rev 18:10 1Jn 2:18

Further Study:

Matthew 24

Daily Proverb:

Proverbs 8

Daniel's vision

Jesus explained that Daniel's vision regarding the 'abomination which makes desolate' is the key to understanding Bible prophecy. He encouraged every person to read and understand this prophecy in the book of Daniel, saying, 'Let the reader understand'. When we are studying the book of Daniel, we need to consider the vision which is recorded in chapter seven and the vision which is recorded in chapter eight as one prophetic package. The vision in chapter seven reveals that a little horn will rise to unprecedented power in the seventh world kingdom. However, the vision in chapter eight reveals how the little horn began to receive power from the heavenly places in the time of the Greek empire. Most importantly, this vision reveals why the little horn is receiving power from the heavenly places. And it reveals *how long* the little horn will be allowed to trample the messengers of God and the church.

In the prophetic vision, Daniel heard a holy one speaking, and another holy one asked the angel who was speaking, 'How long will the vision about the regular sacrifice apply, while the transgression causes horror, so as to allow both the holy place and the host to be trampled?' This verse clearly identifies what is causing the trampling of the messengers of Christ and the church today. The primary cause of the trampling is not the little horn. It is not the media or science. It is not the governments of the world. It is the corruption of the fellowship of offering within the church. It is the violation of the communion. This is the transgression which causes horror. As long as the communion of the body and blood of Jesus Christ, the daily Lamb, is being violated by Christians, then the 'horror' of trampling will continue.

References:

Dan 8:1, 13
Mat 24:15
Mar 13:14
1Co 11:27-30
Joh 13:21

Further Study:

1 Corinthians 10

Daily Proverb:

Proverbs 9

The little horn grew up to the host of heaven

In his prophetic vision, Daniel saw a male goat coming from the west with a large conspicuous horn between its eyes. When the conspicuous horn was broken, four horns rose up in its place towards the four winds of heaven. We know the male goat was the kingdom of Greece and the large conspicuous horn was Alexander the Great. When Alexander died at the age of thirty-two in Babylon, he left no obvious heir to his kingdom. A power struggle quickly developed between all of his generals and the kingdom split into four.

Daniel's vision continued, 'Out of one of them came forth a rather small horn which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the Beautiful Land'. This 'rather small horn', or 'little horn', was Seleucus who founded the Seleucid empire. History tells us that Seleucus manipulated his way to power and gained control over eighty percent of the former Greek empire. As Daniel continued to look in the Spirit, he saw this little horn grow 'up to the host of heaven'. This was a spiritual reality and may not have coincided with the height of the Seleucid empire on earth. It may not have occurred while Seleucus was still alive, but it did occur sometime during the early reign of the Seleucid empire.

The Seleucid empire was established in the city of Babylon, which was the seat of the administration of Babylon over the nations of the world at that time. However, the administration of Babylon, despite its constant striving, is never able to reach the heavenly places. The administration of Babylon is limited by the capacity of man. It cannot ascend beyond the capacity of human strength and wisdom. Babylon sits only as a harlot on top of the kingdoms of mankind. So how did a little horn ascend all the way into the heavenly places?

References:

Dan 8:9-10, 13, 21

Exo 7:4

Isa 6:11

Rev 17:9-10

Further Study:

Daniel 7

Daily Proverb:

Proverbs 12

Empowered from the heavenly places

In terms of appearance, the little horn was far weaker than the administration of Babylon or any of the kingdoms of the world. The little horn did not represent a great king like Nebuchadnezzar. Nor did it represent a mighty and powerful leader like Alexander the Great. In comparison to the large 'conspicuous horns' which arose after Alexander's death, it was a 'rather small horn' with very little human power. However, somehow, this little horn was able to usurp the rulership of Babylon in the world and ascend into the heavenly places during the reign of the Greek empire. This was only possible because Satan had regained access into the heavenly places.

