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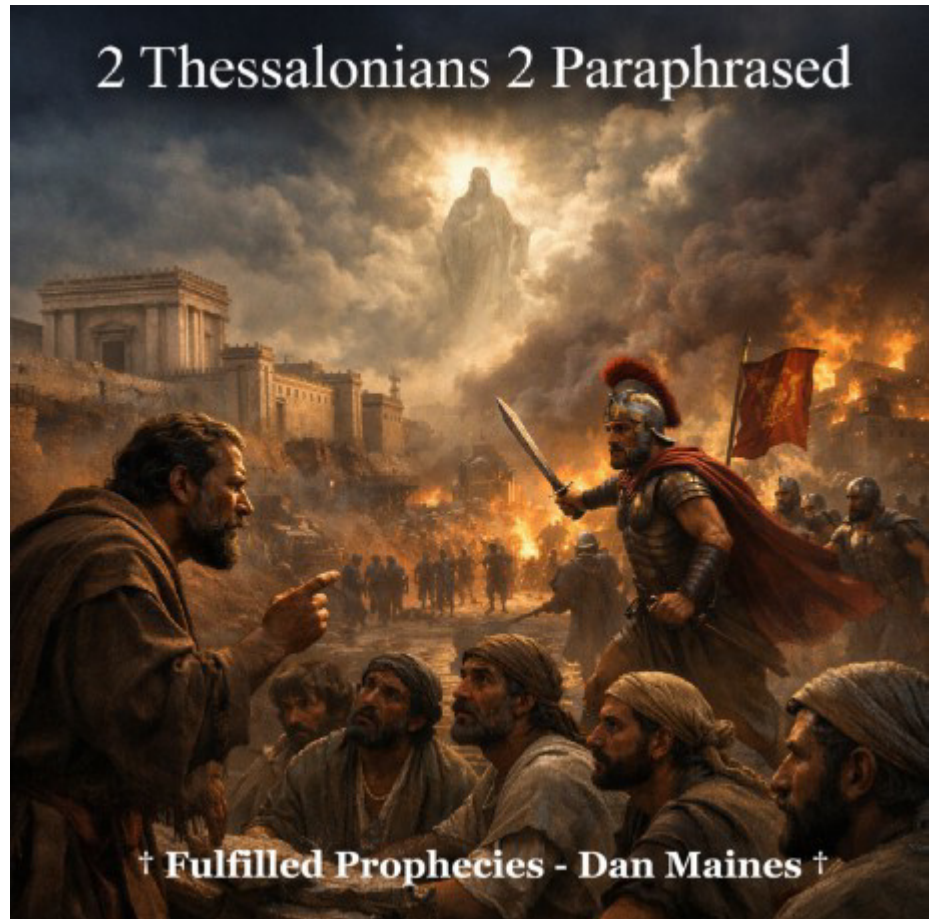
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## 2 Thessalonians 2 Paraphrased



By Dan Maines

## 2 Thessalonians 2 Paraphrased

### Introduction

† Paul wrote this section to calm believers who were being shaken by false claims that the day of the Lord had already arrived.

† Some people were spreading letters and messages pretending to be from the apostles, causing fear and confusion among the churches.

† Paul reminds them that certain events had to happen first,

and that God was still in control of everything unfolding in their generation.

## **2 Thessalonians 2:1**

Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him, brothers, we ask you to think carefully about what you have heard.

† Paul begins by addressing the concern about Christ's coming and the gathering of believers, which many in the church feared had already happened (Matthew 24:30-31).

† The gathering refers to the uniting of Christ's people as the old covenant world was coming to its end (Hebrews 12:22-24).

† The early church understood this gathering in connection with the judgment coming upon Jerusalem.

## **2 Thessalonians 2:2**

Don't be quickly shaken in your thinking or alarmed by some spirit, message, or letter claiming to come from us saying the day of the Lord has already arrived.

† False teachers were claiming apostolic authority to spread confusion among believers (Acts 20:29-30).

† Paul warns them not to panic because rumors and forged teachings were already circulating among the churches.

† The day of the Lord was still approaching and had not yet fully unfolded.

## **2 Thessalonians 2:3**

Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, because that day won't come until the rebellion happens first and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction.

† The rebellion refers to the widespread apostasy within Israel before the destruction of Jerusalem (Matthew 23:37-38).

† The man of lawlessness represents a lawless leader connected with the corrupt leadership opposing Christ and the

church (Daniel 11:36).

† Many early Christians associated this lawless figure with the Roman ruler Nero and the persecution he unleashed against believers.

## **2 Thessalonians 2:4**

He opposes and lifts himself above every so called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God presenting himself as if he were God.

† Roman emperors demanded worship and divine titles, placing themselves above every god of the nations.

† Nero in particular accepted divine honors and required loyalty expressed through emperor worship.

† The temple language reflects the power structure tied to Jerusalem and its corrupt leadership cooperating with Roman authority.

## **2 Thessalonians 2:5**

Don't you remember that while I was still with you I kept telling you these things?

† Paul had already explained these prophetic developments to the church during his earlier visits (Acts 17:1-9).

† His teachings about the coming judgment and rebellion were not new to them.

† The Thessalonians were expected to recall what the apostles had already taught.

## **2 Thessalonians 2:6**

And now you know what is holding him back so that he will be revealed at the proper time.

† Something was restraining the full rise of this lawless power during that period.

† Many early interpreters believed the Roman governing structure itself was restraining chaos until the right moment.

