

## The Timing of the Revelation and the Termination of the Antichrist.

2 Thess. 2:5-8

2 Thessalonians 2:1–8 (NKJV)

**2** Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you, <sup>2</sup> not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come. <sup>3</sup> Let no one deceive you by any means; for *that Day will not come* unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, <sup>4</sup> who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

<sup>5</sup> Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? <sup>6</sup> And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time. <sup>7</sup> 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. <sup>8</sup> And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming.

## Introduction

One of the most perplexing problems for secular philosophers and biblical scholars has been the existence of evil. For many, the fact that evil exist is one of the most complicated and difficult things to understand.

For the secular philosopher, his problem is trying to explain the existence and purpose of evil without God.

For the biblical scholar, his problem is trying to explain the existence and purpose of evil with God.

The secular philosopher can only conclude that this is by random chance, it has no meaning at all ultimately. His ultimate dilemma is how can there be good and evil and there is no standard which defines good and evil.

The biblical scholar must conclude ultimately that evil exist because God has willed it. Or else God is not God and there is something more supreme and sovereign than he is, if Evil can come into existence without his permission.

Then for the biblical scholar is the problem of reconciling the existence of evil and the ordination of evil by God and also knowing that this God is a good

God in a loving God who desires righteousness and has no pleasure in wickedness.

From a biblical viewpoint it is impossible to escape the reality that God has purposed and ordained the existence of evil without being the author of it.

The most horrific crime ever committed by humans in the history of the world was the crucifixion of the son of God. In face of brilliant light of the revelation of the truth of God through the miracle signs and wonders and the teaching of Christ, Israel concluded that he was not the Messiah and was empowered by Satan..

Yet the use of this evil was clearly the plan of God....

Acts 2:23 (NKJV)

<sup>23</sup> Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death;

Acts 4:27–28 (NKJV)

<sup>27</sup> “For truly against Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together <sup>28</sup> to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose determined before to be done.

God has purposed evil to exist and used it with all of its horror to bring glory to His name.

Notice how intentional the purpose of Evil is. It is not a mistake or an unforeseen calamity. It is purposeful and intentional on God's part to allow evil to exist and be used to bring Glory to the Character of God

Most of the character of God would not be understood or displayed apart from the existence of Evil.

Some have suggested that Evil exist because if it had not been allowed, then there would have always been the potential of its existence, so God allows it in order to destroy it.

That is possible but not explicit in Scripture.

The world is moving toward a final and full expression of evil when the world is full of the lawlessness of men who are suppressing the truth of God in their unrighteousness. It is in the context of the culmination of this evil age that the final and full form the man of Lawlessness will be revealed. The earth will be ripe and finally capable of producing the worst that mankind has seen. Evil personified. Satan, incarnate.

Wickedness woven into a human.

There have been some very wicked and evil rulers in the past, and we are watching one right now in Vladimir Putin

“But one is coming who will surpass them all, both in the extent of his power and the evil of his person. He will be the most fiendish, wicked, powerful man ever to walk the earth. He is known in Scripture by many names; he is “Gog of the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal” (Ezek. 38:2); the little horn of Daniel 7:8, 24; 8:9; the “prince who is to come” (Dan. 9:26); the king who does as he pleases (Dan. 11:36); the foolish, worthless shepherd (Zech. 11:15–17); the beast (Rev. 11:7; 13:1; 14:9; 19:20; etc.). In this chapter, Paul describes him as “the man of lawlessness” (v. 3), the “son of destruction” (v. 3), “that lawless one” (v. 8), and “the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan” (v. 9). But he is best known as the *Antichrist* (1 John 2:18)

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2002). [1 & 2 Thessalonians](#) (pp. 263–264). Moody Press.

This is the one we have been looking at for that last few weeks.