In the beginning, Satan was created as an anointed cherub who was full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. His name was Lucifer and he was the priest of the angelic temple. However, he corrupted his mandate, coveted the mandate which belonged to the Son of God, and coveted the predestination which belongs to man. He was corrupted by the abundance of his trading and cast as profane from heaven. He was cast down to the earth. We are reminded of the account in the book of Job when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord. Satan came among them and the Lord asked him where he had come from. Satan replied, 'From roaming about on the earth and walking around on it'. Satan walked to and fro on the earth trying to corrupt the plan of God, but he did not have any access to the heavenly places. This is certainly not the case today. We know that Satan is standing before the throne of God in heaven, accusing the brethren day and night. So how and when did he regain access into heaven? Answering this question is the key to understanding how the little horn is empowered from the heavenly places.

References:

Job 2:1-2 Eze 28:13-16
Rev 12:10 1Pe 5:8
2Th 2:9

Further Study: Zechariah 3**Daily Proverb:** Proverbs 13

Giving Satan an advantage

It was the corruption of the priests after the Jews returned from Babylon that gave Satan the 'advantage' he needed to regain access into the sanctuary of God. When Joshua the high priest was restored in the days of Zechariah, the administration of God was significantly upgraded. The Lord of hosts promised Joshua, 'If you walk in My ways and if you will perform My service, then you will also govern My house and also have charge of My courts, and I will grant you *free access* among these who are standing here'. The priests were given charge of the altar (in the court) and free access into the holy place. They were no longer functioning under the mandate of the angelic administration. The Lord connected Joshua the high priest, and Zerubbabel the governor, directly to the administration of the heavenly places.

If the guardianship of the angels had been a limit and a protection, then this 'free access' was both a privilege and a risk for the holy people. The sanctification of the holy place was now completely dependent upon the accountability and stewardship of the priests toward the altar. Likewise, Michael and his angelic host were tied to the plight of the sanctuary under the custody of the priests. In the days of the prophet Malachi, the priests became corrupt but the angels were not able to intervene. Hence, the Lord cried out when the priests began to profane the sanctuary, 'Oh that there were one among you who would shut the gates'. The corruption of the priests who had 'free access' into the holy place, left the gate open, so to speak, for Satan to regain access into heavenly places. When Satan regained access into the heavenly places, he empowered the little horn to rise up to the host of heaven.

References:

Zec 3:7
1Co 10:21
Lev 10:3

Eze 48:11
1Co 11:21-22

Further Study:

Malachi 1

Daily Proverb:

Proverbs 14

The little horn tramples Michael and his angelic host

The first outcome of the little horn ascending to the heavenly places was the trampling of Michael and the angelic host. Michael is the 'commander of the host' who stands guard over the covenant people of God. We recall that it was the 'commander of the host' who met Joshua as soon as they had crossed the Jordan River and had come into the promised land. Likewise, it was Michael and his angelic host who went before the nation of Israel to fight on their behalf during the conquest of the promised land. In our day, the church does not enjoy this kind of angelic help and support.

The capacity of Michael and his angels to fight on behalf of the people of God, in the heavenly places, has been removed by the corruption of offering. However, when offering has been fully restored within the body of Christ, Michael and his host of angels will stand up again. Michael is the strong angel who will proclaim with a loud voice, 'Who is worthy to open the book and to break its seals?' We read in the book of Revelation that there will be myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands of angels around the throne at this time. A myriad is ten thousand. Ten thousand by ten thousand is one hundred million. The myriads are plural so this would indicate that there will be at least two hundred million angels around the throne. We expect this will also be the number of the remnant church across the world at the beginning of the time of the end.

When the little horn magnified itself to be equal with the Prince of the host in the time of the Greeks, it was able to remove the regular sacrifice from Him and cast down the place of His sanctuary. However, in the time of the end, when the little horn opposes the Prince of princes, 'he will be broken without human agency'.

