"THE REVEALING OF ANTICHRIST"

2 Thessalonians 2:4-8

7-8-2026

INTRODUCTION:

***How will Antichrist be revealed?**

I. In the future, Antichrist's revealing will be evidenced by his demand for the exclusive worship of Himself (v. 4-5)
(The <u>blasphemy</u> of the man of sin)

II. In the present, Antichrist's revealing is restrained by the sovereign working of God (v. 6-7)
(The <u>withholding</u> of the man of sin)

III. In the end, the revealed Antichrist will be terminated by the Lord Jesus Christ (v. 8)
(The <u>doom</u> of the man of sin)



CONCLUSION:

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INTRODUCTION: See Daniel 7

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"THE REVEALING OF ANTICHRIST"

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INTRODUCTION:

Read and comment on verses 1-3.

***How will Antichrist be revealed?**

I. In the future, Antichrist's revealing will be evidenced by his demand for the exclusive worship of Himself (v. 4-5)
(The blasphemy of the man of sin)

"Opposeth" - (*antikeimai)* to be set over against; to be situated opposite; to withstand and be adverse to something.

The Antichrist will not only stand against Christ (hence "Antichrist"), but he will also stand against *"all that is called God."*

"Exalteth himself" - to lift himself up above and over every "god" and religion

In total pride Antichrist (like Satan who energizes him did - Is. 14:13-14) will elevate himself to the place of deity. He will be escalated to the point of global worship (this will occur at the midpoint of the 70th week of Daniel 9:27; cp. with Rev. 13).

"All that is called God" - Antichrist will oppose and replace all of the "gods" that the pagans worshipped. He will exalt himself above Allah, above the 30 million gods of the Hindus, above the New Age philosophy that each person is a god.

"Or that is worshipped" - this egotistical maniac will oppose and elevate himself above every object or person of worship.

The pagan world will cease from its worship of people (Mary, saints), places (shrines and holy places), and things (statues, idols, etc.), and will willingly give all worship to Antichrist (Rev. 13).

All other religion will be banned. "Every so-called god will be deposed of in favor of himself" (Hiebert, p. 308).
It is my view that at the mid-point of the 70th week, the Antichrist who rode the harlot/mystery Babylon religion (the RCC and its ecumenical ties) will along with the 10 kings who give him global authority, burn that false mystery religion and will replace it with himself (Rev. 17:16-18).

"sitteth in the Temple' - Antichrist will take his seat in the rebuilt Jewish inner

sanctuary of their Holy Place

--The Jews perhaps with Antichrist permission and covenant will rebuild their temple (note: It is called here *"the temple of God"* NOT because it will have God's approval or that it will be God's temple; but because from Israel's standpoint, it will be dedicated to jehovah God. Note: God will not put His stamp of approval on any rebuilt Temple until that one which Ezekiel 40-48 speaks about is build in the Messianic kingdom).

--This desecration of Israel's temple is spoken about in Daniel 9:27 and Matthew 24:15.

This abomination (like that of the Grecian ruler Antiochus Epiphanies) will desecrate (pollute) their Holy Place.

At this time (the mid-point of the 70th week), Jesus warned Israel to flee from the holocaust to follow.

"Shewing himself" - to show off; to display; to proclaim; to exhibit.

Antichrist will exhibit to the world his lie - that "He is God."

SEE: Daniel 7:17-28

V. 5

This question expects a positive answer: *"You do remember, don't you, that when I was with you, I used to tell you these things?"*

Paul asks this question because apparently the Thessalonians had forgotten. Their forgetfulness let them give heed to the false teaching that was going around: namely, that the Day of the Lord had begun (v. 2).

Paul is now saying that is impossible, since the man of sin has not yet been revealed. Paul is saying, "You don't see a global religious figure who demands the world to worship him, do you? Then how could you be in the Day of the Lord?"