## Review

In chapter 2 the apostle Paul discusses the confusion that was running through the church

regarding the advent of the Day of the Lord. Many were being confused by letters and statements by others that were indicating that they were already in the day of the Lord. Remember that at this time, the Thessalonian Church would have been under the persecution of Nero. So it would have been very easy for them to believe that they were in the Day of the Lord before the return of Christ since it would have been characterized by very troubling times and persecution of those who would name the name of Christ. In fact in chapter 1 the apostle Paul refers to the persecution they were currently under.

2 Thessalonians 1:4 (NKJV)

4 ..... we ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that you endure,

2 Thessalonians 1:5 (NKJV)

5.... that you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you also suffer;

And then he gives them assurance that in the future the Lord himself will bring vengeance on those who have not believe the gospel and have

caused the people of God to suffer such horrible persecution and trouble.

## 2 Thessalonians 1:6–7 (NKJV)

<sup>6</sup> since *it is* a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you, <sup>7</sup> and to *give* you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels,

## 2 Thessalonians 1:8–10 (NKJV)

<sup>8</sup> in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>9</sup> These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, <sup>10</sup> when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed.

When we come to chapter 2 he's going to answer the confusion that exist within the church regarding the timing of the Day of the Lord. The day of the Lord is a technical term for the time of God's judgment of the ungodly world. It has historical significance because there were many times in the

past that God has judged and this has been called the day of the Lord. But there is an eschatological day of the Lord. A day in the future in which God will not only judge an individual nation but all nations all peoples and all tongues.

It is a day of devastating darkness, vengeance poured out by a holy God who has stored up wrath for centuries for the day of wrath. It is a day of trouble unlike any day in the history of the world. According to Daniel chapter 12. This day

Daniel 12:1 (NKJV)

**12**

..... shall be a time of trouble,  
Such as never was since there was a nation,  
*Even* to that time.

Jeremiah 30:5–7 (NKJV)

<sup>5</sup> “For thus says the Lord:

‘We have heard a voice of trembling,  
Of fear, and not of peace.

<sup>6</sup> Ask now, and see,

Whether a man is ever in labor with child?

So why do I see every man *with* his hands on his  
loins

Like a woman in labor,



And all faces turned pale?  
7 Alas! For that day *is* great,  
So that none *is* like it;  
And it *is* the time of Jacob's trouble...

Unlike all the other Days of the Lord in the past where God was not physically visible. The future day of the Lord will see the visible physical Christ coming in the Clouds with His mighty Angels in Judgment. There will be no debate or confusion as to where this judgment is coming from.

It will not be blamed on Politicians, or Policies. It will not be blamed on Climate change or Cars. The mightiest of men and the most powerful Rulers to the poor and the perverted will run for their lives, and there will be no escape!!

Because the Thessalonian believers were already under intense persecution and suffering immensely for their faith they were easily convinced that they were in the Day of the Lord.

But Paul takes chapter 2 and explained to them that there are two very important events that must take place before the day of the lord comes. Even though the Thessalonian Christians were under intense persecution these two events or two signs would clearly help them to understand that they

were not in the Day of the Lord. Paul's point is that this day cannot and will not come unless these two prominent and very obvious signs occur.

**3** Let no one deceive you by any means; for *that Day will not come* unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition,

**4** who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

Paul makes it clear that there will be a falling away or an apostasy but not just any apostasy, this is the apostasy, the great apostasy. This will be large enough and universal enough among the evangelical community that it can be a sign for the return of Christ. I personally believe that the second sign is the cause of the apostasy. The second sign that Paul points out is the revelation of the antichrist.

He is called the man of lawlessness or the son of perdition in this text. His revelation will prompt intense persecution of the people of God. The fact that he opposes every other form of worship in every

other object of worship puts him in direct conflict with Christianity. Those who name the name of Christ will be a personal and direct target of the antichrist.

Therefore the many that are associated with Christianity that are not real Christians and do not truly know the Lord Jesus Christ will walk away.

Jesus made that abundantly clear in his parables of the kingdom whenever he discusses the seed falling on the soils, that persecution is one of the main reasons why people walk away from the faith.

