



Women's R&R Bible Study 2024-2025

"YOUR WORDS WERE FOUND, AND I ATE THEM, AND YOUR WORD WAS TO ME THE JOY AND REJOICING OF MY HEART."

JEREMIAH 15:16

LIVING IN HOPE LESSON 7

In our chapter this week, Paul describes the events that will precede the Day of the Lord. Back in 1 Thessalonians 5:9, Paul makes it quite clear that believers are not appointed to wrath and will be raptured before the Tribulation Period begins. For some reason, some of the Thessalonian believers thought that they were living in the Day of the Lord because of all the persecution they were experiencing. In 2 Thessalonians chapter 2, Paul attempts to clear up this false teaching.

Please spend time in prayer before you begin. I pray that this chapter challenges you to purity, encourages you to share the Gospel, and strengthens you in your walk with Him.

Memory Verse of the Week: "Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and our God and Father, who has loved us and given us everlasting consolation and good hope by grace, comfort your hearts and establish you in every good word and work." 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17

1. Let's begin by reading 2 Thessalonians 2:1-17. Go back and read verses 1-12 again. List the facts you find in this section. Any repeated words or phrases?
2. What main thought or point do you think Paul is trying to communicate?
3. Read verses 13-17. Observe and write the facts you find.

4. What immediate application do you find in this chapter for yourself?

5. Read verses 1-5. Paul introduces the theme of this entire letter in verse one. What is it?

The “parousia” or the “gathering together” that Paul mentions in verse one refers to the time when all believers, living and sleeping, will gather together in the air to meet Christ at His “invisible” return (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). Remember from our previous lessons, this event is called the “rapture” of the church.

Somehow the word was being passed around that the Day of the Lord had already begun. Since this wasn’t supposed to take place until after the rapture of the church, maybe they felt like they had been left behind. Verse two implies that some believed that this teaching came by “supernatural revelation” (spirit), or that Paul himself had been teaching it (word), or that a letter (obviously forged) written by Paul had been sent, stating this teaching to be true (letter).

6. What was the effect of these rumors on some of the Thessalonian believers? What does the word “soon” in verse 2 tell us?

7. What should they have done about these rumors? What are we supposed to do when we hear teachings contrary to what we believe to be true, according to God’s Word?

The phrase **“shaken in mind”** literally means to “move away from” or to be “shaken out of one’s mind.” This word implies panic attacks or being at wit’s end. The word **“alarmed”** or **“troubled”** means to be despondent or have a troubled spirit. They reacted hastily without waiting to consider what they knew to be true. The return of Christ should have been a comforting hope, not a reason to panic.

8. What has to happen first before the Day of the Lord comes?

The word “**apostasy**” is translated as “falling away.” Paul doesn’t explain much about this falling away from the faith. Men fall away daily, but here Paul is referring to “**the**” falling away. This word implies an aggressive revolt against God and all that is divine, a defection from the Christian faith. Jerry Vines says this: “This apostasy is not merely a revolt against God, it is a denial of the existence of any being, or order of beings, superior to man. It is the claim of man to absolute supremacy not only in the world but in the universe.” Yikes! Look out world! This falling away and the revealing of this man of sin is the signal that big trouble was about to begin. (Paul wrote more about this apostasy later in 1 Timothy 4:1-3, 2 Timothy 3:1-5, and 4:3-4.)

9. Paul is speaking about the antichrist in verse 3, as we call him.

Although John is the only writer who uses this term for him (1 John 2:18, 22; 4:3; 2 John 7), we know this is whom he is referring to. What does Paul call him in verse 3?

10. Who else was given one of these names? (John 17:12, Acts 1:25)

11. What are some other names for him?

- A. Daniel 7:8
- B. Daniel 9:26
- C. Daniel 11:36
- D. 1 John 2:18
- E. Revelation 13:1-10

Charles Ryrie says the antichrist is the “personification of evil and the culmination of all that is opposed to God.”

12. What will this man of sin do to religion, according to verse 4?

13. How is his sin like that of satans'? Read Isaiah 14:12-20 and Ezekiel 28:14-19.

Satan always wanted to be worshipped, and one day the antichrist will surface, causing the world to worship him and believe all of satan's lies. I'm so glad that I will not be here on that dreadful day, aren't you? Lord, save our family and friends!

The event in verse 4 is called the "abomination of desolation" (Daniel 9:27). The antichrist will proclaim himself to be the incarnation of God and will sit in the temple that the returning Jews will be allowed to build in the land of Palestine, and demand to be worshipped. Daniel also prophesied about this in Daniel 11:36-37.

What else do we know about this man antichrist? **Warren Wiersbe** gives us a list of facts about him. He says that "He will be a peaceful political leader who unites 10 nations of Europe into a strong power block (Revelation 17:12-13). He will also bring a brief time of peace to the world before the storm of the Day of the Lord hits, as he imitates Christ (Revelation 6:1-2, 19:11, 1 Thessalonians 5:1-3)."

How do we know how long all these events will last? Again, because Warren Wiersbe does such a good job of explaining this, allow me to quote from his commentary, **Be Ready**. These quotes are referring to Daniel 9:24-27. Please read this entire section, because it is very important, as well as informative.

"First, this prophecy applies to Israel, Jerusalem and the temple, and not to the church. Second, it announces the time when Messiah will come and accomplish certain purposes for the Jewish people. The word 'week' refers to a period of 7 years; 70 weeks are equal to 490 years. Note that these 490 years are divided into three parts: 7 weeks or 49 years, during which the city would be rebuilt; 62 weeks or 434 years, at the end of which time Messiah would come and be cut off; 1 week or 7 years, during which a 'prince' would have a covenant with Israel."

