

The Great Departure

2 Thessalonians 2:1-3

¹ **Now** (moving on to the purpose of this letter) **we request you, brethren,** (written to believers, this is not about the gospel for salvation but about living the Spirit Filled Life) **with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ** (at *The Rapture*) **and our** (all believers) **gathering together to Him,** (to Meet the Lord in the Air).

² **that** (we request you...that) **you not be quickly** (easily or quickly in time) **shaken from your composure** (mind-set on eschatology) **or be disturbed** (in your thinking and understanding) **either by a spirit** (demon) **or a message** (false teaching) **or a letter** (forgery) **as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come.**

(That they missed *The Rapture* and are now living in The Tribulation)

- (1) Phrase **day of the Lord** is used many times in the Old Testament
- (2) **Day of the Lord** includes The Tribulation, the 2nd Advent and the Millennial reign of JESUS CHRIST.
- (3) **Day of Christ** does not occur in Old Testament and refers to *The Rapture* of the Church, or the

gathering of all believers in the Church Age
(1 Corinthians 1:8; Philippians 1:6 and 1:10; Philippians 2:16)

- (4) The Thessalonian believers were upset and confused because some of them thought they were in The Tribulation and were being told that the Roman persecution of believers in JESUS CHRIST was part of the suffering of The Tribulation and that there was no such thing as a rapture or taking up of the Church Age believers

3 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,*

- (5) Paul answers this confusion in verses 3-12

Let no one deceive you This is an interesting Greek construction: it is an Aorist Subjunctive used as an Imperative of the verb meaning to delude, to deceive,

Not only to lead out of the right way, but to lead into error.
This is very important.

Some simply desire to lead you away from truth, out of the right way of thinking, for example:

take away from you moral beliefs,
they are not saying be immoral,
they simply desire to take away your moral standards.

Then on the other hand there are those who seek to lead you to deceive

you out from what is right and at the same time lead you into error.
Lead you out from morality and into immorality.

Some deceive you into thinking that capitalism is wrong;
while others seek
to lead you out from capitalism into Socialism or Communism.

Some seek to simply lead you away from the bible, while others seek to
take the bible away from you and lead you into **Anti-God,**
Anti-Christ thinking.

Some seek to simply take away morality,
while others deceive you into thinking that immorality is right.
Here in context of 2 Thessalonians 2, they seek to deceive these believers
into thinking *The Rapture* is false and they are in The Tribulation.

Let no one deceive you

This is an Aorist Subjunctive –used as an Imperative,
and the reason for the Subjunctive
is that indeed some will be deceived while others will not.
The imperative is an exhortation to continue to **think rightly**
as to the teaching Paul has given them on *The Rapture*.

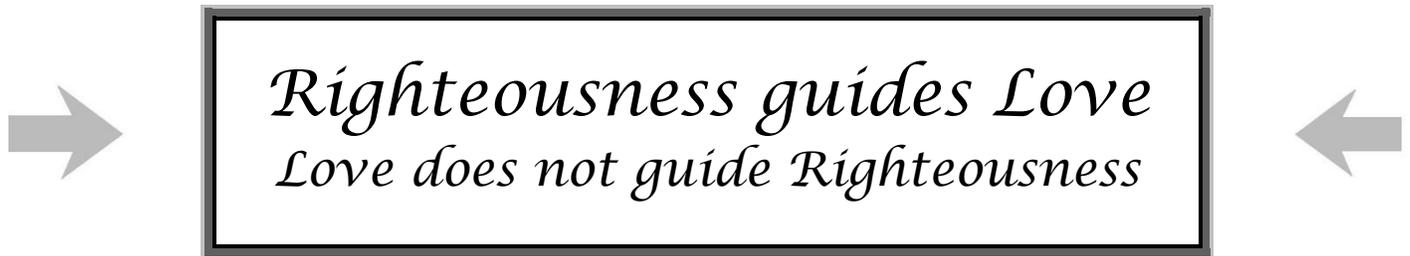
Being **deceived** is characteristic in every dispensation. It is a tactic of Satan
in the Church Age. Being deceived by the enticement of sin as in Romans 16:18.