Also according to the New Testament persecution in trouble and trials are some of the main ways in which God verifies your faith. So this trial that is coming on the whole world will cause many who do not know the Lord but affiliate with local churches to walk away. But it will also confirm the faith and validate the faith of those who do you know the Lord and they will die at the hands of Antichrist.

### Revelation 12:17 (NKJV)

<sup>17</sup> And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

### Revelation 13:7 (NKJV)

<sup>7</sup> It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation.

### Daniel 7:21 (NKJV)

<sup>21</sup> “I was watching; and the same horn was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them,

### Daniel 7:25 (NKJV)

<sup>25</sup> He shall speak *pompous* words against the Most High,  
Shall persecute the saints of the Most High,  
And shall intend to change times and law.  
Then *the saints* shall be given into his hand  
For a time and times and half a time.

### Revelation 6:9–11 (NKJV)

<sup>9</sup> When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held.

<sup>10</sup> And they cried with a loud voice, saying, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?”

<sup>11</sup> Then a white robe was given to each of them; and

it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both *the number of* their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they *were*, was completed.

Another important point to be reminded of regarding the revelation of the antichrist is the fact that God is in control of the timing of this event.

Both the Old and the New Testament have very specific prophecies regarding the revelation of this evil man. There have to be certain things in place before he comes on the scene.

No evil or evil event or evil tyrant as ever arisen apart from the ordination and permission of God. And the same as the case when it comes to the antichrist he cannot and will not be able to come on the scene until God so grants him authority to do so.

This is clearly indicated by the next few verses needs to there is a restrainer mentioned by the apostle Paul that will hold back the revelation of the antichrist until he is taken out of the way. So let's look at the first point.

## **Lesson**

### **I. The Restrainer Identified**

## II. The Antichrist Incinerated

# I. The Restrainer Identified

**5** Do you not remember that when I was still with you **I told** you these things?

I told

ἔλεγον (elegon)

Verb - Imperfect Indicative Active - 1st Person Singular

Strong's 2036: Answer, bid, bring word, command. A primary verb; to speak or say.

The question implies that the church already had sufficient instruction to evaluate and reject the teaching that had so moved them and put them in turmoil. What they needed to do was simply to remember and apply the apostolic instruction, as is frequently the case in the battle against error

Green, G. L. (2002). [The letters to the Thessalonians](#) (p. 313). W.B. Eerdmans Pub.; Apollos.

## 1 Thessalonians 3:4 (NKJV)

**4** For, in fact, we told you before when we were with you that we would suffer tribulation, just as it happened, and you know.

## 1 Thessalonians 5:1–2 (NKJV)

**5** But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. <sup>2</sup> For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night.

It is very apparent from these verses and many more in both letters that the apostle Paul had spent a large amount of his time discussing with them the events surrounding the return of Jesus Christ. Many have noted in their commentaries on this book that the Thessalonian church was a second coming church. Eagerly awaiting and looking forward to the return of Jesus Christ. To the point of even giving up on their earthly responsibilities to wait.

But they like many of us found it difficult to process all the information regarding the eschatological event surrounding the return of Jesus Christ. If it were that simple and that easy to understand we would not have the abundance of views regarding his return, that we do. So we can rest assured that if the Thessalonian Christians did not get it right the first go around or even the second time when they had the apostle Paul as their teacher, you could be assured that it may be also difficult for you to nail down all the events regarding the return of Christ.

**6** And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time.

No problem at the very beginning here with this verse is that Paul the apostle refers to some information that he had given to the Thessalonian church about the identification of the restrainer. But he does not tell us in this verse who this restrainer is or what it is.

To further complicate the matter the first reference to the restrainer is neuter and its gender in the Greek language. The second reference to it is masculine. This is why you have inverse six the statement "you know what is restraining" and then Denver seven statement reads, "he who now restrains. "

So it seems that Paul is talking about a force that restrains but that the force comes from a person.

