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**BIBLE STUDY**

**Refuge Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ of the Apostolic Faith, Inc.**

588 S.E. 7th Street, Webster, FL 33597; (352) 568-2833

**Bishop James Hall, Pastor**

**Bishop M. Ruel McCoy, Sr., Diocesan**

**"THE DAY OF CHRIST IS AT HAND"**

**2 Thessalonians 2:1-8**

***II Thessalonians 2:1 "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and [by] our gathering together unto him,"***

Paul, in this first verse, is recognizing the fact that these things are valid to believe. He is not telling them not to believe in these things. He is saying, they might not be coming in just a few days. This was the stir in Thessalonica. They had decided that the second coming of Christ was to be immediately. Paul says, I believe it too, but let us look clearer to when this shall take place. All Christians should believe in the coming again of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is coming for those who are looking for Him. Our "gathering together unto Him", also known as the “rapture” is the same as the time when the trump of God blows in the sky, and we go to meet our Lord in the sky. The silver trumpet of redemption {the trump of the gathering} will blow, and we shall be changed in the twinkling of an eye to an incorruptible being.

***II Thessalonians 2:2 "That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand."***

Shaken (Gr. saleuō) denotes great anxiety and pain. The Thessalonians were deeply troubled about this matter. As that the day of Christ is at hand (lit., “as though the day of Christ is present”): These people thought the day of the Lord had already begun. This is the purpose of the letter. They had decided that His coming would be in the next few days or weeks, and they had been shaken in their spirit because of this. We do know that for each person there is no more than a 100 years to wait, because if they go the way of the grave, they die within 100 years. This really is not speaking of that. This is the fact that they were expecting Him to come while they were alive and were setting a time schedule on this. They were overly excited thinking the time was really soon. It is dangerous to set times. To build a doghouse, you don’t need a foundation. But you do need one to build a house. And to build a skyscraper, you need a deep foundation. Many want to be skyscraper Christians, but don’t want to pay the price of digging a foundation. Paul tells his readers not to be easily upset or troubled by false teaching. But if you’re not grounded in the truth of Scripture, don’t be surprised if you are unable to stand firm. The Thessalonians were being told that the day of the Lord [had] come that they had missed the rapture and were thus living in the tribulation! They were deceived in three ways. First, they were deceived by a prophecy a spiritual or religious utterance. Paul told them previously, “Don’t despise prophecies” (1 Thessalonians 5:20), but the devil tries to talk in the name of God too. That’s why John said we must “test the spirits” (1 John 4:1). Beware anyone who says, “God told me such-and-such,” if it doesn’t agree with God’s Word. Second, they were deceived by a message hearsay. You might still be doing things merely because “Mama said.” But the only legitimate messages we are to follow are those that agree with the message that comes from God. Third, they were deceived by a letter by things written down. Some of us need to change the books we’re reading and skip looking at the newspaper horoscope. Rat poison is 90% food. But it’s that last 10% that’s designed to kill. The standard of God’s Word must provide our foundation.

***II Thessalonians 2:3 "Let no man deceive you by any means: for [that day shall not come], except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;"***

Falling away (Gr. apostasia) is the great and final apostasy or repudiation of the Christian faith. The word apostasy means “a standing away from” in the sense of a falling away, withdrawal, or defection from the truth. It may be the result of persecution, false teachers, temptation, worldliness, inadequate knowledge of Christ, moral lapse, forsaking spiritual living and worship, or unbelief. While there are those in every generation who fall away, this will be a general condition prior to the revelation of the Antichrist. In classical Greek, the word apostasy was used of a revolt staged by a military commander. This "apostasy", spoken of here, as a falling away from the church was not evident then, but is certainly going on today in the church. Before the coming of the Lord, there will be a great falling away from the church.

***1 Timothy 4:1-5***

***1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;***

***2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;***

***3 Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.***

***4 For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving:***

***5 For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.***

***2 Timothy 3:1-5***

***1 This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.***

***2 For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,***

***3 Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,***

***4 Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;***

***5 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.***

The son of perdition, here, is speaking of the devil spirit in the antichrist. This is speaking of the man of perdition bringing sin in the church. Judas Iscariot was spoken of as son of perdition. This does not mean that it is Judas. Judas was a type of the antichrist. It means someone who has sold out to Satan. He is totally controlled by Satan.

