

**The Coming Antichrist  
2 Thessalonians 1:1-12  
Part Four**

There is a song entitled, *"It Is Well With My Soul."* I would like to read to you the verses of this wonderful hymn.

*"When peace, like a river, attendeth my way, When sorrows like sea billows roll - What ever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say, It is well, it is well, with my soul.*

*My sin - O the joy of this glorious thought - My sin, not in part, but the whole is nailed to the cross, and I bear it no more; Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul.*

*And, Lord, haste the day when my faith shall be sight, the clouds be rolled back as a scroll: the trump shall resound and the Lord shall descend, "Even so" - it is well with my soul."*

If you are here this morning and know Christ as your Lord and Savior you will never experience the wrath of God either in the fires of hell or on earth during the period of time known as the Day of the Lord. Paul made this abundantly clear to the Thessalonians in **1 Thess. 5:9** when in the context of the Day of the Lord he said to them, **"For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ."** Do you believe this? Hopefully there is not a single individual here this morning that doesn't.

But just because you may be holding onto this basic truth, it is quite possible, if you are not careful, to become confused. We know this can be true because it was true of the Thessalonians. The Thessalonians knew that the Day of the Lord was coming. This was a time when God would pour out his wrath upon this earth. They believed, based on the clear teaching of Paul that they would not go through this period and therefore were expecting to be raptured, or caught up to be with Christ, before this particular period of time began to unfold. But even in spite of this belief they had begun to think otherwise and as a result had become fearful. If we are going to avoid fear associated with future coming judgments that the Scriptures have promised, then we need to avoid certain things.

We need to avoid being deceived. The Thessalonians unfortunately had not avoided this always present potential. Look at **VV. 1-2**, **"Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together to Him, (2) that you may not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come."** The Thessalonians had believed they would not go into the day of the Lord. They believed that before this period of time began, Christ would come and gather them together with Him at the rapture. Clearly the Thessalonians had begun to rethink this. Certainly it would appear that they would not have been nearly so open to deception if they had not been so forgetful. This is the second thing we are to avoid.

We need to avoid forgetfulness - Look at **VV. 3-5**, **"Let no one in any way deceive you, for it**

**will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, (4) who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God. (5) Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things?"** Notice V. 5, **"Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things?"** The Thessalonians would not have been so vulnerable to being deceived if they had not been so forgetful. What had they forgotten? They forgot that "it" (the day of the Lord) would not come unless "apostasy came first." And what is the apostasy? We are helped in answering this by asking the question when will it take place? And when does the apostasy take place? It is when **"the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction."** The man of lawlessness, without question, is the person the Scripture refers to as the Antichrist. The day of the Lord cannot take place until the antichrist is revealed or uncovered. The day of the Lord cannot come until the antichrist is seen for who he truly is. When will that be? Let us continue to read. **"Who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God."** According to **Daniel 9:27** these events will take place in the middle of the 70th week of Daniel, or in other words, in the middle of the period of time that theologians call the tribulation. **Daniel 9** tells us that at the beginning of the week he makes a covenant with the many. People see him as a good guy. But in the middle of the week he breaks the covenant and puts a stop to sacrifice and grain offering. And as **2 Thessalonians** tells us, he exalts himself above every so-called god and object of worship and displays himself as God. This event in the Scriptures is called "the abomination of desolation."

The Thessalonians were being told by certain false teachers that they were in the day of the Lord. Paul is reminding them that this cannot be so. It cannot be so because the apostasy (the abomination of desolation) must take place first when the man of lawlessness or the antichrist will be revealed or uncovered; when he will be seen for who he truly is. And this will happen when he breaks the covenant with the many in the middle of the 70th week of Daniel, or in other words, 3.5 years into the period of time known as the tribulation. At this time he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offerings. Or as **2 Thess.** tells, us He will exalt himself and seek to display himself as God.

If the Thessalonians had not forgotten these things, they would not have been so easily deceived. Paul then goes on in **VV. 6-10** to expand their knowledge concerning this coming person who is called the man of lawlessness in this passage or more commonly called the "antichrist." Paul is saying that we are not only to avoid being deceived, avoid forgetfulness, but also avoid ignorance.

What was the first piece of additional information that Paul shared with the Thessalonians? He shared with them that the revealing of the man of lawlessness is now being restrained. Look at **VV. 6-7**, **"And you know what restrains him now, so that in his time he may be revealed. (7) 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."** I believe that it the Holy Spirit is now doing the restraining. In fact he has been restraining the man of lawlessness from coming to the forefront throughout the ages. But at the rapture of the church, or shortly after the rapture of the church, the Holy

Spirit will step aside and the man of lawlessness will be able to quickly move onto the world scene and ultimately be revealed at the midpoint of the tribulation. But this is not all that Paul shares about the Antichrist with the Thessalonians. He also speaks about his destruction.

His Destruction - Let us read **V. 8**, **“And then that Lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming.”** Notice again the revealing of the lawless one is mentioned one more time. The revealing of the man lawlessness, the son of destruction, is mentioned in **V. 3**. Then again in **V. 7** and now finally once more in **V. 8**. This revealing of the man of lawlessness is extremely significant. I have shared with you that it is this event that triggers the beginning of the “Day of the Lord.” The revealing is the beginning of the end for the antichrist.

