

# ***International Bible Lessons Commentary***

## ***2 Thessalonians 2:1-4, 8-17***

***International Bible Lessons***

**Sunday, April 28, 2013**

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The **[International Bible Lesson](#)** (*Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series*) for **Sunday, April 28, 2013**, is from **2 Thessalonians 2:1-4, 8-17**. **Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further** follow the verse-by-verse *International Bible Lessons Commentary* (formerly, *Bible Lesson Forum*) below. **Study Hints for Thinking Further** discuss the five questions below to help with class preparation and in conducting class discussion; these hints are available on the **[International Bible Lessons Commentary](#)** website. For additional **International Bible Lesson Commentaries**, see the complete and comprehensive **[International Bible Lessons Commentary Index](#)**. The weekly **[International Bible Lesson](#)** is posted each Saturday before the lesson is scheduled to be taught at **<http://InternationalBibleLessons.org>** and in **[The Oklahoman](#)** newspaper.

### ***International Bible Lesson Commentary***

#### **2 Thessalonians 2:1-4**

**(2 Thessalonians 2:1)** **As to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him, we beg you, brothers and sisters,**

In Paul's Second Letter to the Thessalonians, he needed to answer some questions the church had about the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. They wanted to know if Jesus had already come and they had missed His coming, or when is He going to come. Furthermore, they wanted to know how they could be together (as individuals and the church) with Jesus and their loved ones.

**(2 Thessalonians 2:2)** **not to be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as though from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord is already here.**

Paul wrote them so they would know what to expect in order not to be deceived or misinformed. An evil spirit or a deceiving spirit might speak through a false prophet or creature and mislead them. Untruths might be passed on by word of mouth. A spurious letter might be sent to them supposedly from Paul or one of the other apostles that spread falsehoods. In spite of what they may have heard, the Lord Jesus had not yet returned.

**(2 Thessalonians 2:3) Let no one deceive you in any way; for that day will not come unless the rebellion comes first and the lawless one is revealed, the one destined for destruction.**

Paul carefully ended his letters in ways that would assure his readers that the letter had come from him and not someone impersonating him. Believers are susceptible to being deceived, and the Bible writers took care to warn all Christians to discern the spirits and evaluate what they heard so they would believe and follow only the truth. The “rebellion” will probably come from within the church when many people reject biblical teachings, truths, and morality (while perhaps claiming to follow Jesus). The “rebellion” may be happening now in some churches and places. The “lawless one” may be a political or religious leader who does not obey God’s law, but leads according to his own selfish ambitions and the selfish desires of others (often promoting lies and death).

**(2 Thessalonians 2:4) He opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, declaring himself to be God.**

Some believe a new temple must be built in Jerusalem for this prophecy to be fulfilled. Others believe that the Christian church is the Temple of God, and those who exalt themselves will try to take the place of God in the church and lead people away from the Word of God (Jesus and the Bible). Our bodies have also been called the Temple of God, and evil people may want to try to control our bodies or lead us into abusing our bodies. The “lawless one” will declare that he himself is God, perhaps claiming to be Jesus Christ returned (as has been done by some, and perhaps by some even today). Believers must not believe or follow anyone who is “lawless” or who takes the authority of God upon himself.

## **2 Thessalonians 2:8-17**

**(2 Thessalonians 2:8) And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will destroy with the breath of his mouth, annihilating him by the manifestation of his coming.**

There have been and are many lawless ones; a lawless one will reveal himself by what he does and says. When Jesus breathed on His disciples, they received the Holy Spirit. When He comes and reveals himself at His Second Coming, Jesus will breathe on the last lawless one and annihilate him, for no one can defeat Jesus Christ, the true King of Kings.

**(2 Thessalonians 2:9) The coming of the lawless one is apparent in the working of Satan, who uses all power, signs, lying wonders,**

Satan works in “the lawless one,” and Satan works, or can work, in all who are lawless—both those who reject the law of God and biblical morality, and those who reject sound government that does not reject the law of God. Some

governments are godless and create laws, rules, and regulations contrary to God's laws. True lawlessness rejects God's law, as do some governments of church and state.

**(2 Thessalonians 2:10) and every kind of wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved.**

Satan will use demonic power, false signs, and lying wonders to deceive people, and the deception is a wicked deception that those who are perishing will accept and practice. If someone refuses to believe the truth and love the truth, they will be deceived and perish. Jesus is the Truth of God in human flesh, and the Bible is the Truth of God written.