This is an interesting passage in revealing who is at the foundation of all
deception Romans 16:17 and 19-20

¹⁷ **Now I urge you, brethren,** (fellow believers in JESUS
CHRIST) **keep your eye on those who cause**
dissensions and hindrances (to the learning of Truth)
contrary to the teaching which you learned, and
turn away from them. (Do not fellowship with them, for it is in
their conversation that they cause dissensions and hindrances to Truth.)

¹⁹ **For the report of your obedience has reached to all; therefore I am rejoicing over you, but I want you to be wise in what is good and innocent in what is evil.**

It seems so wise to allow those who hate JESUS CHRIST into your country or assembly, but always remember that...



NOW FOR THE VICTORIOUS PROCLAMATION

²⁰ **The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.**

Another interesting passage on being deceived in every dispensation look at 2 Corinthians 11:3

³ **But I am afraid that, as the serpent (Satan) deceived Eve by his craftiness, (shrewdness in manipulation of thought or even of the Word of God.)**

And people, just because you do not have an answer when you know what someone is saying if not right, not truthful, do not think they are right, just walk away, do not be deceived by their craftiness in distorting the Truth.

your minds (again, this is where the battle is fought...you

thinking, your mind-set) **will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ.**

(Remember that devotion to JESUS CHRIST
can be distorted into wrongful action...
BE WISE!)

Another important point to remember on *being deceived*.

DECEIVING YOURSELF 1 Corinthians 3:18

¹⁸ **Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you thinks that he is wise in this age, (cosmic thinking, being politically correct) he must become foolish, (to the world) so that he may become wise. (Before God.)**

QUESTION

HOW DO YOU DECEIVE YOURSELF?

- > I can get away with this!
- > I can get away with pre-marital sex;
- > I can get away with homosexual relation!

or

- > I can get away without coming to Bible study!
- > I can get away with not going to church.

We can get away with being generous with other people's money!

I am a generous, virtuous person because I vote to spend other people's money.

We are going to make it as a nation by taking the bible out of our Judicial System and out of our educational system.

People deceive themselves that THEY CAN BE SAVED

- by being moral or
- by going to church.

People do not have to simply and only believe in Jesus Christ to escape Eternal

Damnation.

Being deceived as to what is going on in history
is one of the great deceptions.

We saw how JESUS CHRIST warned the Jews
not to be deceived in The Tribulation.

Matthew 24:4

⁴ **And Jesus answered and said to them, "See to it that no one misleads you. (deceives you)**

HOW DO YOU OVERCOME BEING DECEIVED?

JESUS CHRIST answers this in Matthew 24:23 **do not believe**

2 Thessalonians 2:3

³ **let no one deceive you**
In verse 2...Paul exhorts:
do not be shaken, or disturbed.

Let no one deceive you –in any way We have already seen three ways of being deceived in verse 2: *by a demon; by their clever speaking or by a false letter.* In any way, includes their clever way of distorting the Word of God, their clever way of distorting Love! You must be careful when you listen...be Filled with the Holy Spirit.

For it will not come the italics indicates that this is not part of the original manuscript, but is inserted for clarity...

Actually:

Let no one deceive you in any way for unless the apostasy comes first

We now enter into the most important of phrases in both 1 and 2 Thessalonians and in reference to the chronology of

The Rapture
and
Second Coming of JESUS CHRIST.

The phrase **unless the apostasy comes first** has caused great confusion and misunderstanding.

So we have to be careful and thorough in understanding what Paul is saying.

The Greek word for **apostasy** is ***APOSTASIA***.

Here is yet another place in the Scriptures where some the translators did not try to interpret but simply transliterated:

We have seen this with other words like ***Christ*** and how we translate various translations ***helper*** to ***PARACLETE***, referring to the **Holy Spirit**.

Here they simply transliterated *apostasia* to *apostasy*.

The King James missed the point when they translated this ***a falling away*** which has confused many and has caused a misunderstanding of this verse. But even the NASV missed it when it when they translated it **the apostasy comes first**, then in the margin they write: ***falling away from the faith***

Understanding *apostasia* as *a falling away* has brought confusion.

