

2nd Thessalonians 2:1–12

¹ Now concerning **The Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered to him**: We ask you, brothers and sisters, ² not to be easily upset or troubled, either by a prophecy or by a message or by a LETTER supposedly from us, alleging that the **Day of the Lord has come**.

³ Don't let anyone deceive you in ANY WAY. For that **Day will not Come** unless the apostasy comes first and the **Man of Lawlessness** is revealed, the **Man Doomed** to destruction. ⁴ He opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he sits in God's temple, proclaiming that he himself is God.

⁵ Don't you remember that when I was still with you I used to tell you about this?

⁶ And you know what currently **restrains him**, so that he will be revealed in his time

⁷ For the **Mystery of Lawlessness** is already at work, but the one now restraining will do so until he is out of the way, ⁸ and then the Lawless One will be revealed.

The **Lord Jesus will destroy him** with the breath of his mouth and will bring him to nothing at the **appearance of his Coming**.

⁹ The **Coming of the Lawless One is based on Satan's** working, with every kind of miracle, both signs and wonders serving the lie, ¹⁰ and with every wicked deception among those who are perishing. They perish because they did not accept the love of the truth and so be saved. ¹¹ For this reason God sends them a strong delusion so that they will believe the lie, ¹² so that all will be condemned — those who did not believe the truth but delighted in unrighteousness.

The Coming of Christ
Gathered to him **Rapture**

Day of the Lord

That Day will not Come
Man of Lawlessness ... Doomed

Pre-Trib DIVIDES
Post-Trib Does Not

Restrains him
Mystery of Lawlessness

Lord Jesus destroy him **2nd Coming**
appearance of his Coming

Coming of the Lawless One

The Rapture Question: Revised and Enlarged Edition

self."¹⁰ This is pure dogmatism and is no substitute for solid argument. Actually it is impossible to harmonize Gundry's position on the Holy Spirit with posttribulationism.

Posttribulationism has failed to account for the alarm of the Thessalonians that they were already in the day of the Lord and the Great Tribulation. If they had been taught posttribulationism, they would not have been alarmed. The fact that Paul refuted it shows that they were in error in holding this position. If posttribulationism were right, Paul's approach to their correction could have been entirely different.

While posttribulationists and pretribulationists will continue to argue this passage, in reality there is nothing in it that teaches posttribulationism as such. The only reason posttribulationists bring up this passage is that it is a major proof for pretribulationism and, as such, needs to be refuted by posttribulationism. However, Gundry's admission that the removal refers to the Holy Spirit in the church is extremely damaging to his argument and is not the usual approach of posttribulationism.

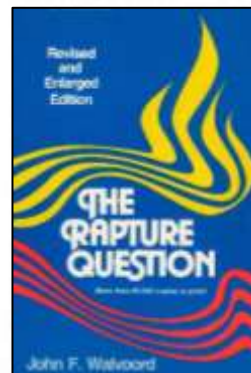
The final reference to the Rapture in 2 Thessalonians in 3:5, translated in the King James Version "the patient waiting for Christ," is translated in the NIV "may the Lord direct your hearts into God's love and Christ's perseverance." In this translation the concept of the coming of the Lord is deleted.

