

2 Thessalonians chapter 2

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Who are the antichrists and lawless people?

The day of the Lord has not yet come, and points out that two things must happen before Jesus returns:

1. Apostasy (2:3): A large-scale betrayal of the faith, which may refer to a crisis of faith within the church or in the world.
2. The lawless person is revealed (2:3-4, 8-10): that is, the "antichrist", who will exalt himself, resist God, and even claim to be God, and perform false signs to deceive people.

This reminds believers not to believe in speculation or unconfirmed prophecies about the end times, but to be grounded in the Bible and patiently await God's timeline.

The "lawless man" is the "son of perdition" (2:3), driven by Satan (2:9), who will deceive the unbeliever with false signs, wonders, and lies (2:9-10). He would exalt himself in the temple of God and claim to be God (2:4), which could symbolize extreme blasphemy against God's authority. There was a "power that hindered him" (2:6-7) to limit his full manifestation, but this power was eventually removed and the lawless one was revealed. Eventually, when Jesus returns, he will destroy him with "breath of his mouth" and "the glory that comes" (2:8).

In Revelation, antichrists are often thought to be associated with "the beast that came up from the sea" (Revelation 13:1-10) and "false prophets" (Revelation 16:13, 19:20, 20:10). These images may echo the "lawless man" in 2 Thessalonians 2:3-12, collectively pointing to an evil force that opposes God and deceives the world. The characteristics of antichrists include:

- **Authority and Deception:** The first beast received authority from the dragon (Satan) and spoke blasphemous words to deceive the world into worshipping it (Revelation 13:4-7).
- **The role of false prophets:** the second beast (coming up from the earth, Revelation 13:11-18) performed false miracles, promoted the image of the beast, and forced people to accept the "mark of the beast" (666).
- **Blasphemy and persecution:** The beast resisted God, persecuted the saints, and ruled for a period of time in the last days (Revelation 13:5-7).

The book of Revelation clearly describes the ultimate fate of the Antichrist and his forces, and here is a summary of the key verses and endings:

1. **Defeated by Christ (Revelation 19:11-21)**

- **Scripture Highlights:** Revelation 19:11-21 describes Jesus Christ's return as a "white horseman" as "King of kings and Lord of lords" to lead the heavenly armies against beasts and false prophets.
- **In the end:**
 - The beast and the false prophet were captured alive and thrown into the "lake of fire burning with brimstone" (Revelation 19:20).
 - Their army was slain by Christ's "sword out of the mouth" (God's Word and judgment) (Revelation 19:21).
- **Connection to 2 Thessalonians 2:** This is consistent with 2 Thessalonians 2:8, where Paul mentions that the Lord Jesus will destroy lawless people with "breath of his mouth" and "the glory that comes."

2. **Satan's End (Revelation 20:1-10)**

- Although the Antichrist (the beast and the false prophet) is already in the lake of fire, Revelation 20 further describes Satan's end:
 - Satan was bound for a thousand years and cast into a bottomless pit (Revelation 20:1-3).
 - A thousand years later, Satan was released to deceive the nations and launch a final rebellion (Gog and Magog, Revelation 20:7-8).
- Eventually, Satan was thrown into the lake of fire and suffered "day and night with the beast and the false prophets for and ever" (Revelation 20:10). The lake of fire represents eternal punishment and separation from God, showing the severe consequences of sin and evil while emphasizing God's justice.

3. **The Final Judgment and the New Heavens and New Earth (Revelation 20:11-22:5)**

- The defeat of the Antichrist marks God's ultimate judgment on the forces of evil. In the judgment of the Great White Throne, all those who are not written in the book of life will also be thrown into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:15).
- Subsequently, God created a new heaven and a new earth, the forces of evil (including antichrists) were completely destroyed, and the kingdom of God reigned forever (Revelation 21:1-5).