H. Wayne House (google) has observed that this *falling away* is viewed by Bible Scholars in four different ways.

- (1) **APOSTASIA** refers to the man of sin, meaning that in this one verse he is viewed as
 - (1> the apostasia
 - (2> man of sin and
 - (3> son of destruction
- (2) Refers to **'falling away'** from the faith. But this view has no consistency. To Whom is it referring?
 - (1> the Church?
 - (2> to Jews during The Tribulation?
 - (3> to Non-Christians who refuse to believe in JESUS CHRIST by large numbers over the earth?
(this was the view of Lewis Sperry Chafer)
- (3) Refers to a revolt or rebellion against God
- (4) **APOSTASIA** refers to *The Rapture* and is yet another word for Rapture. (Kenneth Wuest).

In fact, I read some 23 versions on this verse, in which every one of them translated this word as **rebellion, revolt** or **falling away**.

NOT ONE TRANSLATED THIS WORD
BY IT'S LEXICON DEFINITION OF **"the departure"**.

Firstly:

Let us look at some Greek Lexicons.

In the primary Greek Lexicon Liddell and Scott, defines **APOSTASIA** first as a **defection, revolt**; then secondly as a **departure, disappearance**

The Complete Wordstudy Dictionary of the New Testament.

“to depart, departure, apostasy”

The Complete Biblical Library (8 vols) makes some interesting observations about the use of this Greek word in the New Testament.

Since the New Testament consistently warns against apostasy **“backsliding, falling away”**, it is rather puzzling (I inserted underlining) that it is relatively silent in terms of a precise vocabulary connoting such action.

“Apostasy” itself is used only once (of only two occurrences) in the New Testament in connection with backsliding from the Christian faith.

The verb ***aphistemi*** serves frequently to describe such **“falling away”**, but it is used only three times for backsliding from Faith in God

(Luke 8:13, 1 Timothy 4:1; Hebrews 3:12).

In these passages it actually means **“to draw way”** from something or someone. Its meaning of **“cause to revolt”**, **“go away”**, and **“depart”** can also be applied to ***apostasia*** to give a secondary meaning of **“removal”** or **“departure”**.

Secondly:

Let us note early understanding of this word in the early bible translations.

Tommy Ice has observed that the first seven English translations of

apostasia all rendered the noun as either **departure** or **departing**.

These first seven English translations are:

Wycliffe Bible (1384);
Tyndale Bible (1526);
Coverdale Bible (1535);
Cranmer Bible (1539);
Breeches Bible (1576);
Beza Bible (1583);
Geneva Bible (1608);

This gives strong support of the translation of “**departure**” in 2 Thess. 2:3 and very strong support to Pre-Tribulation Rapture of the Church. In Jerome’s Latin translation known as the Vulgate from around the time of AD 400 renders ***apostasia*** with the word ***discessio***, meaning **departure**.

There is much speculation and debate on why the King James (1611) changed from “**departure**” to “**falling away**”.

But most agree in one way or another it had to do with reaction to the Reformation by Luther in 1517.

- 1... We have looked at the Greek definition of this word ***APOSTASIA*** and seen how it means ‘**departure**’.
- 2... We have looked at the historical translation of this word in early bibles.
- 3... There is yet one more vital area to be considered as we consider the translation here in 2 Thessalonians 2:3 and that is the all-important:

Context

The three guiding rules in hermeneutics
(principles that guide in the interpretation of the Bible)

are:
context, context, context.

So with this in mind let us look at the **context** of 2 Thessalonians 2.

You will notice that in verse 6-8 Paul advances on the same two events he mentions here in 2:3:

the departure—that is *The Rapture* or the taking out of the Church-off the earth, and
the revealing of the man of lawlessness.

Let us briefly note verses 6-8:

⁶ **And you know what restrains him (THE MAN OF LAWLESSNESS) now, (Church Age) so that in his time he will be revealed.**

⁷ **For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains (The Holy Spirit who resides in every believer in Christ during the Church Age) *will do so until he is taken out of the way.***
This is a reference to the ‘departure’ of every believer of the Church Age.