References:

Jos 5:13-15
Exo 23:20-23
Rev 5:2, 11
Dan 8:11, 24-25

Further Study: Daniel 11

Daily Proverb: Proverbs 15

The little horn tramples the star-messengers

When the little horn ascended to the heavenly places, it trampled the angelic host and some of the stars. The stars are the messengers with insight into the mystery, who are able to give understanding to many and lead them to righteousness. There are some messengers with insight who will fall into sin and not find recovery. However, in many cases, the stars fall because the Lord allows them to be trampled, but not because of sin. Some will fall by sword, some will fall by flame, some will fall by captivity, and some will fall by plunder. And finally, some will be trampled as people cleave to them by intrigue and hypocrisy. Daniel was told that the stars will be trampled for 'many days'. The 'many days' refers to the entire duration of the 2300 evenings and mornings, which is complete when the Lamb stands immediately before the opening of the seals and the beginning of the time of the end.

We can be sure that every messenger who is willing to join the fellowship of Christ's sufferings in weakness, will be helped with a little help. This is the help brought to us by the Holy Spirit who is the Helper. Jesus said, 'I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever'. The Holy Spirit brings the power of the sevenfold Spirit of God. We are reminded that Christ was crucified in weakness, yet He lives by the power of God. In this same way, every messenger is able to 'overcome' this trampling by the power of God. His power is made perfect in weakness. The Lord allows the stars to be trampled because He is refining, purging, and making them white. Messengers are being joined to the sufferings of Christ so that their priestly robes are made white in the blood of the Lamb. They are able to walk with Christ in white.

References:

Dan 11:32-35 Rev 7:14
Joh 14:16 Rev 3:4
2Co 13:4, 9 2Co 12:9

Further Study: 1 Corinthians 4**Daily Proverb:** Proverbs 16

The corruption of the regular sacrifice

In the tabernacle of old, the regular sacrifice was the daily lamb which was offered every morning and every evening. This was the foundation of all offering upon the altar. It included the daily meal offering and drink offering. It was a symbol of Jesus Christ who is the Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world. In the New Covenant, the substance of the morning and evening sacrifice is the presentation of our bodies as living sacrifices within the fellowship of the body of Christ. This is our reasonable priestly service and our participation in the fellowship of the altar. It is the substance of the communion. The apostle Paul tells us that we are participating in the body and blood of the Lamb of God as we eat the bread and drink the wine of the communion meal.

The 'transgression which causes horror' was the failure of the priests to guard and maintain the regular sacrifice. The reality of the corruption of the regular sacrifice was described in great detail by the prophet Malachi. The priests were presenting defiled food upon the altar when they accepted the blind, the lame, and the sick as offerings. It was this corruption which allowed the 'horror' of trampling to occur. The apostle Paul used the language of being 'blind, lame, and sick' to describe the corruption of the communion in the church. Concerning the need for spiritual sight, he wrote to the Corinthians, 'A man must examine himself, and in so doing he is to eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgement to himself if he does not judge the body rightly.' He then continued, 'For this reason many among you are weak and sick'. He even said that many have died.

References:

Rev 13:8

Rom 12:1

1Co 11:29-30

1Co 10:16

Mal 1:7-8

Further Study:

Psalm 26

Daily Proverb:

Proverbs 19

Lawlessness in the church

Perhaps the greatest corruption of offering is caused by Christians who refuse to accept the name and work that God has given them. They refuse to recognise where God has placed them in His many-membered body. They will not submit to any kind of authority, and nor will they lay down their life in offering for their brethren. This is the spirit of lawlessness at work in the church. And for this reason, many are weak and sick. A person who does not 'judge the body rightly' will not be able to receive the life and blessing of the communion. They will have no 'grace for life'. If they demand that God receive them in this 'weak and sick' state, they will be offended when they are not accepted. If they cannot humble themselves and deal with this offence, then a root of bitterness will spring up which leads to hatred and betrayal. Bitterness and hatred toward the body of Christ is the evidence that a person is spiritually dead.

The corruption of the communion in the church empowers the little horn in the world. And then, in turn, the principle of the little horn in the world endeavours to *remove the regular sacrifice*, or destroy the substance of offering in the church. This becomes a self-perpetuating cycle. There are many churches that no longer celebrate communion for the sake of being relevant to a world that is becoming more and more influenced by the philosophy of a little horn, which is the spirit of antichrist. The meaning of the communion is no longer understood and preached by many leaders. The word of the cross is no longer preached because of the fear that it will cause offence. People are no longer admonished to join a fellowship of offering. The principle of the little horn in the world exerts significant pressure on churches to remove any vestige of the 'regular sacrifice'.