"Notice that two princes are involved in this prophecy: Christ, Messiah the Prince (vs 25), and antichrist, 'the prince that shall come' (vs 26). The people of the prince that shall come are the Romans, for it was they who destroyed the city and the temple in A.D. 70. The coming antichrist will belong to a nation that was part of the old Roman Empire."

"Finally, note that there is a parenthesis between the 69th and the 70th week. We are now living in that parenthesis. The 69th week ended with the ministry of Christ. The 70th week will start with the arrival of antichrist. He will make a covenant with Israel to protect her and permit

her to rebuild her temple. This covenant will be for seven years. He will temporarily solve the Middle East crisis. Israel will rebuild her temple in peaceful times. It is the signing of this covenant, not the rapture of the church, that signals the start of Daniel's 70th week, that seven-year period known as the Day of the Lord."

"After three and one-half years, antichrist will break his covenant with the Jews and take over the temple. (Daniel 9:27, 2 Thessalonians 2:3b). Up to that point, antichrist has been a peacemaking leader of 10 European nations, obligated to protect Israel. But now he reveals his true character by taking over the Jewish temple and demanding that the world worship him (Revelation 13). This abomination of desolation will usher in a period of intense persecution and tribulation. (Matthew 24:21) He will so control the world's economic system that citizens must bear "the mark of the beast" to be able to buy and sell (Revelation 13:16-17)."

(I need to let you know that grammatically speaking, "antichrist" and satan are supposed to be capital, but I just can't do it. He deserves no such honor. Sorry grammar people!)

The word "told" in verse 5 is in the imperfect tense, implying that it had been done "repeatedly." It's almost as if Paul is reproofing them for allowing these false teachings to shake them. They began to focus on their circumstances, which caused them to lose the hope of Christ's return.

- 14.** Why is it important to know the events that lead up to the coming of the Lord? We aren't going to be here, so why does it matter?

- 15.** On the other hand, have you seen these facts used in a way that was unbalanced? Can you give an example?

- 16.** What effect has this chapter had on you so far?

17. In verses 6-12, Paul says that the Thessalonians “knew” what was restraining the antichrist from being revealed until the time was right. Does he tell us what, or who, that is?

18. How long will he be restrained, or held back?

19. What will the Lord do to him, according to verse 8? How will he be punished?

The expression the “breath of His mouth” occurs only here in the New Testament and indicates a “sweeping away like a hurricane or killing like the blast from a furnace.” (Plummer)

20. How does the power of the man of sin compare with the sovereign and almighty power of God?

The word “**destroy**” in verse 8 does not mean annihilation. This term refers to a “putting out of business,” or “to make idle,” or “render inoperative.”

21. If the antichrist is not annihilated, what happens to him? Read Revelation 19:20 and 20:10. Why is this worse?

22. In what power will the lawless one come?

23. Why will those who follow the antichrist be condemned? Is this a result or a consequence of their unbelief?

The delusion that is sent by God may be either a self-delusion or a product of their own willful thinking.

24. Why does God send a delusion? If God sent it, are they accountable for the choice they make?

This section leaves us with one question: (or maybe many!) Who exactly is the restrainer in verse 6? Who is holding back the full manifestation of evil? The answer to this is debated. Here are a few suggestions that have been given:

1. The Roman Empire, which held back evil by its advanced system of laws
2. The preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles
3. Angelic powers working through the church
4. God Himself working through the state or the church
5. The Holy Spirit working through the state or the church
6. The presence of the God-indwelt church in the world

Most commentators believe that the restrainer is the Holy Spirit. Doesn't the power of the restrainer have to be greater than satan's, in order to hold him back? I'm sure that God uses the church, good government, and angels as means to restrain evil, but it's the power of God that does the work.

Some argue that since the Holy Spirit cannot be taken out of the world (vs 7), He can't be the restrainer. There is a difference between residence and presence. Charles Ryrie said this: "Every person of the God-head has been, is, and always will be, present in the world because God is omnipresent. But the persons of the Godhead and particularly the Holy Spirit have not always been resident within the hearts of God's people, either permanently or universally. Today God has bound Himself to be resident within the hearts of all His people and always (Romans 8:9, 1 Cor. 6:19). Thus, to say that the restrainer is removed is not to say that the presence of God is taken away from the earth, nor is it to imply that God (or specifically the Holy Spirit) will cease to work in the world in any way,

including the work of regeneration, because some will be saved in the tribulation period" (Revelation 7:14).

25. Meditate on the power of God. Even the fact that God ultimately controls the antichrist points again to His incredible power. Find a Scripture that talks about God's power and share it with your group. How does it encourage you at this time?

According to verse 13, God had the choice of His people in His mind from all of eternity past. "The end purpose of the choosing was salvation, and this was accomplished through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." (Ryrie) In this phrase, we see divine choosing and human responsibility working together. On God's part, salvation is a work of the Holy Spirit in sanctifying the believer (1 Cor. 6:11). On the human side, we have the responsibility to know and believe the truth. We were called to accept the truth by the Gospel of Jesus Christ (vs 14).

26. What do you think it means to "stand fast"? Compare the fate of those who stand fast with those who "obey not the truth."

The command to "stand fast" is based on something secure to stand on. It is not shaky ground, but the rock of Jesus Christ. **Our election is sure, our sanctification is sure, our hope is sure!** We have no reason to "not" stand fast.

27. Are you standing fast or are you wavering? Are you allowing your problems to shake you? Are you troubled? **What hope does this chapter bring?**

Paul ends with a prayer for strength for the Thessalonians. He reminds them that they were looking forward to glory, not wrath. But while they wait for His return, be strong and no matter what ... **stand firm.**