

# The Man of Sin Revealed

II Thessalonians 2:1-12

Introduction:

- Paul is writing in response to some important questions raised by the Thessalonians. They received some wrong teaching or information and needed to be reminded of God's plan in the end times
- They thought they were in the Day of the Lord, or the Tribulation- probably because of the fierce persecution they were facing!
- The Thessalonians were afraid that they were in the Great Tribulation (a key aspect of the day of the Lord), and feared that they had missed the rapture. Paul gave them assurance that they were not in the Tribulation, and also gave them definite, discernable signs of the tribulation which cannot occur while the Church is still around
- Paul is not describing the events preceding the rapture- rather he is emphasizing this is how you will know that the Tribulation/Day of the Lord is here. First, the falling away, then the revealing of the Antichrist.

## I. **THE FALLING AWAY-** v. 3

- a. The rebellion or apostasy- falling away, or departure
- b. There will be a widespread departure from true faith and doctrine
  - i. This is an apostasy among those who once claimed to follow God (1 Timothy 4:1-3, 2 Timothy 3:1-5 and 4:3-4)
  - ii. At that time God used Apostles as prophets to reveal His word- now we have the completed Word of God! Sadly, people are still being led astray- and it will get worse!
- c. This part of the stage is already being set with the rapid decline in churches teaching doctrine, and Christians reading their Bibles
- d. The book of Jude has a lot to say on this subject
- e. Some have said this refers to the church's physical departure in the rapture
  - i. I don't think that is the emphasis, but it is definitely a logical result
  - ii. Without the true church, false doctrine will run rampant

## II. **THE MAN OF SIN-** v. 3-4, 8-9

- a. The Antichrist- The little horn of Daniel 7, Wicked one and the beast of Revelation 13:1-8
  - i. Terms means “against Christ.” There have been many antichrists (i.e. Pope), and there is the spirit of antichrist, but there is also the coming of the Antichrist (I John 2:18, 22, 4:3)
  - ii. We should not try and speculate
  - iii. Most Bible prophecy/eschatology experts believe the Antichrist will be the ultimate embodiment of what it means to be against Christ. In the end times, a man will arise to oppose Christ more than anyone else in history. Likely claiming to be the true Messiah, the Antichrist will seek world domination and will attempt to destroy the nation of Israel.
  - iv. He will no doubt live many years before the Great Tribulation, but he will only be revealed as the man of sin during that period.
- b. His character- who is he?
  - i. Man of sin- The idea behind the title man of sin is that he is the very embodiment of sin and lawlessness
  - ii. Son of perdition- means destruction, doom. It is really the opposite of salvation. To call him the son of perdition means his character is marked by destruction.
  - iii. The antichrist will try to come as a substitute for Christ
  - iv. He will appear as an outstanding leader who can help solve the world’s problems
- c. His strategy- what the man of sin does
  - i. Blasphemy in the Temple- v. 4
    - 1. He sits as God in the temple of God: The man of sin’s demand for worship will be so extreme, he will set himself up as God in the temple at Jerusalem, demanding this blasphemous worship from everyone
    - 2. The temple of God: This is a literal Temple (not there now)
    - 3. He sits as God in the temple: The specific Greek word for temple indicates not only the temple, but the most holy place. “It is not that he enters the temple precincts: he invades the most sacred place and there takes his seat. His action is itself a claim to deity.” (Morris) This is the

abomination of desolation spoken of by both Daniel and Jesus. (Matt 24:15-16, 21)

- ii. Showing himself that he is God: The man of sin is truly an Anti-Christ. Satan has planned the career of the man of sin to mirror the ministry of Jesus.
  - a. Both Jesus and the man of sin have a coming (2 Thessalonians 2:1 and 2:9).
  - b. Both Jesus and the man of sin are revealed (2 Thessalonians 1:7 and 2:3). Antichrist's arrival is also called a "Parousia" (coming) and "apokalupsis" (revelation)
  - c. Both Jesus and the man of sin have a gospel (2 Thessalonians 2:10-11).
  - d. Both Jesus and the man of sin say that they alone should be worshipped (2 Thessalonians 2:4).
  - e. Both Jesus and the man of sin have support for their claims by miraculous works (2 Thessalonians 2:9).

iii. Satan's usual tactic- deception, imitation, counterfeit

- 1. "Hath God said?" deceived Eve in the garden
- 2. Revelation 13:1-2- The Antichrist's power will come from Satan
- 3. If someone has spiritual power, signs, or wonders, those are not enough to prove they are from God. Satan can perform his own powerful works

d. God sends a strong delusion- v. 11

- i. Many will be deceived
- ii. This is a part of God's judgment- Romans 1:18, 24, 26, 28- "God gave them up..."
- iii. Light refused leads to light removed
- iv. Illustr- The example of Pharaoh
- v. It is my conviction that it will be impossible for one to be saved in that day if they rejected the Gospel in this day of Grace (v. 10)

III. **THE RESTRAINER**- v. 6-8 (let used to mean hold back, hinder, restrain)

a. The Holy Spirit

- i. Restraining force- v. 6
- ii. Restraining person- v. 7

- iii. Human government? No, it will be at its zenith! (mark of the beast= big strong overreaching government!)
  - iv. Gen 6:3, I Thess 5:19- The Restrainer is the Holy Spirit!
  - v. For now, Satan and the man of sin are being restrained. But at the right time, the Holy Spirit (He who restrains) will be taken out of the way.
  - vi. Illustr- cage suddenly opened at the zoo
  - vii. The **principle** of their working is now present (the mystery of sin is already at work). They will not bring a new wickedness, only an intensity of prior wickedness! (There is certainly already secret wickedness in high places!)
  - viii. The “mystery of iniquity” has taken over the politics, educational system in America, the news and entertainment outlets, the courts, and even many churches.
- b. In what sense is the Holy Spirit removed? Isn't God omnipresent?
    - i. The Rapture of the Church
    - ii. A reversal of Pentecost- John Walvoord
    - iii. The role of the church- salt and light
  - c. This is more proof for the Pre-trib position

#### Conclusion:

- Regarding the destiny of the Antichrist- He is destroyed at Jesus coming-v. 8
- V. 12- The sad destiny of unbelievers. It is sad, but true.
- We are free to make our choice, but we cannot change its outcome
- So, there is an urgency to the Gospel call!
- Make sure and examine our own hearts! Have we really trusted Christ, have we been born again by faith in Him?