

2 THESSALONIANS 2:1-8 – FALLING AWAY & THE RESTRAINER ERRORS

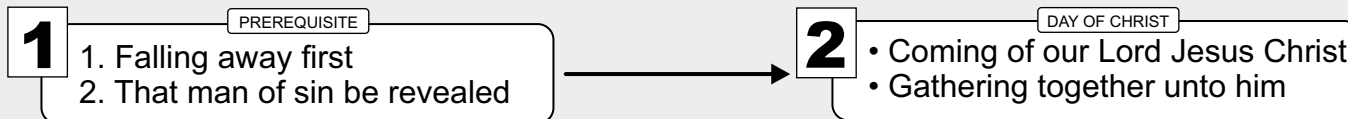
“¹Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, ²That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. ³Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; ⁴Who 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. ⁵Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? ⁶And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. ⁷For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. ⁸And 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:” (2Th.2:1-8)



THE FALLING AWAY IS NOT THE RAPTURE

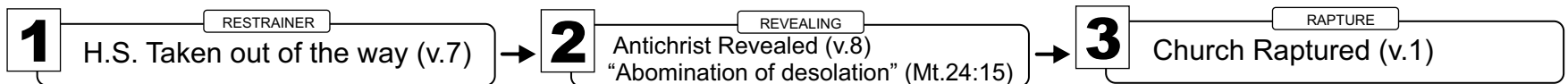
- **V.1**, Paul refers to two distinct things, namely (1) “the coming” and (2) our “gathering together”. These two ideas are governed by one Greek article (Granville Sharp Rule), which indicates that these are two aspects of a single event. Christ comes down, and we go up to meet Him. This is a summary of **1 Thessalonians chapter 4**. This is the rapture of the Church
- **V.2**, Day of Christ — Both the Greek Majority Text and the Latin read “Day of Christ”. Only the Coptic Egyptian text from Alexandria (critical text) reads “day of the Lord”. The Old Testament certainly refers to the “Day of the Lord.” This day is when God intervenes in human history to dispense judgment. However, here it is “the day of Christ” which relates to the coming of Christ for the church. The concern the Thessalonians had was that friends and family who already died (1Th.4:13) would somehow not be resurrected because they did not live to see or experience the rapture.
- **V.3**, The Greek word for “falling away” is *apostasia* which means to stand away from [something], or a departure. Paul provides a clue as to what this departure is by encouraging them to hold to what they were taught (2Th.2:15). If Paul wanted us to understand this “falling away” to be equated with our “gathering” with Christ, he could have used the same verb he used in verse 1. The words for “falling away” and “gathering” have an opposite effect. The “catching away” (rapture) is always spoken of as a gathering, not a departure. One is to depart, and the other is to gather toward. This is a falling away from the truth of the Word of God. Some teach that this refers to the rapture of the church. But this is chronologically impossible:

2:1-3



THE RESTRAINER IS NOT THE HOLY SPIRIT

- **WHO HE IS NOT:** (1) The **CHURCH** in Scripture is always feminine, yet the restrainer “he” is masculine (v.7). (2) The **HOLY SPIRIT** is still active after the Antichrist begins His reign. For example, the 144,000 that will be sealed (Rv.7). Plus, it makes no sense logically. See the following:



2:4-8

If the Holy Spirit is restraining the Antichrist from being revealed, then when He is taken away, the church would no longer have the Holy Spirit. The rapture occurs after the restrainer is removed (v.7), and then the Antichrist is revealed (v.3). How long will the church not have the Holy Spirit? If chronology means anything, then this makes no sense at all! Also, the Holy Spirit is the “earnest of our inheritance until the redemption” (Ep.1:14).

- **WHO HE IS: MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL** is the restrainer of evil for Israel in the Old Testament (Da.10:12-14, 21; 12:1). Several passages show Michael protecting Israel, especially from Satan. “And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time” (Da.12:1). This “time of trouble” is during the last days (Da.10:14). Also, we find Michael contending with the devil concerning the body of Moses (Jude 1:9). Plus, in **Revelation 12:7-9** we find Michael casting the dragon to the earth. From the examples in Scripture, Michael is the one restraining the Man of Sin (Antichrist).