**6** And now you know what **is** \_\_\_\_\_

**restraining,**

is now restraining  
κατέχων (katechon)



## Verb - Present Participle Active - Accusative Neuter Singular

**Strong's 2722:** From kata and echo; to hold down, in various applications.

**Usage:** (a) I hold fast, bind, arrest, (b) I take possession of, lay hold of, (c) I hold back, detain, restrain, (d) I hold a ship, keep its head.

There have been a number of attempts to identify what or who the restrainer is.

### **1. Roman Empire or an Emperor**

This may have worked in the 1st century as possibility, but the Roman Empire and its Emperors are long gone and the revelation of Antichrist is a future event at the return of Christ far removed from the Roman Empire.

### **2. The Nation Israel.**

But there is nothing in scripture that indicates that Israel has to be removed so that Antichrist can come. In fact, I believe that the Scripture indicates the need for Israel to exist for the Revelation of AntiChrist. Daniel 11 and 12 indicate this

### **3. The Church and her influence of Salt and Light.**

But the church will not be removed before the advent of antichrist. In fact, Paul's point is that the

the church will be here when he is revealed, and then and only then will you know you are in the season of the Lords return.

There is however, clear indication in scripture that the presence of the church is a deterrent of the evil in the world. Her being Salt and Light is a great inhibitor of the world being as evil as it could be. But to get rid of this you have to remove the church.

But the church will be here and will endure the wrath of antichrist.

#### **4. Binding of Satan Revelation 20**

This is a view that say that Satan has been bound and is unable to deceive the Nations during this present age and will then be release at the end and then The Antichrist will be revealed. That may work well if you are an Amillennial, But if you are not it doesn't work.

In my opinion, it does not work with the wording of the text in verse 7

The “ what is restraining” would work because that could be the binding of Satan.

but the phrase in verse 7 “now He who retrains will do so until He is taken out of the way” does not work. Because in Revelation 20 Satan is released from prison to do his evil deeds, not taken out of the way.

#### **5. The Preaching of the Gospel.**

Matthew 24:14 (NKJV)

**14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.**

This refers to the preaching of the gospel will have to reach all nations before the end of the age, not the revelation of Antichrist. In fact, the preaching of the gospels continues through the career of the antichrist and the Day of the Lord.

### **6. Human Government.**

While it is true that Government was ordained by God to punish evil and to keep it in check and to promote what is good. It is a far reach to say act government will be removed or taken out of the way before the Antichrist is revealed. In fact, He arises our of a 10 nation confederacy and there are still governments and nations in place through is Rule.

### **7. General principle of law and Morality and Conscience.**

This is appealing because it is clear that as we get closer to the revelation of antichrist that lawlessness will abound, Matt 24. Perilous evil times will come. 2 Tim 3. In the latter times many will depart from the faith and be given over to doctrines of demons. I Tim 4.

The problem with this is, the restrainer is not just a thing, it is a He. It is a person who restrains.

## **8. Michael the Archangel.**

There are some fascinating verses throughout scripture that indicate to us that there is a cosmic angelic war that goes on between the holy Angels and the demonic forces. It is invisible but it is clearly stated in scripture. Because of this in the verses that I will read, some have concluded that the reference to the restrainer is Michael the archangel who is holding back the inevitable revelation of the evil man known as the antichrist.

Daniel 10:13 (NASB95)

13 “But the prince of the kingdom of Persia was withstanding me for twenty-one days; then behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left there with the kings of Persia.

Daniel 10:20–21 (NASB95)

20 Then he said, “Do you understand why I came to you? But I shall now return to fight against the prince of Persia; so I am going forth,

and behold, the prince of Greece is about to come.

21 “However, I will tell you what is inscribed in the writing of truth. Yet there is no one who stands firmly with me against these *forces* except Michael your prince.

Daniel 12:1 (NKJV)

**12** “At that time Michael shall stand up,  
The great prince who stands *watch* over the sons  
of your people;  
And there shall be a time of trouble,  
Such as never was since there was a nation,  
*Even* to that time.  
And at that time your people shall be delivered,  
Every one who is found written in the book.