***John 17:12 “While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.”***

***1 John 2:18-23***

***18 Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.***

***19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.***

***20 But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.***

***21 I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth.***

***22 Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son.***

***23 Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also.***

***Hebrews 10:39 “But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.”***

The reason people will listen to, and follow this man of sin, is that he will do wonders. The Bible says he will even be able to call down fire from heaven. This man of sin (“man of lawlessness”): has already begun his nasty work. This is the beast out of the sea (Revelation 13:1), the little horn (Daniel 7:8), and the false Christ who will aim to rule the world (Revelation 13:15–17). This is the Antichrist.

***II Thessalonians 2:4 "Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God."***

If he is not for Christ, he is antichrist. This has been the old devil's trick ever since Lucifer was thrown out of heaven. He wanted to be greater than God. He always appeals to the ego of man. His trick with Eve was telling her the fruit of the tree would make her wise like God. He lied then, and he has lied to the antichrist as well. He uses people vulnerable to believe his lies. The antichrist is not satisfied with being opposed to Christ, but actually wants to sit in the place of God in the temple. He appears as an angel of light.

***II Corinthians 11:14 "And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light."***

The agenda of hell is to deceive people. Eventually, the human preference for lies through Satanic deception will lead to the appearance of “the lawless one”. He will be empowered to bring the rebellion against God to ultimate fruition. The lawless one will exalt himself as the supreme object of worship and proclaim himself to be God (Revelation 13:5-8). You have to listen carefully to what people say—learn to discern. Know what you believe and why you believe it to protect yourself from the enemy’s lies.

***2 Timothy 4:2-4***

***2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine.***

***3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;***

***4 And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.***

***Matthew 15:9 “But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.”***

***Mark 7:7 “Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.”***

***Ephesians 4:14 “That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;”***

***Romans 1:21-25***

***21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.***

***22 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,***

***23 And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.***

***24 Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:***

***25 Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.***

There are several opinions of where he will be seated; some believe in the temple in Jerusalem, others believe that he will take his place as the authority in the church of the Christians. Paul many times spoke of the believers in Christ as the temple of God. We do know that a Moslem temple presently sits over the location of the temple in Jerusalem. One, or all of these things, perhaps, will happen. It really does not matter. Our job is to be so full of the Word of God that we will not be deceived into believing the antichrist. It is a dangerous thing to want to be God. Sitteth in the temple of God parallels the “abomination of desolation” (Matthew 24:15; Daniel 9:27; 11:31; 12:11). When the Antichrist desecrates the rebuilt temple in Jerusalem, he will usurp worship for himself.

***II Thessalonians 2:5 " Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?"***

***II Thessalonians 2:6 "And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time."***

Paul is reminding them that he had preached about these very things when he was with them. It is a wonderful thing to be looking for the soon coming of the Lord, but it is a bad thing to let it trouble you. Paul is saying, shame on you for not realizing that God will see you through whatever situation you find yourself in if you will put your trust in Him. The only reason the world is not as wicked as it could be is because something currently restrains the lawless one. “Ye know what withholdeth” literally means “restrains,” the same word translated “letteth” in verse 7. The restrainer is the Holy Spirit, who will restrain sin throughout the church age until “He be taken out of the way,” that is, until His restraining influence is removed. This will occur at the Rapture of the church. God has a time schedule when all of these things will happen. The man of sin cannot appear and do these things, until the Lord gives him permission to go ahead. Satan cannot do anything without permission from God to do it. Satan is not in control, the Lord is. The antichrist will appear on the scene when God gets ready for him to and not one minute earlier.

