

High Peaks Bible Fellowship

What Happens After the Restrainer Steps Aside? (2 Thessalonians 2:8-12)

Snapshots of The Beginning & The End of the *man of lawlessness* (2 Thess. 2:8)

Paul is compressing the timetable of the existence of the *man of lawlessness*. In this single verse we see the "starting line" and the "finish line" -- but we do not see the events that will take place between the two.

His beginning:

- After the Restrainer steps aside, the *man of lawlessness* will be revealed.
- Will be revealed (*apokalupto*) = unveiled, made known to the world.
- Notice the passive voice -- an external force will do the revealing of the *man of lawlessness*. He will not reveal himself, but God will permit Satan to unveil him and energize him (see 2 Th 2:9).

His End:

- **Whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth...**
 - The Lord Jesus Christ will slay the Antichrist at some future moment in history.
 - Will slay (*anaireo*) = will bring to an end, do away with, take out of the way. This word emphasizes the *means* by which he will be slain.
 - How will He accomplish this? A mere spoken word from Christ would be enough to slay the *man of lawlessness*. This image is also used in Isa 11:4; 30:33; Rev 1:16; 19:15; 19:21.
- **...and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming.**
 - Bring to an end (*katargeo*) = render useless, deprive of force or power. This word emphasizes the *totality* or *absoluteness* of his destruction.
 - When will this happen? At Christ's appearance when He comes to judge the world and rescue His people Israel.
 - Appearance (*epiphaneia*) of His coming (*parousia*) = combines two terms that are used for the coming of Christ, which in the context clearly emphasizes the Second Coming of Christ at the end of the Tribulation period.
 - Three Greek words used for the "coming" of the Lord Jesus Christ:

<i>apokalupsis</i> (2 Th 1:7)	Emphasizes the <u>revelation</u> of God's purpose and plan.
<i>epiphaneia</i> (2 Th 2:8)	Emphasizes the <u>manifestation</u> of the power of God.
<i>parousia</i> (2 Th 2:8)	Emphasizes the <u>presence</u> of the Lord with His people.

We should be very careful to let the context dictate the meaning, however, because these words are variously used to describe Christ's coming at the Rapture, His Second Coming in judgment, and even the coming of the Antichrist. Usage in context determines meaning.

- This verse is reminiscent of Dan 7:16 -- "his dominion will be taken away, annihilated and destroyed forever" (also see Dan 11:45).

Snapshots of the time between the beginning & the end (2 Thess. 2:9-12)

A view of the power that energizes the *man of lawlessness* (2 Th 2:9a)

- In accord with the activity of Satan = The appearing of the *man of lawlessness* will be accompanied by things that will show Satan is energizing him. The most powerful created spirit being is the source of Antichrist's personal strength and activity.
- Activity (*energeia*) = "power that is being actively exercised" (used in the NT only of superhuman power).
- With all power (*dunamis*) = "with all the power that Satan inherently possesses" -- he is putting his *all* into this effort.

A view of the works of the *man of lawlessness* (2 Th 2:9b)

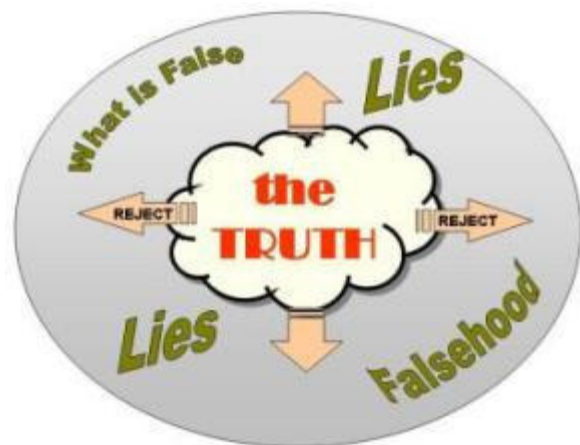
- Power, signs, and false wonders = these are the same three words used for the miracles of Christ (Heb 2:4), but the *man of lawlessness* is working these things by the superhuman energy of Satan. However, his miracles are false, counterfeit, deceiving "wonders of a lie" (*pseudos*). All of them bear the marks of fraud or falsehood.
- Jesus foretold that these kinds of false miracles would mislead many during the Tribulation period (Mt 24:24). The works of the *man of lawlessness* are described in more detail in Rev 13.

A view of the followers of the *man of lawlessness* (2 Th 2:10)

- Just as Jesus prophesied, these *works of deception* will result in many being deceived. These miraculous signs are done for the purpose of promoting wickedness (literally, *unrighteousness* or *injustice*).
- For those who perish (*apollumi*) = This clearly identifies the ones who will follow the *man of lawlessness* as people whom the god of this world has blinded (2 Cor 4:3-4) and to whom the gospel seems foolish (1 Cor 1:18). The middle voice of this participle shows that they clearly chose this for themselves.
- What is the reason they perish? They did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. These people rejected and turned from the truth which could have saved them.

A view of God's response to the followers of the *man of lawlessness* (2 Th 2:11)

- For this reason = because they chose falsehood and rejected the truth.
- This is a judicial act of God who gives the wicked over to the evil which they have deliberately chosen (see Rom 1:24-32).
- God will send = To those who continually reject the truth, God will send an *active power of misleading*. This is reminiscent of the evil spirit from the Lord who terrorized Saul (1 Sa 16:14-23; 18:10; 19:9), and the spirit of falsehood sent by God in 1 Kg 22:20-22.
- There is a progressive downward trend:
 1. They reject the love of the truth.
 2. God gives them over to Satan's delusions.
 3. They actually put their *faith* in these falsehoods (see 2 Th 2:9).



What is the result of this progression? (2 Th 2:12)

- This simply expresses the natural result of their downward progression. This passage cannot be used to say that God predestines some people to damnation. It merely states that the logical outcome of their rejection of the truth is their condemnation.
- Why are they being condemned? Because they did not believe the truth -- they did not exercise saving faith in the true gospel. Instead they chose to exercise their faith, trust, & reliance in what was false and produced unrighteousness.
- They took pleasure (*eudokeo*) in unrighteousness = it "seemed good" to them; they preferred wickedness and were strongly inclined toward it.

Points of Application:

- The Lord Jesus Christ IS coming, and the wicked WILL be judged. In fact, we will be there with Him to witness these events.
- As we saw with the three words for Christ's coming, we must be very careful how we interpret the Word of God. Knowing and using reliable principles of biblical interpretation will protect us from being misled from the truth.
- There will come a time when deception will run rampant – even the elect will be in danger of being led astray (Mt 24:24). Let us continue to love the truth – and let us share the truth while we can.

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High Peaks Bible Fellowship

Our primary purpose is to uphold the truths of the Word of God.

I write so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth. (1 Timothy 3:15)

Our primary responsibility is to equip the saints for the work of ministry.

And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ. (Ephesians 4:11-12)