⁸ **Then (after the departure of the Church—departure of the Holy Spirit) *that lawless one will be revealed* (just as stated in 2:3) *whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming; (SECOND ADVENT)***

Therefore, the chronology of verse 3 and 6-8

^a The removal, departure, rapture of all believers of the Church Age.

^b With the departure of the Church is the departure of the restrainer (Holy Spirit).

c	Now the man of lawlessness, that is the son of perdition can be revealed throughout the earth. (news-media)
d	The 'departure' verse 3 is synonymous with the removal of the restrainer – verse 7 ...referring to the Holy Spirit.

In interpreting this word as '**DEPARTURE**'
referring to the **departure** of the Church, we have looked:

1	Greek definition of the word APOSTASIA
2	Historical translations of the bible
3	Context of 2 Thessalonians 2 and yet we have one more
4	The presence of the definite article: THE DEPARTURE limiting this departure to a time or order identification .

2 Thessalonians 2:3

³ **Let no one** (no matter who they are or their credentials) **in any way** (demon, speech, letter = doctrine of demons) **deceive you**, (entice you away from Truth into a lie) **for it will not come unless the Departure comes first, unless comes first** (conditional expression in the negative)

if not, **unless unless comes first** adverb expressing **order of events or time**. Here it is used to express order that *events will occur*.

unless first comes the departure note **the definite article**—
if this verse were referring to an apostasy –**falling away from the faith**,
this could be a multitude of times throughout the Church Age:

to the Church of England, this would be the Roman Catholic Church;

to the Roman Catholic Church this would be the Reformation.

There are a multitude of times throughout history of the Church that apostasy has appeared. In fact, if we did just a study on *apostasy* that is **the falling away from the Faith** we would find it all through the New Testament epistles.

Christians are warned all through the New Testament to be on guard, to be alert to being deceived by apostasy and forsaking the **True Gospel of Salvation by Faith Alone in Christ Alone** and many other doctrines.

Tim LaHaye makes a clarifying point when he ask:
When it come to the end times are you looking for Christ or the Anti-Christ?

and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction,

the man of lawlessness I am happy to tell you ladies, you can rest, for the antichrist will not be a woman but will indeed be a male.

The definite article, **the man**, specifies this to a specific person in history to be revealed.

In the next phrase he is referred to as **the son of destruction. of lawlessness** here the Greek word is *HAMARTIA* or sin:

the man of sin if you think sin is horrible today, give thanks that you will not be here during The Tribulation.

Where there will be no restrain on the **Inherited Sin Nature**. Sin is yet another word that is not politically correct.

So we do not teach our young people about **sin** and **that many things they**

may desire are indeed sin.

Why is the word **SIN**, politically incorrect?

Because SIN means to go against God and the Word of God.
And since in our society there is no God, then there is no SIN.

He is called **the man of sin**

So why do some translate this **the man of lawlessness**?

For the answer to this question look at 1 John 3:4

⁴ **Everyone who practices sin** this is the same word we had for **the man of sin**
Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; this does not mean the absence of law but...
deliberate violation of Law;
above the law,
no respect for law,
being a law to themselves
and sin is lawlessness.

Believe it or not **lawlessness** is being held in check around the world by the presence of the Holy Spirit in believers. People, this is why Satan does all he can to target Christians, to get Christians to be immoral, to get Christians to sin.

the man of sin is revealed Aorist Passive Subjunctive of the verb meaning to remove the covering, or veil, exposing to open view what was before hidden; to make manifest, to reveal.

Here in chapter 2 it is used three times: verses 3, 6 and 8.
(again... context is so important.)

The passive voice means that this man is revealed for who and what he is in history. He will be born and grow up in the Church Age then when the Holy Spirit is removed by means of the removal of the church at *The Rapture*, he will be revealed in the beginning of The Tribulation.

So here he is identified as **the man of sin** and also as **the son of destruction** this is a rather sobering word in the Greek.

The word means to **destroy fully**.

Used transitively: **the losing or loss**.

Used intransitively **perdition or ruin**.