Revelation 12:7–17 (NKJV)

<sup>7</sup> And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, <sup>8</sup> but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. <sup>9</sup> So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

<sup>10</sup> Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, “Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. <sup>12</sup>.....For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time.”

<sup>13</sup> Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male *Child*. <sup>14</sup> But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent. ....<sup>17</sup> And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

What is clear from these text, is that Michael if definitely engaged in war with the Devil and his forces and that He is definitely involved in the last days revelation of Antichrist. But what is not clear is that we don't know for certain that this is that. Or that Michael is that restrainer.

It is appealing though. Micheal fits the masculine “HE” of verse 7, and the methods and heavenly

warfare, would fit the “what” neuter form of the restrainer of verse 6.

Although I could find myself very content excepting this view that this is a reference to Michael the archangel, I would like to propose one other possibility.

## 9. The Power of God in the Person of the Holy Spirit.

**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.

1. This restraining activity directly affects the time of the revelation of antichrist.

### **2 Thessalonians 2:6** (NASB95)

And you know what restrains him now, so that in his time he will be revealed.

The restrainer and his restraining activity has a direct effect **on when** the antichrist will be revealed. When he stops his restraining work and only then will the antichrist be allowed to do this you will work. This restrainer or his effects have sovereign control over the devil in the

chronological events related to the coming of the Lord.

And God (ultimately) does the restraining **so that in his time he will be revealed**. Satan, of course, does not want to operate on God's timetable. If he could, he would have revealed Antichrist long before now. He longs for the false messiah, through whom he will rule the earth, to appear. But nothing—not even the purposes of hell—operates independently of God's sovereign timetable. Job confessed, "I know that You can do all things, and that no purpose of Yours can be thwarted" (Job 42:2). In Isaiah 46:10 God declares, "My purpose will be established, and I will accomplish all My good pleasure."

Evil will not overstep its divinely ordained bounds. The true Messiah was revealed "when the fullness of the time came, [and] God sent forth His Son" (Gal. 4:4); the ultimate false messiah will likewise **be revealed** in God's perfect time

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2002). [\*1 & 2 Thessalonians\*](#) (p. 278). Moody Press.

2. This restraining activity has a direct affect on the mystery of lawlessness that is already at work.



## 2 Thessalonians 2:6–7 (NASB95)

- 6 And you know what restrains him now, so that in his time he will be revealed.
- 7 For (gar-because) the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; ....

The idea is that the mystery of lawlessness and rebellion against the law of God is already at work and desirous of its most evil form to be brought forth and has yet to see it's final form. But because of the restraining work of the restrainer it is not allowed to even though it is currently at work.

Though Antichrist may be restrained, evil will not be; in fact, **the mystery of lawlessness is already at work**. *Mustērion* (**mystery**) describes something “which has been kept secret for long ages past” (Rom. 16:25) and is incapable of being known unless revealed by God.

## Romans 16:25–26 (NKJV)

<sup>25</sup> Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery kept secret since the world began <sup>26</sup> but now made manifest, and by the prophetic Scriptures made

known to all nations, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, for obedience to the faith—

### Ephesians 3:3–6 (NKJV)

<sup>3</sup> how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, <sup>4</sup> by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), <sup>5</sup> which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets: <sup>6</sup> that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel,

### 1 Timothy 3:16 (NKJV)

<sup>16</sup> And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness:

God was manifested in the flesh,  
Justified in the Spirit,  
Seen by angels,  
Preached among the Gentiles,  
Believed on in the world,  
Received up in glory.

The mystery of godliness and the gospel was once hidden but now is revealed.

The Mystery of Godliness is  
God manifest in the flesh.

The Old Testament gave us only shadows and glimpses of God and godliness. But in Christ it is personified

So it is with the mystery of lawlessness. We only see some of what lawlessness will look like now, but in the future there will be a man of lawlessness who will be the full blown, unrestrained rebellion and evil personified in the Antichrist.

