

2 Thessalonians 2:1-12 (Daniel 7:16 and 11:45)

(Three handouts were referred to from these three online sources:

- The Preterist view and explanation of these verses by [Dr. Kenneth L. Gentry, Jr.](http://www.cmfnow.com/articles/pt550.htm) can be found here: <http://www.cmfnow.com/articles/pt550.htm>
- The origin of the pre-trib rapture teaching traced back to a vision in 1830 by an ill 15 year old girl name [Margaret Macdonald](http://www.askelm.com/essentials/ess025.htm) (see her prophecy [here](#)) in Scotland (an anti-pre-trib rapture paper) is found here: <http://www.askelm.com/essentials/ess025.htm>
- A history of scripture interpretation with academic references to scholars through the ages that alluded to the rapture mentioned by Paul in 1 Thessalonians. This is a paper designed to support the pre-trib view of the rapture by [Dr. David Reagan](http://www.lamblion.com/articles/articles_rapture6.php) of Lamb & Lion Ministries: http://www.lamblion.com/articles/articles_rapture6.php
- See notes concerning the history of modern rapture teaching pro- and con- here: http://www.generationword.com/notes/second_thessalonians/rapture-vision-origin.pdf

This section concerning the time of the Lord's coming (The Day of the Lord) is the primary reason for the letter. The reasons for the letter are three:

1. Chapter One – unjust suffering
2. Chapter Two – the time of the Day of the Lord
3. Chapter Three – the unruly, non-working

It appears the material written in 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 concerning “The Day of the Lord” has been confused by the Thessalonians. Paul had given them information in 1 Thessalonians so that this Day should not surprise them like a thief in the night. Teachers, scholars and interpreters have struggled for 1,900 years with chapter two of 2 Thessalonians. It is hard to recreate the exact problem because:

1. Even Paul does not know where the misinformation came from for sure.
2. Paul makes corrections in 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12 by referring several times to a lot of previous teaching by simply reminding them that he had already taught and explained certain pieces of information that he merely refers to in 2 Thessalonians.
3. Paul refers constantly to his oral teaching heard by the Thessalonians, but nowhere recorded for us
4. Paul uses apocalyptic imagery which is not clear.
5. The text Paul writes includes incomplete sentences and grammatical irregularities.

Our question should be to ask,

- What does this mean to the Thessalonians in 51 AD?
- What did they understand when they were told, ‘The Day of the Lord has already come.’

It seems the misinformation had been accepted because the Thessalonians of 51 AD were suffering some level of persecution that Paul has just referred to in chapter 1.

This persecution was assumed by some of the Thessalonians to be “clear evidence” that “The Day of the Lord” had either come or had begun.

But, Paul will make clear in this set of verses that the Day of the Lord will be preceded by some clear events and other events will clearly surround the manifestation of this Day.

So, clearly “NO” the Day of the Lord had not come to the Thessalonians in 51 AD.

Paul's answer can be broken down like this:

1. 2:1-2 – Paul urges them not to be alarmed by this false teaching or false prophecy.
2. 2:3-4 – The Day cannot come yet because certain events that Paul had already told them about must occur first. The most obvious event is the appearing of the man of lawlessness
3. 2:5-7 – Paul details what is preventing the Day of the Lord from coming. But, since Paul is reviewing information already taught here we are missing some important details.
4. 2:8-12 – Paul explains what will happen when the Day of the Lord does finally come.

2:1 - Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him, we ask you, brothers,

1. “concerning”
2. “THE” – the use of the one article “the” makes the two (“coming” and “gathered”) closely connected and parts of one bigger whole.

3. "coming of our Lord"
4. "our being gathered together to him"
 - a. Reference back to Paul's words of comfort in 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 concerning the **harpadzo** or the rapture.
 - b. Jesus referred to gathering his elect in Matthew 24:31 and Mark 13:27.

2:2 - not to be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed, either by a spirit or a spoken word, or a letter seeming to be from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come.

