

**“Through the Bible in a Year with Pastor Don and the FBC Family”**  
**June 14, 2016**

- ✓ **2 Chronicles 33:1–34:33.** Manasseh and Josiah.
- ✓ **1 John 2:18–27.** The anti-Christ.
- ✓ **Psalm 105:1–22.** Remember His faithfulness.

**COMMENTS:**

**2 Chronicles 33:1–34:33.** The Chronicler detailed the despicable acts of King Manasseh who indulged in every evil act of idolatry, sorcery, and astrology. The writer of Kings blamed Manasseh’s reign for the Lord’s destruction of Jerusalem and the deportation to Babylon (2 Kgs. 21:10–15). However, during his exile, he repented and God answered by returning him to Jerusalem (2 Chronicles 33:10–13). Upon his return Manasseh repaired the temple and renewed proper worship. King Josiah reigned for thirty-one years (640–609 B.C.) and walked in the way of the Lord as David had done (2 Kgs. 22:1–2). For the author of Kings, Josiah’s significance was second only to David’s. Therefore, more attention is devoted to his reign in Kings than in Chronicles. In 2 Chronicles 34:3–7 we have the religious reforms that began in Josiah’s eighth year (632 B.C.), when he was about 16 years old. The purge of idolatry and high places extended to northern towns as well as Judah, indicating that Josiah’s rule was expanding into the old Northern Kingdom without Assyria’s interference. Note the discovery of a copy of the Word of God, the Pentateuch, in 34:14–33. Strange as it may seem, the Books of Moses had apparently been destroyed except for this one copy preserved in the temple. How or when this happened is a mystery, but the most likely occasion was the almost complete eradication of the worship of the Lord and the destruction of all copies of God’s Word in the days of Manasseh and Amon. The faithfulness of God made sure that all copies were not destroyed. Thanks be to God that He is always in control.

**1 John 2:18–27.** In verse 18 we have the introduction of the antichrist. The mention of “as you have heard,” indicates that the teaching of the coming antichrist was well known to his readers. Let us note some details on the antichrist: The general concept of a powerful end-time figure opposed to God is found in Jewish apocalyptic writings, and it is probably in these writings that the background to the author’s antichrist concept is to be found. Within the NT four main passages reflect this concept, even though only 1 and 2 John use the actual term ‘antichrist’. The passages are 2 Thess. 2:1–12; Matthew 24/Mark 13; 1 and 2 John, and Revelation 12–13. The information can be most easily presented in the following columns:

**2 Thessalonians 2**

**Matthew 24/  
Mark 13**

**1 and 2 John**

**Revelation 12–13**

Man of lawlessness is coming (2:3)

False Christs/prophets shall come (Matt 24:4–5, 11, 24; Mark 13:22)

Antichrist is coming (1 John 2:18)

John sees the beast rising from the sea (13:1)

He opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god (2:4)

The beast from the sea blasphemes God (13:5–6)

He takes his seat in the temple, and proclaims himself God (2:4)

Desolating sacrilege standing in the holy place (Matt 24:15–16; Mark 13:14)

Humans forced to worship an image of the beast from the sea (13:4)

When I was with you I told you about this (2:5)

I have told you beforehandAs you have heard, (Matt 24:25; Mark 13:23) antichrist is coming (1 John 2:18)

John informs his readers of what is to come (passim)

You know what is restraining him (2:6)

To be revealed in his time (2:6)

Mystery of lawlessness already at work (2:7)

Now there are already many antichrists (1 John 2:18)

Lawless one to be slain by Christ at his *parousia* (2:8)

Coming of lawless one with great signs and wonders (2:9)

False Christs/prophets will show great signs and wonders (Matt 24:24; Mark 13:22)

The beast from the earth performs miraculous signs to deceive the inhabitants of the earth (13:11–14)

To deceive those who perish (2:10)

They lead many astray. They lead astray, if possible, even the elect (Matt 24:4, 11, 24; Mark 13:22)

I write about those who would deceive you (1 Jn 2:26) Many deceivers have gone out into the world (2 John 7)

The beast from the sea makes war against the saints (13:7)

They will say, Lo Christ is here (Mt 24:26; Mk 13.21)

The antichrists are those who deny Jesus is the Christ (1 John 2:22; 2 John 7)

The antichrists are identified as the secessionists (1 John 2:18–19; 2 John 7)

A number of things significant to our understanding of 1 John 2:18–27 can be seen in the table above. First, it is clear that the coming of a powerful ‘antichrist’ figure was part of early Christian teaching. Three traditions imply that this information was given ‘at the beginning’. Second, in early Christian teaching a distinction was made between the great antichrist figure who will appear near the very end and the lesser antichrist figures whose influence is already being felt. Third, it was widely recognized that the function of both the antichrist figure and those who preceded him was to deceive people. Fourth, in all sources except 1 and 2 John, the antichrist figures attack the church from without. Sometimes the portrayal of these figures has clear political overtones (Matthew/Mark, Revelation). Fifth, only in 1 John are antichrist figures identified as erstwhile members of a Christian community. The evidence for this fifth point is found in 2:19. One of the questions that arises in respect to the antichrists is whether we are to regard them as purely human phenomena, or whether we are to see behind them some spiritual force. While the passages from Matthew/Mark, 2 Thessalonians, and 1 John might be interpreted in terms of human adversaries alone, Revelation 12–14 certainly cannot. There the ‘beast’ stands over against human beings. While the antichrists are experienced now as human entities, behind them there is another force making war against God and his people.

**Psalm 105:1–22.** Psalm 105 reads like a record of God’s faithfulness to Israel—a scrapbook of His work in their lives. To help them remember, the psalmist details each memory, beginning with the great patriarchs with whom God initiated and renewed His covenant—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God didn’t choose these men because of their spotless lives. He was true to Israel, protecting, guiding, and reprimanding them when they were unfaithful and forgetful. Although the psalmist is remembering God’s work and encouraging others to do the same, he ultimately shows that God’s act of remembering should ignite our praise. “He remembers His covenant forever, the word that he commanded for a thousand generations” (105:8). We certainly do not deserve God’s grace and love. Despite our often wayward lives, God remains faithful. This psalm illustrates the point that we shouldn’t live in ignorance of His faithfulness. Knowing that He’ll “remember His wonders that He has done” (105:5), we can live lives of thankfulness and praise. Christians often say in frustration, “I just wish I knew the will of God.” A good response is 1 Thessalonians 5:18: “*in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.*” It is certainly a good place to start and far more important than many of the details that so concern us that really do not have God’s interest at heart.

*Romans 11:36 For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen.*

*Pastor Don*