References:

Eph 2:10

Deu 5:33

Dan 8:11

1Co 1:18

1Jn 2:6

Further Study: Galatians 6**Daily Proverb:** Proverbs 20

The little horn tramples the holy place

The transgression which causes horror, which is the corruption of the daily sacrifice, allows both the host *and the holy place* to be trampled. We have considered the trampling of the angelic host and the star-messengers. However, the trampling by the little horn also extends beyond this to the trampling of the holy place. The meaning of 'the holy place' is much more than the precincts of an earthly temple. Having dwelt in an earthly tabernacle since the days of Moses, it has always been the Lord's intention to dwell *in His people*. This began to be fulfilled in the days of Zechariah and Haggai. The Lord declared through Zechariah, 'Sing for joy and be glad, O daughter of Zion; for behold I am coming and I will dwell in your midst'.

In our day, the holy place is the corporate body of Christ. We are reminded of the words of Jesus to His disciples, 'Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up'. He was talking about the temple of His body. We are living stones who are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood. We are being built together as a dwelling of God in the Spirit. With this in view, we can understand what it means for the holy place to be trampled. Even though there was a time when the temple buildings were trampled by the Greeks, and again by the Romans, it was the trampling of the people themselves which fulfilled the prophecy. It is the same in our day. The little horn will trample both the messengers and the church itself. The star-messengers will fall in unique ways, but the church itself will also be drawn into the fellowship of Christ's sufferings. The nature of this suffering will be unique for each lampstand church.

References:

Rev 21:3
Zec 2:10
Hag 2:5

Joh 2:19
1Pe 2:5
Eph 2:22

Further Study:

Daily Proverb:

Luke 21

Proverbs 21

The little horn flings truth to the ground

The little horn flung truth to the ground when Jesus Christ was crucified at the hands of the Romans. The apostle Paul declared that Jesus 'testified the good confession before Pontius Pilate'. He declared, 'I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.' Pilate responded by asking rhetorically, 'What is truth?' Jesus Christ is the truth, and throughout His ministry He bore witness to the truth. He declared to His disciples, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life'.

In stark contrast to this, Jesus said concerning the devil, 'He was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies.' The mode of the little horn is 'according to the working of Satan'. He will cause 'deceit to succeed by his influence'. We do not need to be concerned when we observe that 'the lie' is prospering in the world today. This is particularly evident in our education system where evolution is taught as fact and the possibility of a Creator is ridiculed. The world has exchanged the truth of God for a lie. This will be the case until the conclusion of the 2300 years. However, we can be assured that when the first seal is opened and the white horse rider goes forth overcoming and to overcome, the testimony of the truth will be declared in every place. The gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a 'testimony' to all nations. The truth will triumph over the lie!

References:

Dan 8:12 Joh 14:6
1Ti 6:13 Joh 8:44
Joh 18:38 Dan 8:25

Further Study: 2 Thessalonians 2

Daily Proverb: Proverbs 22

The little horn performs its will and prospers

The little horn is able to perform its will and prosper because it is empowered from the heavenly places. Daniel was told that 'his power will be mighty, but *not by his own power*'. Unlike Babylon, the power of the little horn is not sourced within itself. It is empowered by Satan from heaven.

In the first case, 'the will' of the little horn is to rise up and usurp the order of the nations that has been ordained and established by God. In this way, the Seleucid empire was successful in rising above the Greek empire, and the Caesars were successful in rising above the Roman empire. The principle of the little horn will again be successful during the reign of the seventh world kingdom. As we approach the beginning of the time of the end, the little horn will 'exalt and magnify himself above every god and will speak monstrous things against the God of gods, and he will *prosper* until the indignation is finished'.