***II Thessalonians 2:7 "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth [will let], until he be taken out of the way."***

The mystery of iniquity (lawlessness) is Satan’s program of sin, and the one now restraining is the Holy Spirit working through the church. The Spirit sets himself up like a dam to hold back the full expression of evil until God removes his church out of the world at the rapture. The relationship of the church (and individual Christians) to the Holy Spirit affects the expansion or limitation of sin in our lives, our families, and the broader society. The presence of the Holy Spirit in this world to some extent restrains evil. Often this is accomplished through the presence of Christians who are the “salt of the earth”. At the Rapture, when Christians are removed and the age of the Holy Spirit ceases, this restraining ministry will be “taken out of the way” during the Great Tribulation. Until that time, God will use the godly examples of Christians to restrain evil in the world.

***2 Chronicles 7:14 “If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.”***

There has always been a battle going on with good and evil ever since the garden of Eden. Man has a free will. He can follow Jesus, or he can follow Satan. The antichrist would not have to be the antichrist if he would follow Jesus. The antichrist has chosen to be an instrument of Satan. We know this to be true, because we know that the spirit of the devil entered into Judas Iscariot, and he betrayed Jesus. The flesh of mankind has always been opposed to the spirit of mankind. The temptations of the flesh are what causes mankind to sin. The free will of mankind chooses to follow the flesh, or the spirit. Mystery is many times veiled around evil. We know that even Babylon is called, mystery Babylon. It is definitely a mystery why anyone would follow evil instead of good. The only answer to that, is they have fallen for a deception. All who oppose Christ are antichrist, but there is a person who personifies this in the end time, and he is the antichrist. When the restraining influence of the Holy Spirit as teacher and guide is removed, then the antichrist will bring lawlessness and sin like the world has never known. Even now this influence is working in the children of disobedience.

***Ephesians 5:1-8***

***1 Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children;***

***2 And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.***

***3 But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints;***

***4 Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks.***

***5 For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.***

***6 Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.***

***7 Be not ye therefore partakers with them.***

***8 For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:***

***II Thessalonians 2:8 "And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:"***

Then shall that Wicked be revealed (lit., “Then shall that lawless one be revealed”): Paul argues that the day of the Lord simply does not begin until the restraint by the Holy Spirit is removed, and the Antichrist is revealed. Since none of this had occurred, the day of the Lord had not yet come. The workings of the evil one are in the world even now, but the teaching by the Holy Spirit of God is keeping him from having the influence he would over the people. When that wicked day comes, the antichrist will have great power. He will no longer be working in secret and in a subtle way. "The Spirit of the Lord's mouth" is the Word of God. Truth does away with deception. The Word of God is Truth. His brightness is above all other brightness in the world. He is the source of all Light. His Light completely destroys darkness in the world. Darkness cannot remain where the Light is. This Light reveals all. We have spoken over and over how evil is the darkness of this world. We, also, know that Jesus Christ is the Light of the world. When these two meet, Jesus' Light does away with all darkness.

**QUESTIONS**

1. What is Paul recognizing in verse 1?

2. What was the stir in Thessalonica?

3. What is meant by "gathering together unto Him"?

4. What is the trump of gathering?

5. What will the Christians who are alive be turned into at His coming?

6. Be not soon shaken in \_\_\_\_\_\_, or be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, neither by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_, nor by \_\_\_\_\_\_, nor by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ as from us.
7. What is the purpose of this letter?
8. That day shall not come, except there be a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ away first.

9. What is this "apostasy"?
10. Who is the son of perdition?
11. Where does this son of perdition bring the sin?
12. Who was spoken of as son of perdition in one instance in the New Testament?
13. Why will people listen to this man?
14. What is one specific miracle he will do?
15. How high does this man of sin exhalt himself?
16. Those who are not for Christ are \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
17. The devil always appeals to the \_\_\_\_\_\_ of man.
18. Where do we find the Scripture that says, Satan is transformed into an angel of light?

19. What can we do to not be deceived by the antichrist?

20. What did Paul remind them of in verse 5?

21. Why can the man of sin not appear, when he wants to?

22. The \_\_\_\_\_ of man has always been opposed to the \_\_\_\_\_\_ of man.

23. What causes man to sin?

24. We know that Babylon is called \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Babylon.

25. What is the restraining influence?

26. What will happen when He is removed?

27. How shall the Lord consume that wicked one?

28. What is "the Spirit of the Lord's mouth"?

29. Who is the source of all Light?

30. Light does away with all \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.