1. "quickly shaken in mind"
 - a. "shaken" refers to the "tossing of the sea" or the "swell of the sea" (used in Heb. 12:26).
 - i. An example would be a docked ship shaken loose from its moorings
 - ii. "shaken" is aorist infinitive indicating a sudden shock that would knock them off balance
 - b. "mind" is correctly translated "from your mind" so it would say "shaken from your mind"
 - i. "mind" is nous which is used to indicate "sobriety", "sense", "balanced judgment"
 - ii. They have been "shaken from logic and good judgment"
2. "alarmed" is **throeisthai** from **throos** meaning "clamor".
 - a. They have been "unsettled" and "thrown into confusion"
 - b. "alarmed" is present infinitive which indicates a continuing condition of being disturbed creating continuous worry.
 - c. Together "shaken" and "alarmed" are referring to both "sudden shock" and "continuous agitation" that the Thessalonians have been dealing with.
3. Paul lists three potential sources of the false teaching and the confusion, but he does not commit to any one of the three:
 - a. "spirit" refers to a prophecy from one of the members of the church
 - b. "word" refers to a sermon, lesson, or teaching
 - c. "letter" refers to a letter credited to Paul, but it was really a forgery (or, possibly a misunderstanding or misinterpretation of 1 Thessalonians)
4. It seems that Paul might have a hunch that the false information came from a prophecy because:
 - a. Paul anticipated confusion concerning prophecy in 1 Thessalonians 5:19-22
 - b. Paul ends this section of teaching in 2 Thessalonians 2:15 encouraging the Thessalonians to:
 - i. "stand firm"
 - ii. "hold to the teachings" they received from Paul by:
 1. "word of mouth" or "spoken word"
 2. "letter"
 3. But, he DOES NOT say "prophecy" or "spiritual utterance"
5. "The day of the Lord"
 - a. The Day of the Lord was more than Jesus coming back to earth, since this would have been easy to prove or disprove.
 - b. The Day of the Lord was a multifaceted episode that included many events.
 - c. So, the false report was saying that these events had already begun to occur
 - d. Jesus taught this same way in Mark 13
6. "has come" is the verb **enesteken**:
 - a. Does not refer to imminence of this event as is translated in the KJ → "is at hand" (although Vincent quotes Lightfoot who says it does.)
 - b. Refers to the actual presence of the Day of the Lord
 - c. The Day of the Lord is not merely a 24 hour period, but an involved period of time complete with a number of events and details that include:
 - i. The Second Coming
 - ii. Judgments
 - iii. Gathering of Israel
 - iv. Etc.
 - d. The period of time immediately before the Day of the Lord will include a time of distress:

2:3 – Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction. .

1. "deceive" – the Greek word means to both make a false impression and then lead astray.
2. "that day will not come, unless"

3. Two events are given as needing to yet occur before The Day of the Lord could take place:
 - a. "the rebellion" is apostasia
 - i. Used in NT here and Acts 21:21
 - b. "the man of lawlessness is revealed"
4. "revealed"
5. "The man of lawlessness"
 - a. Meaning
 - b. Historical options:
 - i. Caligula
 - ii. Titus
 - iii. Simon Magus
 - iv. Nero
 - v. Pope of Rome
 - vi. Martin Luther
 - vii. Muhammad
6. "the son of destruction"

2:4 - who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God.

1. Examples in history:
 - a. OT prophets identify pagan kings who considered themselves a god.
 - b. Roman general Pompey entered the Most Holy Place in Jerusalem in 63 BC
 - c. In 40 AD Emperor Caligula tried to set up a statue of himself in the Temple's Most Holy Place
2. Biblically Jesus referred to this when he himself referred to Daniel:
 - a. Matthew 24:15 -
 - b. Daniel 9:27 -

2:5 - Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things?

1. "used to tell you" - imperfect tense of the verb *elegon* so this verb and its tense stress the repeated action indicating it was Paul's custom to say these things over and over and over about the man of lawlessness.

2:6 - And you know what is restraining him now so that he may be revealed in his time.

1. Augustine writes concerning this verse: "I confess that I am entirely ignorant of what he means to say."
2. The "thing" that restrains or the "person" who restrains?
 - a. 2:6 says "what is restraining" which is referring to a "thing" in the Greek since it is neuter.
 - b. 2:7 says "the one who now restrains" is masculine in the Greek referring to a "person"
3. Who/What is the restrainer? Here is a brief list of historical teachings:
 - a. The Roman Empire
 - b. The Roman Emperor
 - c. Law and Order
 - d. Political Leaders in general
 - e. Proclamation of the Gospel
 - f. The proclaimers of the Gospel (even, Paul)
 - g. Power of God
 - h. God
 - i. Presence of the Church
 - j. Presence of the Holy Spirit in the Church
 - k. Force of Evil
 - l. Satan
 - m. False Prophecy
 - n. False Prophet
 - o. The Jewish Nation
 - p. James of Jerusalem
 - q.

2:7 - For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work. Only he who now restrains it will do so until he is out of the way..

2:8 - And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming.

1. This image of Jesus return is similar to Isaiah 11;4

2:9 - The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders,

2:10 - and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved.

2:11 - Therefore God sends them a strong delusion, so that they may believe what is false,

2:12 - in order that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.