

# Calendars & Character

## 2 Thessalonians 2

### INTRODUCTION:

- What do you think about when you are confronted with biblical prophecy?
- Many Christians believe that prophecy is too difficult to completely comprehend. As a result, many do not spend much quality time studying the subject.
- It's important to understand that prophecy is important and should not be avoided! Prophecy makes up a substantial portion of the Bible.
  - Around 1845 references to the Second Coming of Christ in the Old Testament!
  - There are 318 references in the 260 chapters of the New Testament!
  - Can we afford to neglect such a significant portion of God's Word?
- There is a danger in neglecting prophecy, and there is a danger spending all one's time in prophecy. The purpose of prophecy must always be in the front of our minds: It is not to make us calendar watchers, but to build character as we strive to live for the Lord.
- In chapter 2 Paul deals with the Day of the Lord.

### BIBLE STUDY:

1. The Day of the Lord holds a disturbing message (vs. 1-2).
  - a. These verses are not the easiest to unpack. Here is how these verses read in the Amplified Bible: "Now in regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to *meet* Him, we ask you, brothers and sisters, <sup>2</sup> not to be quickly unsettled or alarmed either by a [so-called prophetic revelation of a] spirit or a message or a letter [alleged to be] from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has [already] come.
  - b. The Thessalonian believers had come across some false prophecies that confused them in their understanding of the Lord's return. Paul wanted to reassure them that they had not missed the Rapture!
  - c. In verse 2 Paul is challenging them to not be "shaken in mind, or be troubled" by these false teachings that declared that Christ had already returned.
  - d. In verse 1, there are two words that describe the Day of the Lord.
    - i. "Coming" is the Greek word *parousia* which refers to the coming of the Lord. It is describing the time when Jesus will once again appear on the scene!
    - ii. "Gathering together" is the Greek word *episunagoge*. This denotes the idea of the saints of God being gathered together to Christ.
    - iii. Together these words describe that glorious day that Paul discussed in depth in 1 Thessalonians 4 when the church is raptured to meet the Lord in the air.
  - e. We can be like the Thessalonians. If we get our eyes focused on the events of this world and the perilous times in which we live, we can become shaken in our thinking and troubled in our hearts. But we have a day to look forward to! We have hope!

TEACHER NOTE: Please watch this week's video where Jeff discusses the curriculum comments regarding the Day of Christ vs. the Day of the Lord.

2. The Day of the Lord concerns a deceptive man (vs. 3-8).
  - a. According to Paul, there are two events that precede the Day of the Lord: apostasy and the appearance of the antichrist.
  - b. In vs. 3b-4, Paul gives a general description. The antichrist is sin personified.

- c. In vs. 6-7, Paul reveals a specific delay. Paul refers to the restraining presence of the Holy Spirit in our times. Once the church has been removed, His restraint will be gone. Can you imagine how sin will prevail when there is no restraining presence to keep it at bay?
  - d. In vs. 8, Paul reveals a horrible destruction. The reign of the antichrist will be brief. Then Christ will return in glory and power, and will consume and overthrow the antichrist once and for all.
3. The Day of the Lord affects the deluded masses (vs. 9-17).
  - a. In this final section, Paul reveals the deluded masses which follow the antichrist.
  - b. Paul describes a great satanic deception which is to come (vs. 9). The antichrist parallels Jesus Christ. He has his own coming, a revelation, and even a gospel (that is a lie).
  - c. From the satanic deception will arise a strong delusion (vs. 10-11). The antichrist will be so convincing that he will lead the masses to believe his lies. These are frightening verses that seem to indicate that those who have rejected the truth of God in this age will have no second chance during the Great Tribulation.
  - d. Paul closes this section with a prayer of thanksgiving and an affirmation that God's call on believers' lives was sure (vs. 13-15).

#### APPLICATION:

- Aren't you thankful for the promise of the rapture and that we will not have to live through the time of tribulation? So, what are we to do in the meantime?
- First, we should seek to win others to the Savior. The time to get right with God is always the present.
- Second, we should deal with our personal sin. When Jesus returns, how should we want to be found?
- Third, we are not to be date-setters for the Lord's return. Instead, we should be seeking to grow in holiness.