

Bible Prophecy Made Easy - 2 Thessalonians 2

Context: Satan used the Roman Empire to try to wipe out the Early Church, killing 10 million saints. But the body of Christ continued to grow at a rapid pace, and the saints just kept laying down their lives for their Messiah. Satan responded by devising a strategy to destroy the Church from *within*, by creating a '*christian*' Church of his own.

Roman Emperor Constantine ended the persecutions in 313 A.D., and then proceeded to offer Christians positions of power and authority. They may have believed that the Lord was blessing them after enduring the harsh persecution.

But it was a deception, as Constantine then combined the worship of pagan Roman gods with Christianity, to form what became the Catholicism of the Roman Catholic Church. The Biblical Saturday Sabbath and God's Holy Feast Days were banned, and the *SUN*day Lord's Day and pagan holidays were introduced.

Pagan gods were renamed and given '*christian*' names. The Roman god Jupiter became St. Peter. The Roman Great Mother goddess, Cybele, became Mary. Her son Attis became baby Jesus.

2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 *"for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition."*

The true followers of Christ resisted these changes, but many compromised their beliefs and they *fell away*. Christianity in Rome *apostatized* into a religion with pagan holidays, idols and theology.

Both of the times that the phrase "*son of perdition*" is used in the Bible, it refers to someone who claimed to follow Christ, but was really *antichrist* in their beliefs and actions. Both Judas and the office of the Papacy have fulfilled this role. So the "*son of perdition*" is someone who would deceive within the church, not an atheist from the outside.

2 Thessalonians 2:4 *"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."*

Keep in mind that when the Apostle Paul wrote this, the Jewish temple was still standing, as it wasn't destroyed by the Romans until 70 A.D., so any reference to a physical temple would have been to that one, not an end times one. So what does Paul mean? To understand that, let's look at how Jesus defined the word '*temple*'.

In John 2:14, Jesus spoke of the physical temple. The Greek word for the physical temple is ***hieron***. "*And He found in the **temple** those who sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers doing business.*"

Then just five verses later in John 2:19-20, Jesus spoke of the spiritual temple. The Greek word for the spiritual temple is ***naos***. "*Jesus answered and said to them, "Destroy this **temple**, and in three days I will raise it up."* But He was speaking of the temple of His body."

Whenever Paul used the word ***naos***, he applied it to followers of Jesus, the Christian Church, which is a *literal* temple, but not a *physical* building.

Ephesians 2:19-22 *"Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, **Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone, in whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.**"*

Paul places the Son of Perdition nowhere else than in the very sanctuary of God, in the very bosom of the Church.

Pope Leo XIII proclaimed *"We hold upon this earth the place of God Almighty."*

Pope Pius V blasphemed that *"The Pope and God are the same, so he has all power in Heaven and earth."*

Pope Innocent III declared *"For the Pope holdeth place on earth, not simply of a man but of the true God."*

Paul's prophetic words in 2 Thessalonians tell us that the Antichrist *Son of Perdition* would usurp the authority of Jesus Christ by assuming an unauthorized position of power *inside* the Christian Church.

'*Antichrist*' is a Greek word. '*Vicar*' is an English word. The words are synonymous. They have exactly the same meaning. '*Antichrist*' translated into the English is '*Vice Christ*' or '*Vicar of Christ*.' '*Vicar of Christ*, rendered into the Greek is '*Antichristos*' = '*Antichrist*.' The ordinary use of the word in the Greek is decisive on this point.

Pope St Gelasius I, who ruled from 492 – 496 A.D., was the first Pope to be called the "*Vicar of Christ*." And since then each Pope has been declared the *Vicar of Christ*, as they have proclaimed to be *Christ in the flesh*. Pope Pius IX said, "*I alone... am the successor of the apostles, the vicar of Jesus Christ. I am the way, the truth, and the life...*"

The position of Antichrist is not just one man, it is a position, like the U.S. President or the King of England.

The Popes of Rome sit (assumes a position of authority) as God in the temple of God. They proclaim to forgive sins. They proclaim that salvation is only available through the Roman Catholic Church. They promote the worship of Mary as *co-redeemer*. They preach a message of '*salvation by works*', instead of through the blood of Jesus.

The Antichrist Roman Catholic Church misleads 1.2 Billion Catholics into believing that salvation is through them, not Jesus Christ, and they are gathering the world under their power.

2 Thessalonians 2:5 "*Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things?*"

Paul could not write that the Roman Empire was going to collapse, and that the Roman Catholic Popes would rise up in their place, as that would have invited more persecution. So he reminded them of what he had said in person.

2 Thessalonians 2:6, "*And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time.*"

As long as the Roman Emperor was in place, the Popes of Rome could not take power. The last Roman Emperor was removed in 476 A.D. Shortly thereafter, in 538 A.D., the Roman Catholic Church gained religious and civil power when Eastern Emperor Justinian issued a decree making the Pope head of all churches.

2 Thessalonians 2:7 "*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.*"

The Popes of the Roman Church were already at work corrupting true Christianity, and creating a *false* Christian Church, while they waited for the Roman Emperor to be removed.

2 Thessalonians 2:9-10, "*The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved.*"

Satan empowered the Roman Catholic Church to take power and authority, to deceive under the guise of *Christianity*

2 Thessalonians 2:11-12, "*And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.*"

Those who fell away from the truth of Yahweh's righteousness, *apostatized* and were *deluded* by the Papal Church.

The *Man of Sin*, the *Son of Perdition*, rose to power over 1,500 years ago, so it not a future one-man antichrist.

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