

Tribulation Central

When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed...2 Thessalonians 1:1-8

He Who Restrains

<http://tribulationcentral.com/pdf/restrainer.pdf>

In the previous¹ study covered the first chapter in 2 Thessalonians, Paul said that God will repay those who afflict the church and give them who are troubled from their afflictions when Jesus is revealed in heaven in flaming fire. Note, that the church rests after the tribulation. Since Paul covered the above in the first chapter, the readers of the epistle has somewhat of an understanding of what is to take place as they enter into reading chapter two. Paul wrote a letter to the Thessalonians before he wrote 2 Thessalonians. In 1 Thessalonians Chapter 4:13-18, Paul describes the sequence of the church's catching up to meet Jesus in the air at His coming. Chapter 5 continues with the day of the Lord coming like "a thief in the night." [And Peter continues in his epistle "Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God" (2 Peter 3:12a)]. Therefore, Paul gave the Thessalonian church some background that carries into the second chapter.²

Our study continues in 2nd Thessalonians chapter 2. And the verses will be used to examine the pre-trib claims:

- The church will be raptured into heaven before the tribulation;
- The Holy Spirit is the Restrainer and must leave and take the church with Him into Heaven in order for the lawless one to be revealed.

Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.

Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these

¹ **When Jesus Shall Be Revealed** , <http://www.tribulationcentral.com/revealed.html>.

² See With a Shout - tribulationcentral.com/shout.html; **Not Destined for Wrath: A Study in 1 Thessalonians Chapter 5** - tribulationcentral.com/nowrath.html (and studies related with the *Not Destined For Wrath* article); and **When Jesus Shall Be Revealed -Ibid.**

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things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:

2 Thessalonians 2:1-8

In chapter two, Paul was writing in regard to **the coming of the Lord, Jesus and their (the church's and Paul's) gathering to him**, as supported by the pre-tribbers, the rapture. The Thessalonians were disturbed by a message or a letter saying the day of Christ (the Lord) has come. Paul told them not to be deceived in any way because the *day of the Lord*³ *will not come except a falling away (apostasy comes first) and the man of lawless one is revealed who opposes and exalts himself above God and shows himself as God*. And Paul reminded them at a time before he told them these things (which he could of told them in person and he also wrote to them about the day of the Lord in 1 Thessalonians chapter 5). And Paul reminds them that there is one who withholds the Anti-christ will do so until he is taken out of the way. And then that wicked man will be revealed whom the Lord Jesus will consume and destroy him with the brightness of His coming.

According to pre-tribbers, the day of the Lord is the tribulation, Jesus raptures the church before the tribulation, and then after the tribulation Jesus returns again to destroy the Anti-christ and sets up His Kingdom. As in the above verse that day will not come until a falling away come first where the falling away is when the Church is raptured and then the Anti-christ is revealed after the rapture of the church.

Again, pre-tribbers claim falling away is the rapture of the church. However, falling away is translated from the Greek *apostasia* in which the word apostasy means *forsake, defection from the truth*. This is hardly a meaning where rapture is used. If Paul was to imply a rapture, he would said so. If this falling away is used as a rapture this would carry further complications with this passage of scripture, which will be explained further. Pre-tribbers claim further that the restrainer who restrains the Anti-christ is the Holy Spirit and He will be taken away from the earth (by rapturing the church with Him) in order for the Anti-christ to be revealed, again which causes complications

³ Isaiah chapter 2:13-17: For **the day of the LORD** of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low: And upon all the cedars of Lebanon, that are high and lifted up, and upon all the oaks of Bashan, And upon all the high mountains, and upon all the hills that are lifted up, And upon every high tower, and upon every fenced wall, And upon all the ships of Tarshish, and upon all pleasant pictures. And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low: and **the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day. The Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. In 2 Thessalonians chapter 2:4: The anti-christ "opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." In the day of the Lord, the Lord alone is exalted. The anti-christ exalts himself during the tribulation. Therefore, the tribulation is not the day of the Lord and are separate.**

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The Holy Spirit is not described as a restrainer anywhere in scripture. The Holy Spirit is omnipresent. There are examples where an angel can restrain.

In Genesis, when Adam and Eve fell God:

...drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims,
and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.
Genesis 3:24

If God used angels (or Cherubims) to keep men out the garden of Eden, isn't it possible angels can restrain the Anti-christ until he is revealed?

Another point, does the restrainer need to be removed from the earth? Here's another example. If we are playing football and I have possession of the ball and I am running toward you and you are restraining me from running across the goal line. Then my teammate comes along and blocks you so you are taken out of my way, so I can run in for the touchdown. In this instance, do you have to be raptured into heaven in order for me to cross the goal line? So, therefore, the restrainer does not have to go to Heaven. He's merely restraining the Anti-christ, and he could step aside for the Anti-christ to be revealed.

Another important point, if the Holy Spirit is in heaven during the tribulation, how does anyone get saved? There are the 144 thousand Jews who "evangelize the earth." How do people get saved without the Holy Spirit's presence? For further study, please read *Absence of the Holy Spirit*.⁴

Some pre-tribbers claim the restrainer is the church, and will be taken out of the way via the rapture. If the church is taken out of the way, Paul would have written "only **we** who now letteth will let, until **we** be taken out of the way...", but he didn't. If the church is the restrainer, this cause further complications with the scriptures.

Remember Paul wrote "by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our **gathering together** unto him..." So this is the focus. Jesus comes and we are gathered by him and not the Holy Spirit. This thought continues further until Paul clearly wrote concerning the Lord's coming "whom the Lord shall consume (Anti-Christ) with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming..." Therefore Paul wrote the Coming of the Lord is when he consumes the Anti-christ, which is after the tribulation. Our gathering together with Jesus happens at the same time. Paul also wrote in the beginning of this letter⁵ that the

⁴ - tribulationcentral.com/absence.html

⁵ -2 Thessalonians 1:1-8; tribulationcentral.com/revealed.html

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church will rest "when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire... " after the tribulation. (Notice how pre-tribbers complicate matters and contradict scripture with their above implications). In Mark, Jesus describes his coming and his gathering of the elect:

But in those days, **after that tribulation**, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, And the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they **see the Son of man coming** in the clouds with great power and glory. And then shall he send his angels, and shall **gather together his elect** from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven.

Mark 13:24-27

Again, it is after the tribulation, Jesus comes and he gathers together the elect.

So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ

1 Corinthian 1:7