

# “Coming Of The Antichrist”

## 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12

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**Teaching Aim:** To explore the circumstances surrounding the coming of the Antichrist. To understand why the Thessalonian believers were struggling from the message found in a counterfeit letter, supposedly from Paul. To realize the coming of Antichrist will coincide with the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. To recognize three things must take place before the Day of the Lord occurs: 1. The falling away (or apostasy of the Church); 2. The man of sin will have to be revealed; and 3. The restrainer will have to be removed.

### **DIGGING DEEPER INTO GOD’S WORD (BIBLE STUDY)**

#### **Part I: Concerning the coming of the Lord and our gathering to Him (2 Thess. 2:1-3a)**

1. The Thessalonian believers had been misled by a counterfeit letter claiming to be from the Apostle Paul. This letter led some to believe they had missed the Rapture and were now living in the Day of the Lord (the Day of God’s judgment on earth). In Paul’s first epistle to the Thessalonians, he had described the future Rapture of the Church in order to encourage the young believers. (See **1 Thess. 4:16-18**) In **1 Thess. 5:9**, he also taught the Thessalonian believers that *“God did not appoint them to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.”* Why do you think the Thessalonian believers were so troubled by a letter that was counterfeit (**vv. 1-2**)?
  
2. Just 6 months to a year after Paul wrote 1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians, he sat down and wrote 2<sup>nd</sup> Thessalonians to address the issues raised in this counterfeit letter. What message did Paul bring to the Thessalonian believers in **verse 3a**? According to **verse 3**, the Day of the Lord will not come unless what two things happen first? What is meant by *“the falling away”* or *“apostasy?”* In your opinion, does the visible church appear to be getting stronger or weaker today? What are the underlying factors behind this?
  
3. William MacDonald writes, *“We can only surmise that [the falling away] refers to a wholesale abandonment of Christianity, a positive rejection of the Christian faith.”* (See **1 Tim. 4:1; 2 Tim. 4:3-4**) The abandonment of Christianity will lead to a powerful world leader coming onto the scene; this leader will seem to have the answers to the world’s problems. This world leader will initially appear to be friendly and a man of peace – but then all hell will break loose!

4. *“The man of sin”* is also called by some translations *“the Man of lawlessness.”* Who is this individual? What can we learn about him from **verse 3**? **Revelation chapters 6-19** describe the horrible period of human history in which Antichrist reigns. The Antichrist will be so evil, that once revealed, he will most-likely make Adolph Hitler look like a choir boy by comparison. Some have speculated that the Antichrist will be of Jewish descent. Why? (See **Dan. 11:37**; **Gen. 49:17**)
  
5. What kind of characteristics do you expect to see in the Antichrist? In what ways will he be different from the Lord Jesus Christ? (See **Isa. 53:1-5**; **Mark 10:44-45**) According to **Dan. 9:27**, what will the Antichrist do at the middle of the 70<sup>th</sup> week of Daniel (the tribulation)? How did Jesus describe this ominous time in world history? (See **Matt. 24:21**)

**Part II: Three things that must happen before the Day of the Lord (2 Thess. 2:3b-7)**

1. The Antichrist will be so powerful in his political might that he will have full control of the world’s economic system. No human being will be able to buy or sell unless they worship Antichrist and receive his mark. What appalling act will the Antichrist do once he is in full control (**vs. 4**)? (See **Rev. 13:15-17**) What is the significance of the number 666?
  
2. According to **verse 5**, Paul had already spoken to the Thessalonian believers about the future Second Coming of Christ and Day of the Lord. There are many theories as to whom the restrainer is (**vs. 6**). Three of the most common are: 1) Michael the Archangel (See **Rev. 12:7-9**); 2. The Holy Spirit of God; 3. The Christian Church as it ministers under the power of the Holy Spirit. Who or what do you believe is restraining evil and the coming Day of the Lord? Why? When will the restrainer be removed?
  
3. What is a *“mystery”* in the Biblical sense? According to **verse 7**, what mystery is already at work in the world? What are some ways that you see lawlessness (or evil) at work in the world today? Why do you think God allows evil?

### **Part III: The coming of the lawless one and what to watch out for (2 Thess. 2:8-12)**

1. The lawless one will be revealed 3 ½ years into the 7-year tribulation (or time of Jacob's trouble). According to **verse 8**, what will happen to Antichrist at the Second Coming of Jesus Christ? (See **Rev. 19:19-20**)
  
2. What did Paul mean when he said in **verse 8**, "*whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming?*" (See commentaries) How did God originally bring the world into existence? (See **Gen. 1:1-3; Psa. 33:8-9; John 1:1-3**) Is it possible the breath of His mouth could be a spoken word from Jesus? (See **Rev. 20:10**)
  
3. What three persons comprise the unholy trinity? (See **John 8:44; 2 Thess. 2:3-4; Rev. 13:15-17**) Who is supplying the power and lies for the Antichrist and False Prophet to do these counterfeit miracles (**vs. 9**)? Should we believe someone just because they perform what appears to be a miracle? What should Christians judge everything against?
  
4. Will there be just one Antichrist or does the Bible teach their will be many? (See **1 John 2:18-19; 4:2-3**) What is the meaning of the word "*antichrist?*" (See Dictionary) What can we learn about the goal of Satan and his followers from **Isa. 14:12-15**?
  
5. Satan's mission is to deceive and destroy those who are following his unrighteous ways (**vs. 10**). (See **2 Cor. 4:3-4**) What truth can we learn about unbelievers from **verse 10**? Note: God does not arbitrarily send people to hell – people send themselves to hell by rejecting the God of the Bible and the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

6. What will God do as a result of the world loving and worshiping Antichrist instead of Jesus (**vs. 11**)? (See **John 5:43**) Those who reject Christ will be left to face the consequences of their sin. What will that consequence be? (See **John 3:36**) Have you ever reaped the consequences because of a sin that you've committed? How did the consequences of this sin affect you? Have you repented and turned back to God yet? If not, why not do so right now?
  
7. Does God take any pleasure in condemning the wicked (**vs. 12**)? (See **Ezek. 33:11a**)? What can we learn about the God of the Bible from **2 Pet. 3:9** & **1 Tim. 2:1-5**? Coming to saving faith in Christ is the only way a sinner can get to heaven. (See **John 3:16; 14:6; Acts 4:12**) Have you repented of your sin and received Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord?

#### **MINER'S CORNER ~ *Manna to live by!***

- Christians should not believe everything they hear; they should check everything out against the Word of God.
- The Scriptures and the Scriptures alone are the authority for what we believe.
- The Thessalonian believers had been deceived into thinking they were living in the Day of the Lord, they were not; they were being persecuted for their faith in Jesus Christ.
- Antichrist will appear to be a friend of the Jews, but halfway through the 70<sup>th</sup> week of Daniel, he will turn on the Jews and declare himself to be God.
- Antichrist will take over the temple in Jerusalem and demand human worship.
- All power, signs, and lying wonders will accompany the arrival of Antichrist.
- At His return, Jesus Christ will overthrow Antichrist with the breath of his mouth – perhaps this implies through a spoken word.