The Complete Wordstudy Dictionary of the New Testament says of this word: *“in the New Testament this word refers to the state after death wherein exclusion from salvation is a realized fact, where in man, instead of becoming what he might have been, is lost and ruined.”*

The Complete Biblical Library: “In the Greek New Testament the term **APOLEIA** is the principal word for ‘**destruction**’ and ‘**eternal destruction and damnation**’.

Bauer, Arndt, Gingrich: A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament

¹ ‘destruction’ **transitively**, the destruction that one causes

² **Intransitive**; The destruction that one experiences, annihilation, both complete and in process.’

Those who cause destruction and who are destined for destruction.

Chronology of Eschatological Events

- ¹ First is the 'removal' 'departure' of the Church (all believers in JESUS CHRIST on earth, and they are removed by the 'snatching up' or *The Rapture*, or the Gathering by Christ to Himself, in the Air.

- ² And with the departure of the church comes the removal of the restrainer... that is the Holy Spirit.

- ³ After the departure of the church, and the removal of the Holy Spirit, and not before it's departure, the man of sin, the son of perdition, the antichrist, the dictator of the Revived Roman Empire will be revealed on earth.

- ⁴ When the Church is taken off the earth, people (unbelievers) will accept that which is false.

- ⁵ The man of sin, the dictator of the Revived Roman Empire, will be both a political and religious leader of the world. This is a concept that most American leaders *do not understand*.

For example they think of the Muslims as a religious movement rejecting that they are a very strong political organization. The Muslim presences in the world and in America should be viewed as a political organization, with political designs that are in complete opposition to the Constitution of America.

As long as we treat them as religious only, they will continue to increase in their domination of America's judicial and political systems.

- ⁶ He is called the man of sin that is the man who leads in more sin. He is called the son of destruction that is *the man who brings destruction*. Satan's major problem at this time in history, in the Church Age, is that he is restrained by the presence of the Holy Spirit inside of

believers. Satan cannot get the religious groups united in one group. But once the *restrainer* that is the Holy Spirit is removed then Satan is free to destroy all he can to bring about his one world government under one world religion.

⁶ This man who represents Satan and who is controlled by Satan has many titles, here we have two; *man of sin, and the son of destruction.*

How befitting this title is from our study in Daniel 9:26-27

²⁶ **“Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off** (crucifixion of JESUS CHRIST) **and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come** (reference to *man of sin*) **will destroy the city** (Jerusalem) **and the sanctuary.** (Temple) **And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined.**

²⁷ **“And he** (the man of sin) **will make a firm covenant with the many** (Jews in Israel) **for one week,** (7 years of The Tribulation) **but in the middle of the week** (some 3 ½ years) **he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering;** (in Israel) **and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.”** (This is *the son of destruction.*

Also note Daniel 7:25

²⁵ **He will speak out against the Most High** (JESUS the CHRIST) **and wear down the saints** (those who believe in Jesus as the Christ) **of the Highest One, and he will intend to make alterations in times and in law; and they will be given into his hand for a time, (2) times, and half a time.** (3 ½ years.)

Also note Daniel 8:23-25

²³ **“In the latter period of their rule,** (near the end of the Times of the Gentiles Luke 21:24) **When the transgressors have run *their course*, A king will arise, Insolent and skilled in intrigue.**

²⁴ **“His power will be mighty, but not by his *own* power,** (he will be empowered by Satan) **And he will destroy to an extraordinary degree And prosper and perform *his will*; He will destroy mighty men and the holy people.** (Believers in JESUS CHRIST, namely the Jews)

²⁵ **“And through his shrewdness He will cause deceit to succeed by his influence;** (multitudes will be deceived, even of the elect) **And he will magnify *himself* in his heart, And he will destroy many while *they are* at ease. –by proclaiming peace**

2 Thessalonians 2:3

³ **Let no one in any way deceive you, for *it will not come* unless the departure comes first, and the man of lawlessness (Sin) is revealed, the son of destruction,**

I HOPE you are living each day looking for
The Departure,
where You will see the Lord in the Air,
You are not looking for the AntiChrist.

I HOPE you are living each day
Anticipating
Meeting Him in the Air!