

24. Virtuous violence must always find its permission from principles of divine establishment:
 - (1) internally through jurisprudence and
 - (2) externally through military organizations.
25. The only virtuous violence outside these two is in the case of self-defense which is partially justified by the principle of the right to bear arms in the U.S. Bill of Rights.
26. In the Tribulation, when these systems of virtuous violence are suppressed by organized evil, the only violence left which is greater is divine violence.
27. Jesus Christ returns in righteous indignation to eradicate concentrated organized evil from the earth.
28. Since disorganized evil leads to organized evil, the genesis of the problem is found in the amalgamation of individual reversionism into collective reversionism each soliciting divine discipline:

Arrogance in any of its myriad forms is a “life of deceit.” The arrogant believer denies the results of his own bad decisions and ignores the warning discipline that God adds to his self-induced misery. If he is a moral degenerate, he practices sin and evil behind a façade of respectability. Preoccupied with his own righteousness and zealous to convert others to his brand of human good, he refuses to believe that he causes most of his own trouble or that God is trying to get his attention through suffering. If he is an immoral degenerate, his sins will be more blatant. He may blame circumstances or environment for his behavior. He may claim to be no worse than others by fallaciously comparing his few strengths against their weaknesses. He may look upon his sins as isolated exceptions rather than as the consistent trend of his life.

Both moral and immoral degeneracy attempt to justify self, but both are equally abhorrent to God. The only way God can break through the “life of deceit” is with pain that strikes the degenerate believer in his particular area of sensitivity. God “Makes war against the arrogant” (Proverbs 3:34; James 4:6; 1 Peter 5:5), attacking arrogance where the discipline will hurt most and be most effective.⁶

⁶ R. B. Thieme, Jr., *Christian Suffering*, 3d ed. (Houston: R. B. Thieme, Jr., Bible Ministries, 2002), 41.

29. The Lord's political authority is illustrated in Scripture with the term "rod of iron." The Hebrew word for "rod" is שֵׁבֶט (*shebet*): scepter, and is found in:

Psalm 2:9a - 'You shall rule them [the nations] with a rod [scepter] of iron ... (NASB)

2:9. Iron scepter. The scepter was representative of kingship, and iron was symbolic of strength.¹

In the kingdom age, He (Jesus) will rule as King of kings, and Lord of lords (Revelation 19:16), the *one* absolute and sole Sovereign of the earth. His unflinching sternness in dealing with recalcitrants is depicted in His breaking offenders with a rod of iron (Psalm 110:5–6; Revelation 2:27; 12:5; 19:15).²

שֵׁבֶט (*shebet*). The first occurrence of *shebet* in Scripture occurs at Genesis 49:10,³ a passage widely understood to be messianic ... here it must mean scepter. Ultimately, one from Judah will have reigning authority. (p. 4:27)

Shebet occurs in yet another putative messianic passage, 2 Samuel 7:14.⁴ In this case it does not mean the scepter of a ruler, but rather the rod of discipline on David's offspring employed by authorities under the direction of God. Ultimately, this discipline fell on Messiah, who bore our sin (2 Corinthians 5:21). Thus its use here approaches the most common understanding in Old Testament poetic literature. (pp. 4:27–28)

The most common understanding of *shebet* in the poetic literature of the Old Testament is that of a rod of discipline employed by one in authority, as in the case of a father for remedial punishment, civil authorities for penal use, or God. This is perhaps the idea of Psalm 2:9 as well, where God's Messiah wields a rod (*shebet*) of iron over opposing nations, suggesting both authority and discipline.

The New Testament affirms the messianic intent of Psalm 2:9 and 45:7 by applying these to Christ using *rhábdos* [ῥάβδος] in Revelation 2:27 (12:5; 19:15) and Hebrews 1:8 respectively.⁵ (p. 4:28)

¹ John H. Walton, Victor M. Matthews, and Mark W. Chavalas, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament* (Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP Academic, 2000), 519.

² Merrill F. Unger, *Unger's Commentary on the Old Testament: Genesis —Song of Solomon* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1981), 1:751.

³ "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until Shiloh comes, and to Him shall be the obedience of the peoples." (NASB)

⁴ "I shall be a father to him [Solomon] and he will be a son to Me; when he commits iniquity, I will correct him with the rod of men and the strokes of the sons of men." (NASB)

⁵ David M. Fouts, "שֵׁבֶט," in *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*, gen. ed. Willem A. VanGemeren (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997), 4:27–28.