The true character of **lawlessness** is already at **work** (cf. 1 John 3:4); and “even now many antichrists have appeared” (1 John 2:18; cf. 4:3).

The verb *at work* (***energeitai***) is the same one that is found in 1 Thessalonians 2:13 and implies some kind of supernatural activity, whether it be divine (Matt. 14:2; Mark 6:14; 1 Cor. 12:6, 11; Gal. 2:8; 3:5; Eph. 1:11, 20; 3:20; Phil. 2:13; Col. 1:29) or evil (Eph. 2:2; 2 Thess. 2:9). Paul does not suggest that this *secret power* is divine but only that it is supernatural, and, according to the context, malignant and satanic (v. 9)

Green, G. L. (2002). [The letters to the Thessalonians](#) (p. 317). W.B. Eerdmans Pub.; Apollos.

Evil, lies, hypocrisy, immorality, and false religion permeate the world and grow increasingly worse, so

that every generation is more wicked than those before (2 Tim. 3:13), but sin's ultimate manifestation is yet to come. When the restraint is removed and Antichrist appears, the true character of evil will be manifested

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2002). [1 & 2 Thessalonians](#) (p. 278). Moody Press.

3. When the Restrainer and his work of restraining is removed, and Lawlessness is allowed to abound. Then, v.8 the Lawless one will be revealed.

2 Thessalonians 2:7 (NKJV)

<sup>7</sup> 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.

2 Thessalonians 2:7 (YLT)

\—till he may be out of the way or midst.

Bruce (170) adduces several examples from nonbiblical Greek where ἐκ μέσου plus a participial form of γενέσθαι occur with the sense of “be removed

Wanamaker, C. A. (1990). [The Epistles to the Thessalonians: a commentary on the Greek text](#) (p. 256). W.B. Eerdmans.

I believe the best possible conclusion to this mystery of who this restrainer is is that it is the Holy Spirit and his power and influence on this planet.

The change in gender from the neuter participle translated “what restrains” in verse 6 to the masculine participle rendered **he who ... restrains** is significant. The sovereign, divine force that currently restrains Antichrist is exerted by a person—the Holy Spirit (cf. John 14:26; 15:26; 16:13 where Jesus used a masculine pronoun with the neuter noun translated “Spirit”). Only He has the supernatural power to hold Satan in check. The Holy Spirit has always battled wickedness in the world. Addressing the wicked pre-Flood generation, God declared, “My Spirit shall not strive with man forever” (Gen. 6:3). Stephen issued this stinging rebuke to the leaders of Israel: “You men who are stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears are always resisting the Holy Spirit; you are doing just as your fathers did” (Acts 7:51). The Holy Spirit also opposes evil by “convict[ing] the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment” (John 16:8)

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2002). [1 & 2 Thessalonians](#) (pp. 278–279). Moody Press.

The phrase **taken out of the way** must not be interpreted to mean that the Holy Spirit will be

removed from the world. That is impossible, since He is omnipresent. Nor could anyone be saved during the Tribulation (cf. Rev. 7:14) apart from His regenerating work (John 3:3–8; Titus 3:5). The phrase refers not to the removal of the Holy Spirit from the world, but rather to the cessation of His restraining work.

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2002). [1 & 2 Thessalonians](#) (p. 279). Moody Press.

Another way to look at this is to consider what happens whenever God does stop restraining evil whenever he lets a people go into the depths of the evil that they would desire to plunge into. In other words there are text that indicate that had God restrain them they would not have gone as far into evil as they have. But when he removes his restraint they plunged headfirst into debauchery and evil.

Romans 1:21–31 (NKJV)

<sup>21</sup> because, although they knew God, they did not glorify *Him* as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. <sup>22</sup> Professing to be wise, they became fools, <sup>23</sup> and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things.

<sup>24</sup> Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, <sup>25</sup> who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

<sup>26</sup> For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. <sup>27</sup> Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due.