2 Thessalonians chapter 2 mainly discusses the teachings of the return of Jesus Christ and the revelation of the "antichrist". Paul clarifies the false rumors in the Thessalonian church that "the day of the Lord has come." He exhorted believers not to be easily moved or alarmed by false spirits, words, or letters. These rumors can lead to confusion among believers, even giving up their jobs or falling into panic. Paul explained that before Jesus returns, two things must happen: 1. Apostasy: There will be a large-scale betrayal of the faith. 2. (Antichrists), who will resist God, exalt themselves, and even sit in God's temple and claim to be God. Paul mentioned that this lawless man is driven by Satan to perform false signs and wonders to deceive those who do not believe in the truth. God will deceive those who do not love the truth, believe falsehoods, and eventually be condemned.

Paul thanked God for choosing believers to be saved by faith in the Word and the Holy Spirit. He encouraged believers to stand firm and hold fast to the teachings they received (whether orally or in letters). Finally, he prayed for God and Jesus Christ to comfort and strengthen the hearts of believers to stand firm in good deeds and good words. This chapter emphasizes that believers need to be wary of false teachers and misinformation, especially about the teachings of the end times and the return of Jesus. Before the Lord's return, lawless people will appear, bringing deception and betrayal, but they will eventually be destroyed by the Lord Jesus. Believers must hold on to the truth, stand firm in God's power, live a holy life in hope, and maintain hope and steadfastness in a chaotic age.

We pray together:

Dear Heavenly Father,

We thank You for reminding us through Your Word that in the last days there will be rebellion and the rise of the Antichrist. Help us to stay watchful, not deceived by false teachings or counterfeit signs, but firmly rooted in Your truth. Lord, keep our hearts from fear and instead fill us with a deep longing for the glorious return of Jesus Christ. May we hold fast to our faith until the end and be ready to share in the salvation and glory You have promised. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ we pray, Amen.

2 Thessalonians 2

Amplified Bible

Man of Lawlessness

2 Now in regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our ^[a]gathering together to *meet* Him, we ask you, ^[b]brothers and sisters, ² not to be quickly unsettled or alarmed either by a [so-called prophetic revelation of a] spirit or a message or a letter [alleged to be] from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has [already] come. ³ Let no one in any way deceive *or* entrap you, for *that day will not come* unless the ^[c]apostasy comes first [that is, the great rebellion, the abandonment of the faith by professed Christians], and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction [the Antichrist, the one who is destined to be destroyed], ⁴ who opposes and exalts himself [so proudly and so insolently] above ^[d]every so-called god or object of worship, so that he [actually enters and] takes his seat in the temple of God, publicly proclaiming that he himself is God. ⁵ Do you not remember that when I was still with you, I was telling you these things? ⁶ And you know what restrains him now [from being revealed]; it is so that he will be revealed at his own [appointed] time. ⁷ For the mystery of lawlessness [rebellion against divine authority and the coming reign of lawlessness] is already at work; [but it is restrained] only until he who now restrains it is taken out of the way. ⁸ Then the lawless one [the Antichrist] will be revealed and the Lord Jesus will slay him with the breath of His mouth and bring him to an end by the appearance of His coming. ⁹ The coming of the [Antichrist, the lawless] one is through the activity of Satan, [attended] with great power [all kinds of counterfeit miracles] and [deceptive] signs and false wonders [all of them lies], ¹⁰ and by unlimited seduction to evil *and* with all the deception of wickedness for those who are perishing, because they did not welcome the love of the truth [of the gospel] so as to be saved [they were spiritually blind, and rejected the truth that would have saved them]. ¹¹ Because of this God will send upon them a misleading influence, [an activity of error and deception] so they will believe the lie, ¹² in order that all may be judged *and* condemned who did not believe the truth [about their sin, and the need for salvation through Christ], but *instead* took pleasure in unrighteousness.