II. In the present, Antichrist's revealing is restrained by the sovereign working of God (v. 6-7)
(The withholding of the man of sin)

"What withholdeth" - the One who is restraining, holding [Antichrist] back

"In his time" - This phrase points to a very exact, specific, appointed moment or season when the Antichrist will be manifested.

The reason God has such restraint upon the unveiling of Antichrist is because God, in fulfilling His sovereign plan and prophecy has His calendar marked for a specific time period. When that exact moment in history occurs, the man of sin will be manifested.
"Letteth" - to hinder or hold back
The same word is used in Rom. 1:18 in describing men who *"hold down"* or *"suppress"* the truth in unrighteousness.

Even since the days of Paul, the mystery of lawlessness was already at work, already in operation, already in motion. The gradual development of the world scene over the centuries and the rapid and recent development of the "New World Order," the sovereignty of the U.N., the rapid advancement for a cashless society, the unification of Europe, peace talks with Israel, the moral degeneration of the world (II Tim. 3:1ff), the technological advances (of bar-coding, microchip inplantations), the quest for an ecumenical-one-world religion, are all events that are setting the stage for the devilish work of Antichrist.

"The mystery of iniquity" was already at work because of the appearance of *"many Antichrists"* (I John), all of which were minor characters compared to the Antichrist who shall come!

God's control of man's sin is due to His "common grace" or His undeserved goodness experienced by all men (Psalm 145 - note the repeated word "All").

Examples of God's "common grace":
--God sends rain on the just and unjust (Mt. 5:44, 45)
--God provides food and gladness even for pagans (Acts 14:15-17)
--God restrains man's acts of sin (Gen. 20:6)
--God restrains the effects of sin
Examples:
a. Through law and government - Rom. 13
b. Through discoveries of medicines
c. Through believing Christians - I Cor. 7:14
NOTE: Believers to a large extent are the "moral conscience" of society. A society will reflect the beliefs of its people. God's children are to be salt and light - Mt. 5:13-16.
NOTE: God withheld his catastrophic judgment on Sodom because of the presence of the righteous man Lot (Gen. 18:23-32, 19:21-22)

The person of the Godhead most closely associated with the exercise of "common grace" -- and in particularly controlling sin -- is the Holy Spirit.

Genesis 6:3 - "My Spirit shall not always strive with man . . ."

God's Spirit patiently strove with man prior to the flood, but because they did not respond, but rather increased and continued in wickedness (Gen. 6:5-6), God judged that generation (v. 7).

Note: Though God in His mercy and grace does exercise control over the proneness of man's depraved heart, He is under no obligation to do so.

When men persist in sin, and rebel against the "light" God gives them (Ex: creation and conscience), God will let go of them and let them plunge into the depths of sin and subsequent ruin (Romans 1:18-32).

II Thess. 2:6-8

The Holy Spirit Who today CONTROLS sin is keeping back the Antichrist from appearing on the World scene. No doubt Satan for a long time has desired to energize a man to fulfill his diabolical plan.

V. 6 - "What withholdeth" - Lit. "The One who is restraining" (definite article plus a present, active participle that is neuter in gender, and singular in number).

The word "withhold" means to hold back, to restrain; to grab something and hold it tightly so that it does not get loose and out of control (Ex: holding on the leash of a vicious dog).

V. 7 - "He who now letteth" - the old English way of saying: "He who now restrains or holds back" (same Greek word as in verse 6 - "withholdeth").

Who is the Restrainer?

Some view the restrainer as being Michael the Archangel (Dan. 12:1-2), who at the mid-point of the Tribulation releases his grip on Satan and lets him persecute Israel (Rev. 12:1-17 *v. 7) via his Antichrist (Rev. 13:3-7). At this point the Antichrist's true identity is revealed to Israel (Rosenthal, The Pre-wrath Rapture - Nelson Pub., p. 256-260).
*Another view is that the restrainer is the Holy Spirit.