<sup>28</sup> And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; <sup>29</sup> being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; *they are* whisperers, <sup>30</sup> backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, <sup>31</sup> undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful;

Psalm 81:11–12 (NKJV)

<sup>11</sup> “But My people would not heed My voice,

And Israel would *have* none of Me.

<sup>12</sup> So I gave them over to their own stubborn heart,  
To walk in their own counsels.

Hosea 4:17 (NKJV)

<sup>17</sup> “Ephraim *is* joined to idols,  
Let him alone.

Proverbs 1:23–32 (NKJV)

<sup>23</sup> Turn at my rebuke;

Surely I will pour out my spirit on you;  
I will make my words known to you.

<sup>24</sup> Because I have called and you refused,  
I have stretched out my hand and no one  
regarded,

<sup>25</sup> Because you disdained all my counsel,  
And would have none of my rebuke,

<sup>26</sup> I also will laugh at your calamity;  
I will mock when your terror comes,

<sup>27</sup> When your terror comes like a storm,  
And your destruction comes like a whirlwind,  
When distress and anguish come upon you.

<sup>28</sup> “Then they will call on me, but I will not answer;  
They will seek me diligently, but they will not find  
me.

<sup>29</sup> Because they hated knowledge



And did not choose the fear of the Lord,  
<sup>30</sup> They would have none of my counsel  
*And* despised my every rebuke.  
<sup>31</sup> Therefore they shall eat the fruit of their own way,  
 And be filled to the full with their own fancies.  
<sup>32</sup> For the turning away of the simple will slay them,  
 And the complacency of fools will destroy them;

## I. The Restrainer Identified

# II. The Antichrist Incinerated

. <sup>8</sup> And then the lawless one will be **revealed**,  
 whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His  
 mouth and destroy with the brightness of His  
 coming.

**revealed**, apokaluptó: to uncover, reveal

**Original Word:** ἀποκαλύπτω

**Part of Speech:** Verb

**Transliteration:** apokaluptó

**Phonetic Spelling:** (ap-ok-al-oop'-to)

**Definition:** to uncover, reveal

**Usage:** I uncover, bring to light, reveal.

601 apokalýptō (from [575](#) /apó, "away from" and [2572](#) /kalýptō, "to cover") – properly, uncover, revealing what is hidden (veiled,

obstructed), especially its inner make-up; (figuratively) to make plain (manifest), particularly what is immaterial (invisible).

<sup>8</sup> And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will **consume** with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming.

the Lord will consume

2 Thessalonians 2:7–8 (ESV)

.<sup>8</sup> .... whom the **Lord Jesus** will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming.

## consume

**ἀν-αλίσκω**: **1.** *to expend; to consume, e. g. χρήματα (to spend money; very often in Xen.).*

**2.** *to consume, use up, destroy: Lk. 9:54; Gal. 5:15; 2 Th. 2:8 R G WH mrg. (Sept. Jer. 27 (50):7; Prov. 23:28; Gen. 41:30, etc.) [Comp.: κατ-, προσ-αναλίσκω.]\**

Thayer, J. H. (1889). In [A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: being Grimm's Wilke's Clavis Novi Testamenti](#) (p. 39). Harper & Brothers.

## Early manuscripts

**anaireó**: to take up, take away, make an end

**Original Word**: ἀναιρέω

**Part of Speech**: Verb

**Transliteration:** anaireó

**Phonetic Spelling:** (an-ahee-reh'-o)

**Definition:** to take up, take away, make an end

**Usage:** I take up, take away the life of, make an end of, murder.

The verb ... *anelei*, “destroy” used by Paul [in 2 Thess. 2:8] does not necessarily mean physical death. It can also refer to relegation to the lake of fire because the literal force of ... *anaireō* [the root form of *anelei*] is “I make an end of.” (*Revelation 8–22: An Exegetical Commentary* [Chicago: Moody, 1995], 397) MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2002). [1 & 2 Thessalonians](#) (p. 281). Moody Press.

From **ana** and (the active of) **haireomai**; to take up, i.e. Adopt; by implication, to take away (violently), i.e. Abolish, murder -- put to death, kill, slay, take away, take up.

