



AI Generated

Iran and Israel at War (Conclusion)

By

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Iran and Israel at War has been a primary focus of this series, but I've also wanted to emphasize the importance of 'rightly dividing the word of truth' (2 Timothy 2:15.) To 'rightly divide' is to 'make a straight cut, to dissect correctly, to handle correctly' (ὀρθοτομέω). That may sound easy enough to do, but Paul knew how hard it would be for Timothy after Paul's death. Paul knew based on his own experience of teaching the Word of God 'rightly divided' for almost three decades that Timothy would face a lot of opposition from both Christians and non-Christians. What did Paul tell Timothy he would need to do as he faced those challenges?

He began by telling him, 'You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus' (2 Timothy 2:1). Paul also told Timothy to, 'endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ' (2 Timothy 2:3). Anything else?

Be Gentle To All

“Remind them of these things, charging them before the Lord not to strive about words to no profit, to the ruin of the hearers. Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and idle babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness. And their message will spread like cancer. Hymenaeus and Philetus are of this sort, who have strayed concerning the truth, saying that the resurrection is already past; and they overthrow the faith of some. Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: “The Lord knows those who are His,” and, “Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity.” But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay, some for honor and some for dishonor. Therefore if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work. Flee also youthful

lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. But avoid foolish and ignorant disputes, knowing that they generate strife. And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will.” 2 Timothy 2:14-26

- Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth
- avoid foolish and ignorant disputes, knowing that they generate strife
- a servant of the Lord must not quarrel
- be gentle to all
- able to teach
- patient

- in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth
- that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will.

Using Paul's points to Timothy about facing opposition I try to determine whether disputes within Christianity are foolish and ignorant, 'knowing that they generate strife.' I try not to 'quarrel.' I also try to 'be gentle to all.' That's not always an easy thing to do, but we can depend on God's Spirit in us to help us follow His will for our lives and ministry.

Being 'able to teach' is διδακτικός and means having an 'aptitude' to instruct others. That may mean a Christian has the spiritual gift of 'teaching,' or they have an aptitude toward teaching with other spiritual gifts. We know that's important for elders in a church (1 Timothy 3:2), and Paul reminded Timothy again about the importance of having that ability. The 'Church' needs teachers who have both an ability to teach and a knowledge of how to study for teaching. My observation after decades as a member of the Body of Christ is that churches are sorely in need of help in that area. Unfortunately, thousands of churches have cancelled times of Bible teaching during their weekly calendar for groups that gather outside of the church, often led by people who have good intentions but no aptitude for teaching the Bible. The groups often watch a video or read a book together to stimulate discussion among group members. How does that fit the pattern we find in Paul's letters? If you doubt what I'm saying, read 1 Corinthians 14 and look at what an ancient Sunday service looked like. Bible teaching (prophecy) was number one in church services. All things were to be done decently and in order and to the edification of all in attendance. Teaching is the priority that God established.

Why have so many churches abandoned the one thing God told churches to do? Why don't church leaders want gifted and equipped teachers 'proclaiming' God's Word in their church meetings? I think that's a question that should be answered in every church that has not made 'rightly dividing the word of truth' the priority in their gatherings.

What about differing views in eschatology ('last things') like the ones I've pointed out in this series? Are they 'foolish and ignorant disputes?' Do they 'generate strife' within churches and denominations? Unfortunately, they sometimes do. According to the Apostle Paul I need to understand why people believe what they believe and 'discuss' rather than 'quarrel.' I hope you've found this series more of a 'presentation of my views' as a Bible student and teacher rather than a 'quarrel.'

Patience is also a virtue that Paul commended to Timothy; even though it's not easy to be patient with people who won't discuss points of disagreement with you from a Scriptural perspective. I found it difficult through the years to have logical discussions with people whose arguments I found 'illogical' rather than 'biblical.' Still patience and 'humility' are what God requires of His 'workers.' I will admit that it not an easy thing to do, but it's what God wants from us. Ask God to help you when you face opposition within your own church or denomination.

The Man of Sin

Before I sign off on this series there is one more portion of Paul's writings that I'd like to address about 'last things,' and it may go directly to the current war in the Middle East or some other massive worldwide event that hasn't happened yet.

“Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you, not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come. Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time. For the mystery

of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way. And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming. The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.” 2

Thessalonians 2:1-12

The context of this Scripture is clear: ‘concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him.’ The Greek word for ‘coming’ is παρουσία. It is the same word Jesus Christ used for His ‘coming’ as the ‘Son of Man’ (Matthew 24). James, Peter, and John also used the same word in their letters for the Lord’s return from Heaven to Earth. The word ‘*parousia*’ also translates as ‘return.’

The Greek word for ‘gathering together’ is ἐπισυναγωγή and means ‘a complete collection, a complete gathering together.’ It comes from the word ἐπισυναγωγή (to gather completely, to gather in the same place’). That fits perfectly with what Paul wrote in 1 Thessalonians 4:

“For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.” 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17

Back to Paul's second letter to the Christians in Thessalonica. He was concerned that Christians would be 'shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come.' Paul knew that false teachers were attempting to 'deceive' Christians about the Lord's return – much like what happens in churches and denominations across the world today. Paul was clear in stating: 'that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.'

Paul warned of a coming ἀποστασία (*apostasia*) that would cause people to 'fall away' (forsake the truth, defect from what is true) from what he had taught them previously.

The second thing that would happen would be that ‘the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.’ The Greek for ‘man of sin’ is ἄνθρωπος τῆς ἀνομίας. He is a human being who is defined as being ‘of sin.’ Paul said this man would be ‘revealed’ (ἀποκαλύπτω – *apokaluptó*) at a future time. The meaning of ‘revealed’ is to ‘take off the cover, uncover, disclose what was hidden.’ This means the ‘man of sin’ would be ‘hidden’ until the time came to take off the cover and ‘reveal’ him.