Though many explanations for the restrainer have been offered (such as a government, etc.), here are a couple of proofs that the Restrainer is either

Michael the Archangel or the Holy Spirit:

1. The phrase *"what withholdeth"* (V. 6) has a neuter article because the Greek word for "Spirit" is neuter.

2. In verse 7 the masculine article points to a person (not a force; but evidently the Michael or Holy Spirit) - *"he..."*

3. The supernatural character of the *"one holding back"* points to the Michael or Holy Spirit ("Only a supernatural person can truly frustrate the supernatural workings of Satan" - Hiebert)

"Until he be taken out of the way" - lit. until He removes Himself out of the midst.

We are not to view the Holy Spirit as departing from the earth, but as removing Himself from His present ministry of restraining the appearance of Antichrist.

The Holy Spirit has been holding back the appearing of the Antichrist and the onslaught of sin. One day the Holy Spirit's restraint will be removed.

Note: Scripture does not teach that the Holy Spirit Himself will be removed prior or during the Tribulation period; indeed, He will be on earth sealing and saving souls and performing signs (Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2:16-21; Rev. 7:4; Zech. 12:10; Ezek. 39:29; cp. Is. 44:3 with Rev. 22:17).

The Biblical understanding, therefore, is not that the Spirit Himself is removed, but that His restraining power is removed.

The Holy Spirit's hand, which has been holding back Satan's wickedness and wicked one, will one day be withdrawn. At that time the world will experience the full force of man's evil.

III. In the end, the revealed Antichrist will be terminated by the Lord Jesus Christ (v. 8)
(The doom of the man of sin)

"And <u>then" -</u> At a specific time, when the Spirit's restrain is lifted, that lawless one will be uncovered.

Jesus Christ alone will abruptly <u>terminate</u> Antichrist.

Put your trust in the omnipotent, sovereign Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

"Consume" - the word is used of the consuming power of fire (Lk. 9:54). It is also used of what happens to that which is chewed up and devoured (Gal. 5:15).

"With the <u>Spirit</u> of His mouth" - i.e. with His <u>word</u>. All Christ will have to do is say the "words" and it is done

--God's Word is called the <u>Sword</u> of the <u>Spirit</u>

--When Christ returns a sharp <u>sword</u> will proceed out of His mouth (Rev. 19:15).

"Shall destroy" - to bring to nothing; to render inactive; Jesus will bring Antichrist's ability to operate to a screeching halt. He will have exactly 3 1/2 years of global tyranny and that will be it! He will be put out of commission.

"The brightness of his coming" - the shining splendor or glorious manifestation of His presence.

The glow of the beaming appearance of Christ will end the Antichrist's career.

SEE: Rev. 19:11-21

With God's people safe in Heaven (19:6-9), the wrath of God is then outpoured (v. 11-21)

NOTE: especially Rev. 19:20, 20:10

Daniel 7:11, 26 - *"I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld even until the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame. . . But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end."*

CONCLUSION:

Characteristics of the <u>Antichrist</u>

He will be:

1. **A <u>fearsome leader</u>** (Dan. 7:20).
   "More stout" = more imposing or fearsome. Antichrist will impress the godless world by his clout, power, personality, and boastful mouth.

2. **A <u>cruel persecutor</u>** (v. 21)
   He will war against the saints (Jew & Christian) during the <u>second half</u> the Tribulation (cp. v. 25; Rev. 13:7, 12:11-13)

3. **An <u>arrogant blasphemer</u>** (v. 25)
   He will talk about God with contempt and set himself up as God) - See Daniel 11:36

4. **A <u>powerful despot</u>** (v. 25)
   He will attempt to change that which only God has the right to change).
   He will rule globally for 3-1/2 years.

5. **A <u>military-obsessed</u> idolater**
   (Dan. 11:37-38)

6. **A <u>Satanic deceiver</u>**
   (II Thes. 2:9; Rev. 13:3, 4)

7. **A man of <u>lawlessness</u>** (II Th. 2:3)