**8** .....the Lord will consume with the  
breath of His mouth and destroy with the  
brightness of His coming.

Isaiah 11:4 (NKJV)

4 ...

He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth,  
And with the breath of His lips He shall slay the  
wicked.

Hosea 6:5 (NKJV)

5 Therefore I have hewn *them* by the prophets,  
I have slain them by the words of My mouth;  
And your judgments *are like light that* goes forth.

Revelation 1:16 (NKJV)

16 He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance *was like the sun shining in its strength.*

Revelation 2:16 (NKJV)

16 **Repent, or else I will come to you quickly and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth.**

**8** ····the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming.

The parallel statement **and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming** adds a slightly different dimension to Antichrist's destruction. *Katargeō* (**bring to an end**) literally means, "to render inoperative," "to abolish," or "to render ineffective."

**καταργέω** (*katargeō*), vb. *abolish; set aside; wipe out.*  
fut.act. καταργήσει; aor.act. κατήργησεν; perf.act. κατήργηκα;  
aor.pass. κατηργήθη; perf.mid. κατήργηται.  
Aramaic equivalent: (2) ܠܬܒ.

**Verb Usage**

1. **to stop (discontinue)** — to put an end to a state or an activity. Sense Antonym: to uphold (maintain). See also παύω. Related Topics: End; Enjoin; Quit; Cease.

1 Co 13:11 ὅτε γέγονα ἀνὴρ, **κατήργηκα** τὰ τοῦ νηπίου.

2. **to inactivate** — to cause something to become idle, inactive, inoperative, or useless.

Brannan, R., ed. (2020). In [Lexham Research Lexicon of the Greek New Testament](#). Lexham Press.

Not only will the Lord **slay** (destroy) Antichrist's person, He will also **bring to an end** his empire. Christ will annihilate both the man and his enterprise **by the appearance of His coming**, a reference to the visible manifestation of Christ at His second coming

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2002). [1 & 2 Thessalonians](#) (p. 281). Moody Press.

Daniel 7:25–27 (NKJV)

<sup>25</sup> He shall speak *pompous* words against the Most High,  
 Shall persecute the saints of the Most High,  
 And shall intend to change times and law.  
 Then *the saints* shall be given into his hand  
 For a time and times and half a time.

<sup>26</sup> ‘But the court shall be seated,  
And they shall take away his dominion,  
To consume and destroy *it* forever.  
<sup>27</sup> Then the kingdom and dominion,  
And the greatness of the kingdoms under the  
whole heaven,  
Shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most  
High.  
His kingdom *is* an everlasting kingdom,  
And all dominions shall serve and obey Him.’

#### Daniel 11:45 (NKJV)

<sup>45</sup> And he shall plant the tents of his palace between  
the seas and the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall  
come to his end, and no one will help him.

#### Revelation 17:11 (NKJV)

<sup>11</sup> The beast that was, and is not, is himself also the  
eighth, and is of the seven, and is going to perdition.

#### Revelation 19:11–21 (NKJV)

<sup>11</sup> Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white  
horse. And He who sat on him *was* called Faithful  
and True, and in righteousness He judges and

makes war. <sup>12</sup> His eyes *were* like a flame of fire, and on His head *were* many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. <sup>13</sup> He *was* clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. <sup>14</sup> And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. <sup>15</sup> Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. <sup>16</sup> And He has on *His* robe and on His thigh a name written:

### KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS

<sup>17</sup> Then I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in the midst of heaven, “Come and gather together for the supper of the great God, <sup>18</sup> that you may eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them, and the flesh of all *people*, free and slave, both small and great.”

<sup>19</sup> And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army.

<sup>20</sup> Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone. <sup>21</sup> And the rest were killed with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse. And all the birds were filled with their flesh.





aoist middle subjunctive, γενηται *genētai*

Robertson, A. T. (1933). [Word Pictures in the New Testament](#) (2 Th 2:7). Broadman Press.