The end takes place when the Lord will “slay” (ANALEI) him. The word slay (ANALEI) means to “take away, do away with, destroy.” Do the Scriptures give us more detail concerning this particular event? The answer is yes. Look at **Revelation 19:11-21**, **“And I saw heaven opened; and behold, a white horse, and He who sat upon it is called Faithful and True; and in righteousness He judges and wages war. (12) And His eyes are a flame of fire, and upon His head are many diadems; and He has a name written upon Him which no one knows except Himself. (13) And He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood; and His name is called the Word of God. (14) And the armies, which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses. (15) And from His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may smite the nations; and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. (16) And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, “King of Kings, and Lord of Lords” (17) And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried out with a loud voice, saying to all the birds which fly in midheaven, “Come, assemble for the great supper of God; (18) in order that you may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of commanders and the flesh of mighty men and the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them and the flesh of all men, both free men and slaves, and small and great.” (19) And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies, assembled to make war against Him who sat upon the horse, and against His army. (20) And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs of his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone. (21) And the rest were killed with the sword which came from the mouth of Him who sat upon the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh.”** This is a certainly a very graphic and detailed picture of what Paul says in **2 Thessalonians 2:8**. There is another very graphic description of this event given to us in **Revelation 14:17-20**.

How difficult will it be for Jesus to slay the beast or in other words the antichrist? Let us again look at the verse. What does it say? **“And then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of his mouth.”** How will He slay him? **“With the breath of His mouth.”** The expression implies the ease with which his end will be brought about. No fierce, drawn-out conflict will be necessary. The reference to the breath of his mouth accomplishing great things is common in the Scriptures. We see it in **Exodus 15:8, 2 Samuel 22:16, Job 4:9, Psalm 33:6, Isaiah 30:27-28**.

Certainly Satan is a formidable foe in respect to ourselves and we must remain on the alert. But we should never be led to believe that he in any way is a threat to the person or work of the Lord. And certainly this would also be true of his henchmen such as the antichrist.

The Bible teaches us that Jesus will “slay” him quickly and decisively when he comes “from heaven, with his mighty angels in flaming fire.” The Bible teaches us that Jesus will “slay” him quickly and decisively when he comes to tread the “wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty.”

Obviously when Jesus slays the antichrist his activities are brought to an end. And Paul speaks about that, at the end of **V. 8**, “**and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming.**” The antichrist will never be heard from again in terms of the affairs of men. His reign of terror has been extinguished.

But Paul is not done yet. Not only has he given the Thessalonians more information about his revealing, and his destruction, but he also details for them his power over the lost.

His power over the lost - We will begin by looking at a description of his power in **VV. 9-10**, “**that is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, (10) and with all the deception of wickedness.**” There have been in the Bible individuals that are referred to as demon possessed but rarely do we find an individual who actually was possessed by Satan himself. Certainly Judas was momentarily possessed in the upper room according to **John 13:27**. But the Antichrist will be possessed by Satan much longer than just a moment. Paul tells us that the antichrist, during the period of the tribulation, will come “in accord with the activity of Satan.” The word “activity” is translated from the Greek word “ENERGEIA” from which we get our English word “energy.” The antichrist comes in the actual energy of Satan. And will therefore come “**with all power and signs and false wonders.**”

This obviously communicates very clearly that the antichrist will perform all kinds of satanic miracles. Even though we see the words “**false wonders,**” don’t be misled to think that this means that the miracles that he performs are somehow faked. They are not faked. The power that he will display is real. We know it is real because he comes “**in accord with the activity of Satan.**” We know it is real because he comes in the “energy” of Satan.

Whatever Satan can do he can do. It says that the antichrist will come in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders. We must understand this to mean that these miracles, these demonstrations of real power, will lead people to make false conclusions.

These miracles are very real. They are not the result of trickery and pretense - but rather that they belong to the realm of falsehood, false in their very character. He will perform “genuine” supernatural feats to produce false impressions, deluding people to the point of accepting the lie as truth which we see in **V. 11**.

In fact the whole of this period of tribulation will be a time of incredible miraculous activity. Not

so much being performed by the righteous but rather by the unrighteous. These manifestations of power will be extremely effective.

In **Matthew 24:21-24** it says, “**For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall. (22) And unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days shall be cut short. (23) Then if anyone says to you, ‘Behold, here is the Christ, or There He is, do not believe him. (24) For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect.’**”

But certainly on the top of the heap of all that will be taken place during this time is the antichrist. He is going to be doing things that have never been seen. And those demonstrations of power will be so monumental the world by and large will view him as being God.

## CONCLUSION

What is in our future? Though there may be a debate about the precise details, know this: As the church of the Lord Jesus Christ, wrath is not part of our future. We are not destined for wrath. We cannot be destined for wrath because we have made peace with God when we accepted Jesus as our Lord and Savior.

The Thessalonians at one point in time believed this but they had become confused. And in their confusion that had become fearful believing that the day of the Lord had come. A day characterized by wrath and judgment. Paul is writing to minister to them in their confusion. In ministering to them he ministered to us. If we are to avoid becoming fearful about future impending judgments we need to avoid the following:

We need to avoid deception

We need to avoid forgetfulness.

And we need to avoid ignorance.

Yes, there is a period of time called the tribulation that is coming. A time period of trouble. Yes, it is true in the middle of this time period the antichrist will be revealed, unveiled, uncovered and with his unveiling, the day of the Lord will be triggered. This will be a fearful time. **Matthew 24:15-22** says, “**Therefore when you see the abomination of desolation which was spoken through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (16) then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains; (17) let him who is on the housetop not go down to get the things out that are in his house; (18) and let him who is in the field not turn back to get his cloak. (19) But woe to those who are with child and to those who nurse babes in those days! (20) But pray that your flight may not be in the winter, or on a Sabbath; (21) for then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor**

**ever shall.”** This is the time period that the Thessalonians had thought they had entered. And they had become fearful and that would be the proper response to anyone who thought that they were in fact in this period.

But praise God we do not have to worry about this. Lord willing, if we have understood the Scriptures correctly, the church will have already been caught up to be with Him.

I would like to remind you of the words of Paul. **“Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together to Him, (2) that you may not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed.”**