He is also called the ‘son of perdition’ (υἱός τῆς ἀπώλεια) which means a ‘son, child, of destruction, ruin, loss, waste, damnation’. The reason for such strong language is because of what the ‘son of sin, son of perdition’ would do. He will oppose and exalt himself ‘above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.’ This will be an abomination and it’s coming.

It's interesting that Jesus used the same word for Judas Iscariot: "none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled" (John 17:12). Satan entered into Judas Iscariot to direct him to betray Jesus (John 13:27), and Satan will also influenced the 'beast' in Revelation who will accept 'worship' from the people of the world:

"Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name. Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like the feet of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority. And I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world marveled and followed the beast. So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?" And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was

given authority to continue for forty-two months. Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven. Revelation 13:1-6

Restraint, Lies, Deception, Delusion

Paul reminded the Thessalonians in his second letter that he had told them about these things previously: ‘Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things?’ Then Paul wrote:

“And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way. And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming. The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, that they all may be condemned who did not believe

the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.” 2
Thessalonians 2:6-12

Someone or something is ‘restraining’ (κατέχω – ‘withhold, hold fast, hold down’) so that he might be revealed in his own time. Paul wrote that, ‘He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way.’ γίνομαι means ‘emerge, become, transitioning from one point, realm, condition to another.’ Some Bible teachers believe the Holy Spirit is withholding the revealing of the ‘man of sin.’ Some believe it was the Roman Empire. Some believe it will be some future empire. Paul doesn’t tell us clearly in the letter, though it was something he had told the Thessalonians previously.

Satan will be behind the coming of this ‘man of sin’ and will give him supernatural powers to ‘deceive’ the nations. God will send a ‘strong delusion’ so that people ‘should believe the lie:’

“The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”

The ‘man of sin,’ endued with Satan’s power, and no longer held back by the ‘One’ restraining him, will tell ‘the lie.’ What is ‘the lie?’ Could it be a lie about major wars, worldwide economic collapse, the ‘sudden disappearance’ of millions of people in the ‘rapture,’ something that ‘artificial intelligence’ might cause, an accidental or purposeful destruction of Islam’s Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem that would open a way for Israelis to rebuild the Third Temple? We don’t know because Paul didn’t say, but what we do know is that God will send the world ‘strong delusion, that they should believe the lie.’ The word ‘delusion’ is πλάνη and means ‘deluding, error, wandering from straight path, fraudulent.’

I call this 'Deception and Delusion.' Satan will deceive and God will send a 'strong delusion' so that people will believe the 'man of sin's' lie. Satan has a plan that he first revealed in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:4-5). God has a plan that began in Eternity and He's revealed it to the world slowly through the ages. God knows the end from the beginning ('Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things that are not yet done, Saying, 'My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure,' Isaiah 46:10).

As we study Scripture we see that Satan's plans never surprise God. God has always known that Satan wanted to be worshiped and would do whatever he could to get it. One example is when Satan tested Jesus Christ in the wilderness:

"Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to Him, "All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me." Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.'" Matthew 4:8-10

That confrontation between Satan and Jesus says it all. Jesus is the Eternal Son of God who created the universe and everything in it. He has been worshiped since the beginning by the angels and humans He created. Satan is jealous of that and desperately wants similar worship, which is why he tempted the Son of God when He came to Earth in human form. Jesus responded by quoting Scripture about worshipping ‘the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.’ It’s interesting that Jesus didn’t respond to Satan by saying the kingdoms of the world were not the devil’s to give. Remember that the Apostle Paul called Satan ‘the god of this age’ (2 Corinthians 4:4).

Satan and his proxies (man of sin, beast, plus the ‘false prophet’) will receive worldwide worship for a short time in the future, but it won’t last long. Satan will pay a severe price for his desire for worship and domination :

“The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.” Revelation 20:10

In Conclusion

I am well aware, unfortunately, that tens of thousands of pastors, seminary professors, and other Bible teachers don't believe what I think the Bible clearly proclaims about 'end times' as it relates to the Church, Christ's Body, and the nation of Israel. I've met them, talked with them, discussed these points with them, read their books, and watched their videos. I guess we can agree to disagree, even though it is difficult for me to see so many Christians who are walking a path that seems different than the one God has given us to follow. We will all know for sure one day when Jesus returns for us, and that's what really matters – being with Jesus Christ forever and ever.

If you've found this series helpful, I also recommend other series to you as well:

[Apologetics for Jesus Christ](#)

[Apologetics for False Preachers & Teachers](#)

Apologetics for Worldviews

Church Leader Resources

Please contact me if you have any questions about this series. You can email me at faithandselfdefense@gmail.com. Thank you for taking the time and effort to read this series and study the Scriptures.

You may also find help from two books I wrote almost 20 years ago:

[A History of Man's Quest for Immortality](#)

[GraceLife: Words of Encouragement in a Discouraging World](#)

eBooks Past and Future

There are many more challenges to Christianity than what I've included in this series. I tried to keep the focus on areas that might impact how believers see the current war in the Middle East based on how they interpret God's Word. There are more issues that need to be addressed that fall into other areas of theology. I've included many already in our [eBook section](#). I am working on a series of articles that will begin publishing this Fall that I hope might bring some clarity to a centuries-old problem that still plagues the Church. You'll find that series on the [GraceLife Blog](#). Another series I recommend is called 'Order in the Court of the King.' It is seven-eBook series that addresses questions about how Christians can resolve differences biblically. I hope you'll visit there as well.

[Order in the Court of the King! Volume I](#)

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