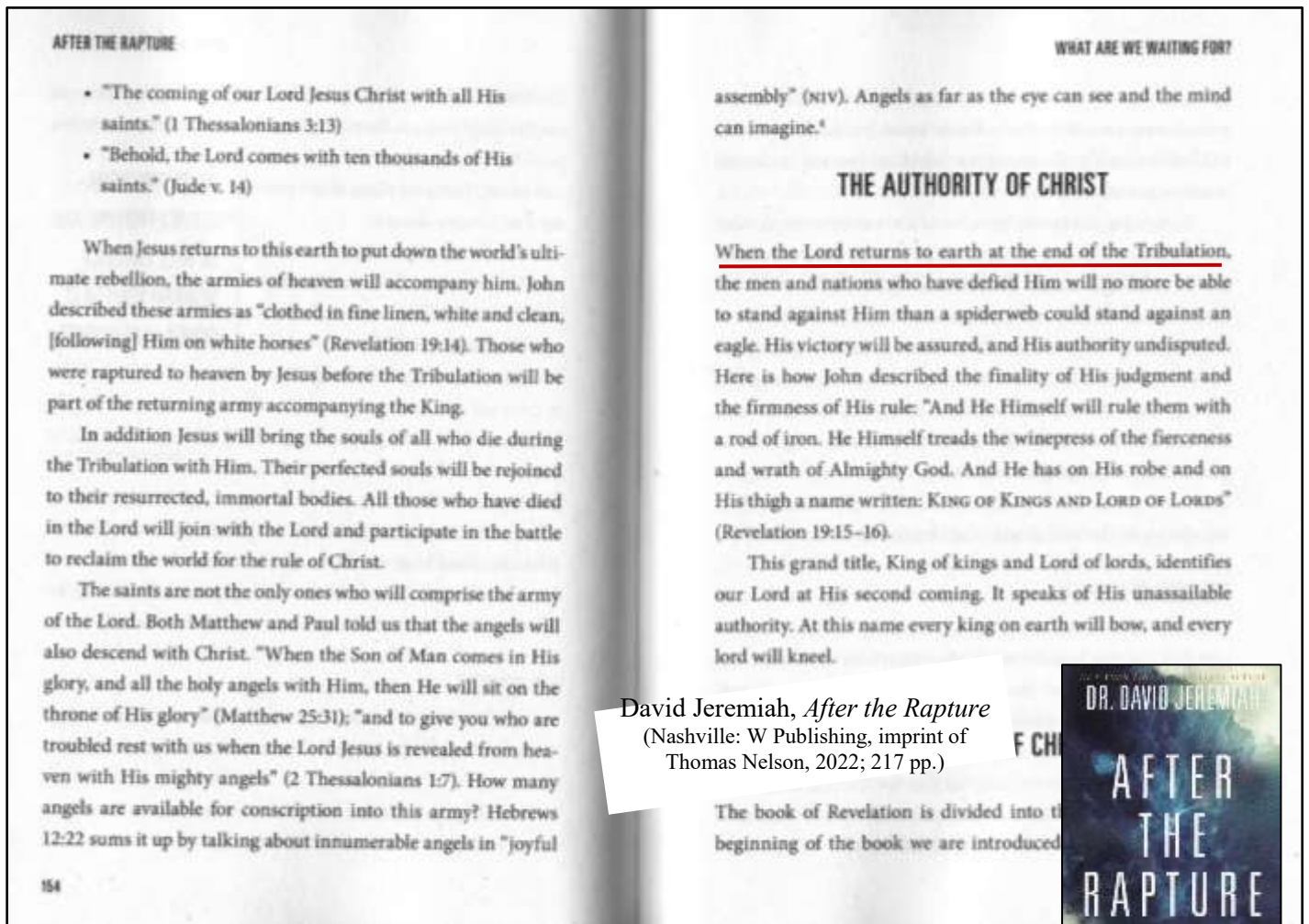
Taken as a whole, 2 Thessalonians makes a major contribution to the doctrine of the Rapture, refuting this early form of posttribulationism. Paul taught in 2 Thessalonians 2 the important fact that the man of sin, or the lawless one, cannot be revealed as such until the Rapture, that is, the removal of the church indwelt by the Holy Spirit. According to the prophecies of Daniel 7 and Revelation 13, the man of sin is probably to be identified with the final world ruler who will emerge first as the head of a ten-nation confederacy and then will make a covenant with Israel (Dan. 9:27) seven years before the second coming of Christ.¹¹ When this covenant is

The Rapture in 2 Thessalonians

made, it will be an unmistakable identification of this man as the man of destiny who ultimately will become a world ruler. If this occurs seven years before the second coming of Christ and will be confirmed three and one-half years before the second coming of Christ when he takes the role of world ruler, it should be obvious that the church must be raptured before he is revealed. The truths revealed in 2 Thessalonians 2 are a devastating blow to posttribulationism, labeling it as an early error in the church that later mushroomed and became more evident in the second century of the Christian Era. When carefully examined, the revelation of 2 Thessalonians relating to the Rapture is a confirmation rather than a refutation of a pretribulationist return of the Lord for His church.

John F. Walvoord, *The Rapture Question*
(Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979; 304 pp.)





Notice one glaringly obvious problem. In the pre-trib view, those Left Behind **know WHEN Christ 2nd Coming happens—7 years after Rapture!**

Compare Matthew 23–24

Baptist Faith & Message, 1963 & 2000

www.PreciousHeart.net/Baptist_Faith.htm

Article X is the same in both 1963 & 2000 versions

X. Last Things. God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.



Exodus 24:4; Deut. 4:1-2; 17:19; Joshua 8:34; Psalms 19:7-10; 119:11, 89, 105, 140; Isaiah 34:16; 40:8; Jeremiah 15:16; 36:1-32; Matthew 5:17-18; 22:29; Luke 21:33; 24:44-46; John 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17; Acts 2:16ff.; 17:11; Romans 15:4; 16:25-26; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1:19-21.

Notice the BF&M does **NOT commit to any** pre-, mid-, post-tribulation view, or any postmillennial, amillennial, premillennial view.