† God was controlling the timing of these events so they unfolded exactly when prophecy required.

## **2 Thessalonians 2:7**

The mystery of lawlessness is already at work, only the one who restrains it now will continue to do so until he is taken out of the way.

† Lawlessness was already growing within Israel and the wider Roman world during the first century (Matthew 24:12).

† The restraint refers to the political order that was temporarily holding back open rebellion and persecution.

† Once that restraint was removed, the full crisis would unfold leading up to the war with Rome.

## **2 Thessalonians 2:8**

Then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the appearance of his coming.

† Christ's victory over this lawless system would come through judgment, not through a physical battle (Isaiah 11:4).

† The destruction happened through the events that culminated in the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70.

† Jesus had already warned that this generation would see these things take place (Matthew 24:34).

## **2 Thessalonians 2:9**

The coming of that lawless one happens by the working of Satan with all kinds of power and false signs and deceptive wonders.

† Deceptive signs and false prophets were widespread during the years leading up to the Jewish war (Matthew 24:24).

† Josephus records numerous false prophets and miracle claims stirring the crowds during this period.

† These movements misled many people into rebellion and

destruction.

## **2 Thessalonians 2:10**

They use every kind of deception of wickedness among those who are perishing because they refused to love the truth so that they could be saved.

† Many within Israel rejected the message of Christ and the apostles (John 5:40).

† Their rejection of the truth left them vulnerable to deception and false hope.

† This refusal ultimately led to the catastrophic destruction of the nation.

## **2 Thessalonians 2:11**

For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so they will believe the lie.

† When people reject the truth repeatedly, God allows them to follow the deception they prefer (Romans 1:24-25).

† Israel's leaders had already hardened themselves against Christ's message.

† Their continued rejection resulted in spiritual blindness before the coming judgment.

## **2 Thessalonians 2:12**

So that all will be judged who didn't believe the truth but took pleasure in unrighteousness.

† The judgment fell upon those who rejected the gospel and supported the corrupt system opposing Christ.

† This judgment unfolded historically in the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple.

† It confirmed that Christ's warnings about that generation were completely fulfilled.

## **2 Thessalonians 2:13**

But we should always give thanks to God for you brothers loved by the Lord, because God chose you from the beginning for salvation through the Spirit's work in making you holy and through your belief in the truth.

† Paul contrasts the faithful believers with those who rejected the truth.

† The Spirit was actively working within the church to preserve and guide them.

† Their faith placed them among the people of the new covenant kingdom.

## **2 Thessalonians 2:14**

It was for this that he called you through our gospel so that you may share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

† The gospel call brought believers into the glory and kingdom of Christ (Colossians 1:13).

† This glory wasn't a distant future hope but a present participation in Christ's reign.

† The church was already experiencing the reality of that kingdom.

## **2 Thessalonians 2:15**

So then brothers stand firm and hold tightly to the teachings that you were taught whether through what we said or through the letters we wrote to you.

† Paul encourages them to remain faithful to apostolic teaching.

† Both spoken teaching and written letters carried the authority of Christ's message.

† Stability in truth protected the church from deception.

## **2 Thessalonians 2:16**

Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father who loved us and gave us eternal encouragement and good

hope by grace,

† Paul closes this section with a prayer of encouragement.

† Their hope was grounded in God's grace and love rather than the chaos unfolding around them.

† The believers were reminded that their future was secure in Christ.

## **2 Thessalonians 2:17**

encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good work and word.

† Despite persecution and confusion, believers were called to continue living faithfully.

† Their strength came from God who was sustaining them through the transition of the ages.

† The church was being established as the enduring kingdom that would remain after the old covenant world passed away.

## **Historical References**

† Josephus describes the false prophets and chaos leading up to the Jewish War in Antiquities of the Jews and The Jewish War.

† Irenaeus acknowledged that early Christians connected prophetic warnings about lawless rulers with the Roman persecutions.

† Eusebius records the destruction of Jerusalem and the fulfillment of Christ's warnings to that generation.

† Clement of Alexandria wrote about the persecutions under Roman rulers and the endurance of the early church.

## **How It Applies To Us Today**

† This passage reminds us that God is always in control of history even when events seem chaotic.

† Believers must remain grounded in the truth so they are not

shaken by false teachings.

† The kingdom Christ established continues to grow and endure long after the old covenant system ended.

† Just as the early church stood firm during their trials, we are called to stand firm in faith today.

## **Q & A Appendix**

**Q:** What rebellion was Paul referring to?

**A:** The widespread apostasy in Israel that rejected Christ and led to the events surrounding the destruction of Jerusalem (Matthew 23:37-38).

**Q:** Who was the man of lawlessness?

**A:** A lawless ruler connected with the persecuting Roman leadership, commonly associated with Nero who violently opposed the church.

**Q:** What restrained the lawless one?

**A:** The existing political order that temporarily held back the full outbreak of rebellion and persecution until the proper time.

**Q:** When was the lawless one destroyed?

**A:** Through the judgment events culminating in the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70, fulfilling Jesus' warnings to that generation (Matthew 24:34).

**Q:** What lesson does this passage teach believers today?

**A:** That we must remain rooted in the truth and not be shaken by deception or false teaching.

**† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †**

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**Source Index**

- † 2 Thessalonians 2
- † Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews
- † Irenaeus, Against Heresies
- † Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History
- † Clement of Alexandria, Stromata

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