

stead of the God (cp. Romans 1:25).

4. The Church Must Be Completed (2:13-17)

The Day of the Lord relates to the Jews and the World, but not to the Church. It is a day of God's wrath, and the Church is not destined for wrath (1Thessalonians 1:10; 5:9). The purpose of the Tribulation is the punishment of the unbelieving Gentile world and also the purification of the Jewish nation, which by this time has fully returned to its own land in unbelief.

But Antichrist cannot begin his rise to power until Christ has taken the Church from the earth. What a contrast between the Church and the followers of Antichrist! We have been saved by believing the Truth (1:10); they will be damned because they believe a lie (v.10 –11). We have believed the good news of the Gospel; they believe the false promises of the devil. We who believe in Christ have been chosen for heaven; they are destined for hell.

A Summary of the events is as follows:

- (1) **The Church** will be 'Raptured' to heaven before the Antichrist (1Thessalonians 4:17).
- (2) **The Antichrist** will begin his rise to power in a peaceful way (1Thessalonians 5:1-2).
- (3) **The Antichrist** (Beast) will unite Europe (Revelation 17:17) and make a seven year covenant with Israel to protect it (Daniel 9:27).
- (4) **The Antichrist** will break that covenant after three and a half years, invade Israel and take over the world (Daniel 9:27; 12:11).
- (5) **The Antichrist** will abolish all religion and set himself up to be worshiped (Daniel 11:31; 2Thessalonians 2:4; Revelation 13:4).
- (6) **Christ will return to earth** at the end of the seven-year tribulation period and destroy the Antichrist and his system (Matthew 24; 2Thessalonians 2:8; Revelation 19:19-20).

Five wonderful applications (vv.13-17)

1. Relax in God's Purposes (v.13). We have been chosen to be delivered – 'Raptured' - before the Day of the Lord comes.

2. Rest in Christ (v.14). You are eternally secure through the Gospel and will soon share in the glory of Jesus Christ in heaven.

3. Stand fast! (v.15). Don't be moved by world convulsions, political upheavals, financial crises or religious apostasy. All these things must take place, but God is still on the throne. As the end of the age draws near, it will be more and more difficult to live for Christ and serve Him, but stand firm (Revelation 3:11).

4. Hold on to the Word of God (v. 16). Don't listen to the lies of the devil—the teachings of the cults, the sugar-coated promises of false teachers. Hold to the Word of God! We have in Christ and His Word eternal *encouragement and good hope*.

5. Keep on working (v.17). Keep "Doing every good word and work" (v.17). Keep on giving out the Word; keep on working for Christ. As we win others to Christ, we are building up Christ's Church and when it is completed, it will be caught away to glory. As long as the Church is in the world, Satan's program of wickedness is held back. These are great and challenging days. May we be found faithful when Jesus comes! If you are not sure if you will be included in the Rapture, then please speak to me as soon as possible. © Notes by Dr. Warren Wiersbe and Andy Hollier.

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The Day of the Lord is Coming

2Thessalonians 2



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THE DAY OF THE LORD

2Thessalonians 2

In 2Thessalonians 2, the apostle Paul arrives at the heart of his letter, with his explanation about the future **Day of the Lord** and the Antichrist called the **Man of Sin**.

These early Christians were “troubled” and all “shaken up” instead of being established and encouraged (1Thessalonians 3:2, 13), because they had been told (falsely) that the **Day of the Lord** was already here (v.2). Paul explains that certain events must first take place before this day of God’s wrath and judgment can come to the world.

What is the Day of the Lord? It is a Biblical term used mostly to describe the events of the 7 year Tribulation time that is yet to take place on earth. It also covers the return of the Lord, His kingdom on earth, and the events at the close of Christ’s 1000 year reign on earth.

However, predominantly the phrase is used throughout the Old and New Testaments to clearly define the coming Antichrist, his powerful rule, the catastrophic natural disasters and the judgements of God upon this world. It culminates with the return of Christ as King of Kings and Lord of Lords, who will save his people; deliver Israel in the battle of Armageddon; destroy the Antichrist; bind Satan and his power and establish the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. Then Jesus the Messiah, will be enthroned as the true King over his kingdom of love and peace on earth.

(cp. **Day of the Lord** – Isaiah 2:10-21; 13:6-13; Hebrews 12:25-29; Joel 2; 3:12-18; Zephaniah 1; Amos 5:18-20; Matthew 24:3-30; 2Thessalonians 2:1-12; Revelation 6:12-17).

1. The Apostasy Must Take Place (2:1-3)

The word “apostasy” means “a falling away.” Here it refers to a falling away from the truth of the Word of God. While there were certainly false teachers in Paul’s day, the church at large was united on the truths of the Word of God. If you met another Christian, you knew he believed in the Word of God, the deity of Christ and salvation by faith in Christ. This is certainly not true today! We live in a day of “Christian unbelief”. People say they are Christians, yet deny the deity of Christ, the inspiration of the Bible, and so on.

This apostasy, or falling away from the truth, was foretold by Paul in 1Timothy 4 and 2Timothy 3. We are living in apostate days right now, which indicates that the coming of the Lord is near. Much of the professing church (Christendom) has departed from the faith.

2. The Temple Must Be Rebuilt (2:4-5)

Paul foretells the rise of a world dictator, the “man of sin... son of perdition” (v.3). He is not talking about a world system, but a person who will head up a world system. This “man of sin” contrasts with Christ, the Saviour from sin. He is the son of perdition; Christ is the Son of God. He is the liar; Christ is the Truth.

This man is called “the Antichrist,” which means both “against Christ” as well as “in place of Christ.” This world dictator will be energised by the devil (2Thessalonians 2: 9) and will unite the nations behind him as a much needed world ruler (Revelation 13:8,12; 17:17).

According to Revelation 17, the Antichrist will cooperate with the apostate world church in his rise to power and then he will destroy this religious system when he doesn’t need it anymore.

Both the OT and NT predict the return of the Jews to Palestine and the rebuilding of the Jewish temple (Daniel 9:27). Jesus taught in Matthew 24:15 - that the Antichrist will set him-

self up in the (rebuilt) temple in Jerusalem (cp. Revelation 11:1-2). Jesus refers to this “*abomination of desolation*”, spoken of by Daniel (Daniel 11:31).

One ‘**major reason**’ this did not happen in AD 70 or AD 100, is because the Antichrist will be occupying the Temple in Jerusalem, when Christ physically returns to destroy him—see (2Thessalonians 2:8).

3. The Restrainer Must Be Removed (2:6-12)

Satan’s mystery of iniquity is already working in the world (v.7) and we can see its godless activities increasing rapidly. But what is holding back Satan’s evil program and the rise of the Antichrist?

God has a “*restrainer*” in the world, which we believe is the Holy Spirit working in and through the Church. ‘The One’ who hinders is the Holy Spirit, (v.7) and he will continue to hinder Satan’s activities until he is “*taken out of the way*” when the Church is Raptured.

Of course, the Spirit will still work on earth, since people will believe in Christ the Messiah and be saved after the Rapture; but his hindering ministry through the Body of Christ will end. This will give Satan free course to fill the cup of iniquity to the full.

Satan will work through the Antichrist in miraculous powers (vv.9-10), just as the magicians in Egypt imitated Moses’ miracles. He will imitate Christ’s powers (Acts 2:22) and get the world to accept and worship him. Men would rather believe a lie than the truth!

Of course, true believers who are saved after the Rapture will not be deceived; it is the lost who will be deluded and ultimately end up in hell. They will believe the lie (2Thessalonians 2:10-11), which is worshipping and serving the Antichrist and Satan in-