**(2 Thessalonians 2:11) For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion, leading them to believe what is false,**

When someone refuses to believe and love the truth, they choose to believe what is false. Having chosen to believe what is false, Satan can use deceiving spirits and deceiving people to deceive those who do not love the truth. As punishment for rejecting God and turning from His Truth, God will send upon some a powerful delusion so they will believe what is false and suffer the consequences. This is a part of the just judgment of God in this life upon those who choose to turn from God, the truth, and the free gift of salvation that true believers receive by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. After suffering under a powerful delusion, some will seek the truth and turn to Christ for freedom and redemption.

**(2 Thessalonians 2:12) so that all who have not believed the truth but took pleasure in unrighteousness will be condemned.**

Those who will not believe the truth take pleasure in unrighteousness. They enjoy the sins of the mind and flesh that the Bible condemns. They prefer to practice sin rather than believe the good news of Jesus Christ. They prefer to live a life of sin rather than ask Jesus to save them from slavery to sin and grant them eternal life. When someone chooses to turn away from God they choose the consequence of condemnation.

**(2 Thessalonians 2:13) But we must always give thanks to God for you, brothers and sisters beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the first fruits for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and through belief in the truth.**

Paul thanks God for the Christians who have asked about the Lord's coming and who love and want to know the truth. He knows and assures them that the Lord Jesus loves them from heaven, even though He has not yet returned. They were some of the first to become Christians in the early years of the New Testament church. Paul indicates how we are saved or reveals something of the process of

salvation. In the process of being saved, we must believe the truth: the truth of Jesus and the Bible as the revealed will and word of God. The Holy Spirit also sets believers apart for God and enables us live a pure and holy life in the service of God and others. The Holy Spirit uses the Bible (the Word of God written) to help us follow Jesus Christ (the Word of God in human flesh) so those who are saved can live for Jesus Christ instead of for themselves.

**(2 Thessalonians 2:14) For this purpose he called you through our proclamation of the good news, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

Paul wrote his letter to Christians (or at least to those who claimed to be Christians in the church). Jesus Christ calls believers into His church and He does so through the preaching and teaching of the Good News about the purpose of His coming, His achievements, His teachings, and who Jesus truly is as the only begotten Son of God. We will obtain the glory of purity and a resurrected body through faith in Jesus Christ, and our transformed lives will reveal to all the glory, wonder, love, and truth of Jesus Christ.

**(2 Thessalonians 2:15) So then, brothers and sisters, stand firm and hold fast to the traditions that you were taught by us, either by word of mouth or by our letter.**

Believing these and other facts that Christians have been taught by word of mouth and the letters that eventually became the New Testament, Christians need to stand firm and hold fast to these truths no matter what they may hear that may contradict these facts. False teachings may sound persuasive, so we need to “hold fast” to the truth we possess, then we can keep learning and practicing more truth from the Word of God.

**(2 Thessalonians 2:16) Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and through grace gave us eternal comfort and good hope,**

After explaining why they needed to “hold fast” and do what they were taught, Paul offered a prayerful blessing upon his readers. God loves us: the Father and the Son love us. Believers need to hold fast to those truths. God is our Father and Jesus is our Lord; they freely and graciously give us comfort, a comfort and peace that will remain with us forever, and a hope for future blessings from God.

**(2 Thessalonians 2:17) comfort your hearts and strengthen them in every good work and word.**

The Word of God, the truths of the Christian faith, can be used by Christians to give everyone comfort in times of trial. The truths of the Christian faith can give us the resources we need and the perseverance and strength to keep on doing good work. Notice: “good work and word” go together. Good works and good

words are needed by believers to keep on keeping on, and both are needed by unbelievers to understand the truth and come to saving faith in Jesus Christ. Doing good works and teaching good words of truth from the Bible give us assurance that we are truly following Jesus Christ, which comforts our hearts and strengthens us. Just doing good works without explaining that the source of our good works and the guidance we receive for doing good works comes from Jesus Christ may mislead some.

### **Five Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further**

1. In this Bible lesson, what does Paul say must happen before Jesus Christ returns?
2. What did Paul say would eventually happen to the lawless one?
3. What are some tools that Satan will use to help the lawless one deceive people?
4. Who does Paul say will be deceived by Satan and the lawless one?
5. How do believers in Jesus Christ differ from those who believe what is false?

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