



“When Evil is Unrestrained”

2 Thessalonians 2:6-12

“For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way, and then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming.”

2 Thessalonians 2:7-8

What we know about the Antichrist:

After the rapture of the Church, a man will rise in power to become the leader of the New World Order.

- The Apostle John called him Antichrist, which actually means “pseudo-christ,” for he will perform such amazing miracles, he will convince many people that he is, in fact, Christ.

- The Apostle Paul called him the “lawless one,” for he will use his evil powers and attributes to try to destroy the world.
- He will deceive Israel into making a seven-year treaty, only to break it after 3 ½ years by entering the temple in Jerusalem, desecrating it, and declaring himself to be God.
- God will use this event to open the eyes of the few remaining Jews, and “all Israel will be saved.” (Romans 11:26)
- Daniel said this world leader would rise from the revived Roman Empire and lead the whole world in that final battle against the Kingdom of God, but he will be defeated.

“For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work.”

- The spirit of the Antichrist has always been in the world. It manifests itself as the immoral “spirit of the age,” always anti-God, anti-Christ, and anti-family.
- Satan has always opposed God, and his legion of demons have harassed the men of God from the beginning, and we can see that same spirit of the Antichrist in the world today.
- In 2 Timothy 3:1-5, Paul described the spirit of the Antichrist as “*perilous times*.” The Greek word “perilous” describes the vile and vicious behavior of wild animals who are always on the edge of attack, ready to assault or kill.
- In 2 Timothy 3:13, Paul said such behavior would increase even during the church age;
 - *“Evil men and impostors will proceed from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived,”*
- But a day is coming when the evil of the Antichrist will be unrestrained, and the evil of men’s hearts will be uncontrolled.
- In Matthew 24, Jesus warned His disciples that wickedness and evil would increase just before His return;
 - *“Because iniquity (lawlessness) shall abound the love of many will wax cold,”* and by every measure, the level of wickedness

and evil in the world today has reached that level.

- The rate of murder, rape, robbery, theft, and assault is higher than at any other time in recorded history.
- The rise of pride, arrogance, hedonism, liberalism, lewdness, and the sexualization of society exceeds that of the Days of Noah, Sodom, and Gomorrah and the evil degradation of the Roman Empire.
- Evil is on the rise in the false worship of the one true God and in the worship of many false gods.
- However, the level of evil and wickedness we are witnessing today is nothing compared to what it will be during the last half of the tribulation.
- In Matthew 24, Jesus labeled the last 42-months as a time of:
 - *“Great Tribulation such as the world has never seen before, or will ever see again.”*

1. His Revelation – Vs. 6 – *“Now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time.”*

Paul’s purpose in writing this second letter to the Christians in Thessalonica was to assure them of two things:

- They, nor their loved ones who had died, nor those who were martyred for their faith in Jesus Christ, had missed the rapture of the Church.
- They were not living in the “Day of the Lord” because that day could not come on God’s prophetic calendar until the Great Apostasy had taken place, followed by the Rapture of the Church.
- Paul had taught these new believers about eschatology during the three successive Sabbaths he was with them.
- However, since Paul did not identify the “restrainer,” there has been much speculation as to who/what he meant.

- The Preaching of the gospel – when the truth of God’s Word is preached, Satan’s lies cannot succeed.
 - The Church – as long as the Church stands as the voice of truth, the Antichrist cannot take over.
 - Human Government – God established legal authorities to control the spread of evil.
- However, because all of these entities are dependent upon human power, they are impotent against the supernatural power of Satan.
 - While the Antichrist will be fully human, at some point in his activity, he will also become fully possessed by Satan.
 - Therefore, the only being that can restrain him is the Holy Spirit, and when God removes the Holy Spirit from the world, the people will get the freedom to control their own lives and make their own choices.

The two reasons why the man of sin is being restrained:

- That the man of sin will be revealed at the right time according to God’s plan for the redemption of lost man.
- That all those who were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world are ransomed, redeemed, and united with Him forever.

2. His Destruction – Vs. 8 – *“Whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming.”*

For seven years, the Antichrist will blaspheme God, command the world’s armies to go to war, and order the martyrdom of those who will not bow before him as God.

- But on the day Jesus comes again, the mightiest man in the world will be destroyed with the “breath” of the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords.
- Isaiah 11:4 – *“With the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked.”*
- After the Antichrist is destroyed, Jesus will also destroy his demonic system by *“the brightness of His coming.”*

- According to Revelation 20:10, the Antichrist, Satan, and all those who joined in their rebellion against God, including the False Prophet, will be thrown into the lake of fire, where they will be tormented forever.

3. His Deception – Vs. 9-10 – “*His coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders with all deceivableness of unrighteousness.*”

- The Antichrist is a “counterfeit Christ,” but he will have the supernatural power to mimic the true Christ and to do things in such a way as to convince the people that he is the Christ.
- He will demand everyone bow before him and worship him as God, and he will destroy those who won’t.

4. His Influence – Vs. 10 – “*With all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.*”

- Those who did not receive the truth to be saved will not be able to discern the truth, for God will send them a strong delusion to allow them to believe Satan’s lie.

**“The lost enjoy forever the horrible freedom they demanded,
and therefore enslaved.”**

C.S. Lewis
