

## 2 Thessalonians 2:1-9

### Verses 1-2

*Now we request you, brethren...that you may not be quickly shaken...* Word had reached Paul that false teaching about the return of Christ was circulating in the church at Thessalonica. It involved:

-A spirit (*pneuma*) – This would be an ecstatic prophetic utterance by someone.

-A message (*logos*) – Probably an oral statement

-A letter (*epistole*) – A letter or letters that were forged in Paul's name.

*With regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together to Him* – The word for coming is *parousia* and refers to the rapture which Paul spoke on in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.

*To the effect that the day of the Lord has come* – The false teaching was that they were already in the Day of the Lord. If this were true then what about the rapture? Had they missed it?

They clearly understood the rapture to be before the Day of the Lord or pre-tribulation.

*Day of the Lord* - In the critical text, which would refer to the tribulation period.

*Day of Christ* - In the majority text, which would refer to the judgment seat of Christ (1 Corinthians 1:8, Philippians 1:6, 10, 2:16. Regardless of which reading is correct the idea is that the rapture must occur before the Day of the Lord or the Day of Christ begins.

Paul now shows that three events must happen before the judgments of the Day of the Lord began.

### Verse 3

*It will not come unless the apostasy comes first* – This word means 'a falling away or defection'.

Some think this could refer to the rapture but more likely refers to the departure of both unsaved and saved from the truth of God's Word. It is called '*the apostasy*' and may refer to the worldwide anti-God attitude. 2 Timothy 3:1-5 describes this '*last days*' attitude.

*And the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction* - John calls this man *the antichrist* in 1 John 2:18. Jesus refers to Daniel 9:26-27 and calls this man *the abomination of desolation* in Matthew 24:15.

### Verse 4

*Who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship* – Satan has always desired to be like God and to be worshipped.

*He takes his seat in the temple of god, displaying himself as being God* – Clearly a reference to the antichrist and the actions of Daniel 9:27 and Matthew 24:15. This also indicates the temple will be rebuilt during the tribulation.

### Verse 5

*Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things?* – Paul regarded prophecy as important and taught it to the new believers in Thessalonica. Note some other details about the man of lawlessness in Revelation 13:1-8 specifically verse 5 where he speaks blasphemies for forty-two months or the last 3½ years of the tribulation.

### Verse 6

*And you know what restrains him now* – Paul had taught them who the restrainer was during his time there.

*So than in his time he may be revealed* – A reference to the man of lawlessness. His time of revealing cannot occur until the restrainer is removed.

### **Verse 7**

*The mystery of lawlessness is already at work* – John tells us that there are many antichrists in the world doing their work (1 John 2:28, 22, 4:3, 2 John 7). The mystery seems to be the future climax of lawlessness.

*Only he who restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way* – The restrainer appears to be the Holy Spirit indwelling the body of Christ. At the rapture His restraining influence through believers will be removed. The Holy Spirit himself will still be active during the tribulation.

### **Verse 8**

*And then that lawless one will be revealed* – Since the rapture is the removal of the restrainer in the church, it must occur before the revealing of the lawless one, therefore it must be pre-tribulational.

*Whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth* – Note Revelation 19:15.

*By the appearance of His coming* – Literally the 'brightness' of His coming. Note Matthew 17:2, Revelation 1:14, 19:12, 22:5.

### **Verse 9**

The lawless one is empowered by Satan. He is able to perform powerful signs and false wonders. He will be very persuasive. Note Jesus' words in Matthew 24:24.