In the second case, 'the will' of the little horn is to destroy the people of God. It was revealed to Daniel that the little horn will destroy to an extraordinary degree. He will destroy many while they are at ease. The little horn will destroy mighty men and the holy people. However, we know that the twenty-four elders will take their seat and the 'court will sit for judgement' at the conclusion of the 2300 year prophecy. At that time, the dominion of the little horn will be removed. The little horn will be broken without human agency by the authority of the twenty-four elders in the heavenly places. Following this, he will be overcome in the world by the messengers of Christ when the first seal is opened. And finally, he will be destroyed by the king of the north when the second seal is opened.

References:
Dan 8:24-25
Dan 11:36, 40
Rev 6:2, 4

Further Study: Revelation 5
Daily Proverb: Proverbs 23

2300 evenings and mornings

We have considered the six outcomes of the little horn being empowered by Satan from the heavenly places. We'll now return to the issue of 'how long' God allows this to happen. The angel who was speaking to Daniel answered this question when he said, 'For 2300 evenings and mornings; then the holy place will be properly restored'. We know that this does not refer to 24-hour days because the prophecy has not yet been fulfilled. Gabriel declared to Daniel, 'Son of Man, understand that the vision pertains to *the time of the end*'.

There are only two prophetic formulas that are used in the Scripture to interpret the length of a symbolic 'evening and morning'. The 'thousand years for one day' formula is used exclusively for the overall creative and redemptive purpose of God. The 2300 'evenings and mornings' is not a period of creation or redemption; it is a period of judgement and restoration. The prophetic formula which the Scripture uses in this case is 'a year for a day'. Concerning the desolation and the restoration of the land, the prophet Isaiah declared, 'For the Lord has a *day* of vengeance, a *year* of recompense for the cause of Zion'. We recall that Zion is the city of the living God. It is the heavenly Jerusalem at the top of the mountain of the Lord.

The book of Daniel is consistent with itself and this formula is used repeatedly throughout the book. The first occurrence of the 'year for a day' principle is seen with the judgement upon king Nebuchadnezzar. It was revealed to Daniel that his mind would be changed from the mind of a man to the mind of a beast, and 'seven times' would pass over him. The literal meaning of 'a time' in this situation was 'one year'. An even more definitive example of the 'year for a day' principle in the book of Daniel is the 'seventy weeks' prophecy which is clearly seventy 'weeks of years'.

References:

Dan 8:14, 17 Dan 9:24
2Pe 3:5-8 Psa 90:4
Isa 34:8

Further Study: Daniel 4

Daily Proverb: Proverbs 26

A year for a day

The best example of the 'year for a day' principle is the judgement upon the nation of Israel in the wilderness. When Moses sent the spies into the land of Canaan, they spent forty days and forty nights walking throughout the land. Only Joshua and Caleb brought back a positive report. The rest persuaded the congregation to disobey the Lord and not enter and possess the land. As a result, the Lord said, 'According to the number of days which you spied out the land, forty days, for every day you shall bear your guilt a year, even forty years, and you will know My opposition'. This judgement had one outcome for the older generation and another outcome for the younger generation. The older generation was condemned to forty years of aimless wandering until their bodies were strewn throughout the wilderness. However, the younger generation were taught to be shepherds for forty years. It was a discipline upon them, training and preparing them to enter and possess the land.

We observe the same principle with the judgement of the 2300 years. The Lord has subjected His covenant people to 2300 years in the wilderness before they are able to serve the Lord in His holy mountain in the time of the end. The prophet Ezekiel called this the 'wilderness of the peoples'. Ezekiel clearly connected the judgement of the Lord in the 'wilderness of the peoples', with the judgement of the nation of Israel in the wilderness in the days of Moses. The Lord declared, 'I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there I will enter into judgement with you face to face. As I entered into judgement with your fathers in the wilderness in the land of Egypt, so I will enter into judgement with you.'