2 Thessalonians 2:8 - At that time [international notoriety], the lawless one [**Beast-Dictator**] will be revealed whom the Lord will later annihilate with the breath of His mouth [**virtuous violence**]. In fact, He shall neutralize him by means of the sudden appearance of His Second Advent [**παρουσία (parousía)**]; (EXT)

2 Thessalonians 2:9 - that is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, (NASB)

30. Verse 9 continues by repeating the term *parousía* which is translated, “whose coming.” The word was used in verse 8 to make reference to the Second Advent of Christ.
31. Some confusion may occur here so we must revisit verse 8. Note it begins with the statement, “At that time, the lawless one will be revealed.”
32. Verses 8 and 9 would be more easily understood if what follows in the remainder of the verse 8 were placed within a parenthesis thusly, (...):

2 Thessalonians 2:8 - At that time [international notoriety], the lawless one [**Beast-Dictator**] will be revealed [whom the Lord will later annihilate with the breath of His mouth. In fact, He shall neutralize him by means of the sudden appearance of His Second Advent]; (EXT)

v. 9 - that is, the one whose coming [**παρουσία (parousía)**] is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, (NASB)

1. In verse 9, the one “whose coming” is that of the Beast Dictator, referred to as the “lawless one” in verse 8. In verse 9, his coming is described as *parousía*. When applied to Jesus, it refers to the Second Advent; when to the Antichrist, it refers to his international celebrityship.

2. At the mid-point of the Tribulation, the Beast-Dictator will be “presented” on the world stage as the “one everybody has been looking for.” At his “coming-out party,” he breaks his alliance with the false prophet whom he had made dictator and religious leader of Israel.
3. The two had entered into an alliance when the Jews discerned they were being targeted by kings of the North (present-day Russia), the Southeast (Arabia), and the East (China).
4. The Jews came to realize they were the potential target of a multinational struggle to seize Israel, whose geographic location was the commercial gateway to three continents. Then the false prophet went into a treaty with the West’s Beast-Dictator for protection.
5. Satan begins to promote his selected front man to bring about his strategy of not only acquiring maximum power, but in so doing, to have the opportunity to destroy Israel.
6. When Satan observes the power and influence his selected personality is able to achieve, he uses him as the central figure in pursuit of his global enterprise:

For a time the covenant between the two dictators provides Israel with a false sense of security. But in the middle of the seventieth week [3½ year mark of Daniel’s 70th heptad], the dictator of the Revived Roman Empire indwelt by an enraged and avenging Satan breaks his treaty, eliminates the Jewish sacrifices in the Temple, and demands that he be worshiped as God (Daniel 12:11). At this point, a statue of the king of the West, the “abomination of desolation,” is set up in the Holy of Holies. All who fail to worship the image are put to death (Revelation 13:15).

To believers who know the Word of God, the erection of the abomination of desolation is the signal to flee to the mountains where they are to remain for the next three and one half years (Matthew 24:15–16).⁶

⁶ R. B. Thieme, Jr., *Armageddon*, 2d ed. (R. B. Thieme, Jr., Bible Ministries, 2002), 18.

7. The Beast-Dictator's celebrity status is made possible by "the activity of Satan," which is the noun, **ἐνέργεια (enérgeia)**: "energy, working, operation, modus operandi."
8. This word refers to the Beast-Dictator being energized and motivated by a system he is indwelt to execute.
9. Consequently, the Beast-Dictator functions under the power of the indwelling Satan to implement the strategy and tactics of the Dark Side's agenda.
10. The Greek: **Σατανᾶς (Satanás)** and Hebrew: **שָׂטָן (Śatan)** are defined as "adversary" in both Testaments. He is the adversary of God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, and believers of every dispensation.
11. Satan has been inspiring human agents to join the Dark Side since Cain murdered Able in the garden.
12. One of his favorite tactics is duplicity, defined as, "contradictory doubleness of thought, speech, or actions; especially the belying of one's true intentions by deceptive words or action."⁷
13. The personality profile for the Antichrist includes intelligence, cunning, and guile. The candidate must be clever, but with the capacity to use his intellect to deceive.
14. One of his major strategies to acquire a following is to promise benefits and advantages to a target audience. This is actually a rhetorical veil that conceals while advancing a hidden agenda.

⁷ Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 11th ed., s.v. "duplicity."

15. Magicians fool their audiences with illusions described as “sleight of hand” by two English words: **(1)** from French, “legerdemain”: *leger* [light] *de main* [of hand]) and **(2)** “prestidigitation” from French *preste* (quick) and Latin *digitus* (hand).⁸
16. Verbal magicians do the same thing, but by using their tongues instead. They adroitly construct sentences in such a way so they present a rhetorical veil that conceals while advancing their hidden agenda.
17. Those using this strategy include two major profiles: **(1)** the obvious tyrant and **(2)** the insidious deceiver.
18. History documents a long roster of tyrants such as Egypt’s Pharaoh Ramses II, Babylonia’s King Nebuchadnezzar, and Assyria’s King Sennacherib from Old Testament times, Roman emperors Tiberius, Caligula, and Nero just in the first century A.D., and, not to exclude the French, Kings Louis XIV and XV who at their deaths were hated by the people. The American colonists viewed England’s King George III as a tyrant.
19. The twentieth century has its long-line of dictators who ruled Russia, China, Cuba, Iraq, and various nations in Africa, and South and Central America.
20. These are only a few fairly recent examples of personalities whose distinctive character traits Lucifer finds intriguing in his ongoing research for the ideal Antichrist.
21. Verse 9 ends with the phrase “with all power and signs and false wonders.”

⁸ Ibid., s.vv. “legerdemain,” “prestidigitation.”