¹³ But we should *and* are [morally] obligated [as debtors] always to give thanks to God for you, believers beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through the ^[e]sanctifying work of the Spirit [that sets you apart for God's purpose] and by your faith in the truth [of God's word that leads you to spiritual maturity]. ¹⁴ It was to this end that He called you through our gospel [the good news of Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection], so that you may obtain *and* share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁵ So then, ^[f]brothers and sisters, stand firm and hold [tightly] to the traditions which you were taught, whether by word *of mouth* or by letter from us.

¹⁶ Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father, who has loved us and given us everlasting comfort *and* encouragement and the good [well-founded] hope [of salvation] by *His* grace, ¹⁷ comfort *and* encourage and strengthen your hearts [keeping them steadfast and on course] in every good work and word.

2 Thessalonians chapter 2 in detail and highlight its theological influence in English.

1. Overview of 2 Thessalonians 2

1. **Concerning the coming of Christ (vv.1–2):**
Paul warns believers not to be alarmed or deceived by false claims, prophecies, or forged letters suggesting that the "Day of the Lord" has already come.
 2. **The rebellion and the man of lawlessness (vv.3–4):**
Before Christ returns, there will be a great falling away (apostasy) and the appearance of the "man of lawlessness" (often identified with the Antichrist). He will exalt himself above God, even sitting in God's temple and claiming divine authority.
 3. **The restraining force (vv.5–7):**
Paul reminds them that something (or someone) is currently holding back the lawless one from being revealed until the appointed time.
 4. **The destruction of the lawless one (vv.8–10):**
When Christ comes, He will overthrow the man of lawlessness with the breath of His mouth and the splendor of His coming. This figure will deceive people with counterfeit miracles and lies, empowered by Satan.
 5. **God's judgment on unbelief (vv.11–12):**
Those who reject the truth will be handed over to delusion, believing lies, and will ultimately face condemnation.
 6. **Encouragement to believers (vv.13–17):**
Paul thanks God for choosing the Thessalonian believers for salvation. He urges them to stand firm in the apostolic teaching and prays that God will comfort and strengthen them.
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2. Detailed Explanation

- **The great rebellion (apostasy):** This refers to a large-scale turning away from true faith, both within and outside the church.
- **The man of lawlessness (Antichrist):** A figure of ultimate rebellion against God, echoing the prophecies in Daniel and Revelation. He seeks worship that belongs only to God.
- **The restrainer:** This is a debated subject. Possibilities include:
 - Political authority (such as the Roman Empire in Paul's time),
 - The Holy Spirit,
 - God's sovereign timing and order in history.
- **The Antichrist's fate:** Though powerful and deceptive, he is no match for Christ, who will destroy him effortlessly at His return.
- **Delusion and judgment:** Those who reject God's truth are given over to deception, showing that unbelief is not only rebellion but also brings divine judgment.

- **Standing firm:** Paul emphasizes holding fast to apostolic teaching rather than being swayed by false doctrines or new revelations.
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3. Theological Influence

1. **Eschatology (end-times teaching):**
This chapter provides one of the clearest outlines of events before Christ's return: apostasy, the Antichrist's revelation, restraint being lifted, and Christ's victory.
 2. **Christology (the person of Christ):**
Christ's return reveals His ultimate authority. Even the most powerful satanic force is destroyed by the mere breath of His mouth.
 3. **Human responsibility and judgment:**
People are judged not simply for ignorance but for rejecting the truth and delighting in wickedness.
 4. **The role of the church:**
Believers are called to resist deception, guard the truth, and remain steadfast in the gospel.
 5. **God's sovereignty:**
The fact that the Antichrist is restrained until God's appointed time shows that history unfolds under divine control, not chaos.
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✦ Summary:

2 Thessalonians 2 gives a sober but hopeful vision of the end times. It warns believers of apostasy and the rise of the Antichrist, but it also assures us that Christ's return will bring ultimate victory and judgment. The passage calls Christians to live faithfully, grounded in truth, and unshaken by deception.