References:

Eze 20:35-36

Isa 34:8

Eze 4:5-6

Further Study:

Numbers 14

Daily Proverb:

Proverbs 27

The love of the majority will grow cold

Jesus referred to the final period of the 2300 year prophecy when He said, 'They will deliver you up to tribulation'. He continued, 'Many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another'. It is frightening to consider that this period of tribulation will be caused by Christians betraying one another. When a Christian becomes offended and they allow bitterness to take root in their heart, this produces a hatred that is worse than anything that is seen in the world. It has the potential to become 'ancient hatred', in the same spirit of Esau's hatred toward his brother Jacob. Many Christians will experience this kind of hatred and betrayal in their own families. Jesus said, 'You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers and relatives and friends, and they will put some of you to death'.

It is difficult to comprehend how such great betrayal could ever happen among family members and fellow Christians. Jesus clearly identified the cause by saying, 'Because lawlessness is increased, most people's love will grow cold'. The word translated 'lawlessness' can also be translated 'iniquity'. The fullness of times is a period when iniquity abounds. It is important to recognise that there is a difference between iniquity and sin. The apostle Paul declared that where 'sin increases, grace abounds all the more'. However, in stark contrast to this, where iniquity abounds, most people's love will grow cold. Iniquity leads to the wilful and culpable violation of fellowship. When the transgression reaches its fullness, the love of the 'majority of Christians' will grow cold! This is most certainly a sobering reality. It will only be a 'minority of Christians', or a 'remnant', who will be committed to the fellowship of first love and offering as we approach the time of the end.

References:

Mat 24:10-12

Rev 2:4

Mat 10:21

Mic 7:5-6

Rom 5:20

Further Study:

Mark 13

Daily Proverb:

Proverbs 28

Lawlessness and opposition

In his second letter to the Thessalonians, the apostle Paul spoke of the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and of our gathering together to Him. He did not want the Thessalonians to be quickly shaken from their composure, or to be disturbed by any kind of false gospel saying that the day of the Lord had already come. Paul continued, 'Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the great falling away comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who 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'. In this passage, Paul identified that there will be two phases of overcoming for the church in relation to the spirit of antichrist. The first will be 'lawlessness' and the second will be 'opposition'.

Lawlessness in the church is the abomination which makes desolate. It causes the love of 'the many' to grow cold and, therefore, precipitates the great falling away. The falling away occurs throughout the period of the 2300 years and culminates in the period immediately before the beginning of the time of the end, which is called the 'fullness of times'. It is during this period that the transgression reaches its fullness. In the second phase, the little horn becomes the 'opposer'. He opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god and object of worship. We read in the book of Daniel that 'he will exalt and magnify himself above every god and will speak monstrous things against the God of gods; and he will prosper until the indignation is finished'. He will oppose the need for any religion in the world, but the Christian church will be the main object of his fury.

References:

2Th 2:3-4 Rom 6:19
Dan 11:36 Mat 24:12
1Jn 3:4 Dan 8:11

Further Study: James 4

Daily Proverb: Proverbs 29

The one who endures to the end

Jesus warned us about the great falling away ahead of us, and then said, 'The one who endures to the end, he will be saved'. He was referring to those who persevere and endure through until the time of the end. Jesus said to the lampstand church of Philadelphia, 'Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth'. The 'hour of temptation' which will come upon the whole world is the 'last hour', the duration of the time of the end.

If we keep the word of present truth, which is called the 'word of His perseverance', then we know that He will keep us from the hour of temptation. This does not mean that we will avoid tribulation and persecution; but it does mean that the Lord will preserve and protect us so that we do not fall away in the midst of the trial. It is the work of the Holy Spirit that enables us to persevere. The word 'perseverance' means 'bearing evil and suffering it with a tranquil mind'; that is, without anxiety and fear. No one will be able to endure until the end without the help of the God of perseverance.

With the help of the Holy Spirit, the fellowship of first love will be fully restored within lampstand churches. There will be lampstand churches in every nation, connected to the throne of God in one administration which is suitable for the fullness of times. When offering has been fully restored, the 2300 years will be complete and the time of the end will begin. When the first seal is opened, the white horse rider will go forth 'overcoming and to overcome'. The gospel of the kingdom will be preached as a testimony in all nations.

References:

Mat 24:13-14

Rev 3:10

Eph 1:10

Rev 6:2

Further Study: Hebrews 3

Daily Proverb: Proverbs 30