

*In these days of deceit, lies and glaring omissions emerges a supreme cover-up. What is the Christian establishment hiding? Why are so many unsure whether Christ or Antichrist appears first? Christians everywhere must read "Thrown to the Ground."*

**THROWN TO THE GROUND:  
THE COMING CHRISTIAN REBELLION AND  
ALLIANCE WITH THE ANTICHRIST**

By John F Finkbeiner

**Order the book from the publisher [Booklocker.com](http://Booklocker.com)**

**<https://www.booklocker.com/p/books/11638.html?s=pdf>**

**or from your favorite neighborhood  
or online bookstore.**

# THROWN TO THE GROUND

HOLY  
BIBLE

*The Coming Christian Rebellion  
and Alliance with the Antichrist*

A VERSE-BY-VERSE EXPOSITION OF  
2 THESSALONIANS 2

John F Finkbeiner



*THROWN TO THE GROUND:*  
THE COMING CHRISTIAN REBELLION  
AND  
ALLIANCE WITH THE ANTICHRIST

Copyright © John F. Finkbeiner, First edition, November 2020, Second edition (Revised), February 2021

ISBN: 978-1-64719-128-3

All rights reserved. No part of this manuscript may be reproduced in any format or by any electronic or mechanical means without written permission from the author and/or publisher, except by a reviewer who may quote brief passages in a review.

“Unless otherwise noted, Scripture taken from the HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House.”

**Unless otherwise indicated, all bold type scripture is the author’s emphasis. All rights reserved.**

Published by BookLocker.com, Inc., St. Petersburg, Florida.

Printed on acid-free paper.

Cover by Engel Creative

Inside graphic: Clker-Free-Vector-Images

A product of *The Eirene Group, LLC*

*“Media for today and tomorrow”*

# Table of Contents

Preface.....	vii
Chapter 1 - Contempt .....	1
Chapter 2 - About Christ's Coming.....	8
Chapter 3 - Easily Unsettled .....	17
Chapter 4 - Deception.....	25
Chapter 5 - Not Until .....	33
Chapter 6 - Oppose and Exalt .....	41
Chapter 7 - Just the Facts.....	49
Chapter 8 - Teacher.....	57
Chapter 9 - Secret Power .....	65
Chapter 10 - Doomed .....	73
Chapter 11 - He is Coming Sooner.....	81
Chapter 12 - An Offer We Must Not Refuse .....	89
Chapter 13 - Another Way .....	97
Chapter 14 - Depraved .....	105
Chapter 15 - Do's and Don'ts.....	113
Chapter 16 - Brothers .....	123
Chapter 17 - A Firm Grip.....	131
Addendum.....	139
Chapter 18 -The Story Behind the Story.....	141
Special Thanks .....	149

# Chapter 1

\*

## Contempt

*“Do not put out the Spirit’s fire; do not treat prophecies with contempt.”*

*1 Thessalonians 5:19-20*

As I write, we are witnessing the disintegration of Western society. All signs point to the imminent collapse of once great republics with global chaos to follow. Where Christianity once thrived, awe of a holy God has been nearly abandoned. Fear of men has replaced it. In 1775, Thomas Payne wrote in *The Crisis*, “These are the times that try men’s souls.” It was true at liberty’s first breath in America 250 years ago, and will be at its last gasp; crisis tests our souls.

We are warned that a spark too close to gaseous fumes will cause an explosion. Ignoring God’s warnings or disobeying his commands, places us in greater danger. It precedes the eternal fire. God’s wrath is the most legitimate of all fears. When tempted by the chief of rebels, Jesus answered, *“It is written: Do not put the Lord your God to the test.”* (Matthew 4:7, Luke 4:12)

Thumb your nose at God’s counsel. Spit in His face when He says “No!” Throw truth to the ground. Treat prophecy with contempt, then experience God’s anger. It is the height of foolishness. Examine *Psalms* 2:9-12, then count the cost for showing contempt.

### *Contempt*

Perhaps it is curious that I mention Paul’s admonition to the saints in *1 Thessalonians* 5:20 in the context of spitting in God’s face. In a sense, Paul was a physician treating the church’s problem. The reason for the key prophecies in *First and Second Thessalonians* was the mess created in the church. Prophecy was treated with contempt; so, the Spirit’s fire was quenched. This has been the history of God’s people. Contempt for prophecy ends in destruction: *“...a people without understanding will come to ruin.”* (Hosea 4:14b)

An oppositional-defiant attitude toward God is evidenced by our lack of understanding and neglect of prophecy. The Lord made a charge against Israel,

*I wrote for them the many things of my law,  
but they regarded them as something alien.*

*Hosea 8:12*

Prophecy and law are the same. They come from the same divine source, so they are inseparable. They form *The Book of the Law and the Prophets* (ex. *Matthew 7:12*). Contempt for the Old Testament or *The Law and the Prophets* belies a negative attitude toward God's authority. It is the spirit of this age, or the spirit of the antichrist.

Saints love God's instruction (*Psalms 119:163*, et. al.). His words are life-giving and a delight. They enable His people to dwell in peace. The Lord's blessed ones receive the prophet's message with joy and so fulfill the command to love God with all their heart.

Still unconvinced of a connection between purposeful ignorance of prophecy and rebellion? Consider: What led to the religious Jew's opposition to Jesus? They observed the Law, but they rejected God's servants, the prophets. Had they studied prophecy and taught it to the people all would have recognized Jesus as the Messiah. Instead, they hated Him and were driven to plot Christ's death. They fulfilled the prophecy they held in contempt.

In 70 A.D. Roman legions swept through Jerusalem putting residents to the sword. Centuries earlier Babylonians destroyed the Holy City for the same reason: Prophecy in *Deuteronomy 28* and *2 Chronicles 7:11-22* was ignored. Throughout *The Book of Jeremiah*, we read of threats on the prophet's life. Why was God's spokesman ill-treated? Was it because he called fellow Jews to repentance so they might be spared? Had they listened and called out to God for mercy, they would have lived. It was the same in the time of the Romans. Had Jews heeded Jesus' words they would have been saved.

These are examples of George Santayana's *Law of Repetitive Consequences*: "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it," as well as Thomas Merton's stated *Law of Unintended Consequences*, "Actions have results which are not part of the actor's purpose." Forgetting or never knowing the history of God's judgment leads to ruin. Ignoring the prophets and persecuting those whom God sends to save has unforeseen consequences.

Paul saw the problem in Corinth and knew where they were headed. In *1 Corinthians 14*, the apostle counseled: There are

unintended consequences for debating issues like tongues, yet ignoring the prophets. The apostle summed up his chapter-long argument regarding prophecy v. tongues this way: *“Since you are eager to have spiritual gifts, try to excel in gifts that build up the church.”* Have Christians been heeding Paul? It is not just tongues, but a host of other issues that emerge to divert our focus from the accurate teaching of Bible prophecy. Controversies will cease. Prophecy declares there will be unity by eliminating scatterers (*Ephesians 4:13 and 5:6*). Division and dividers within Christ’s body will be no more.

### *Indifference*

The harmful effects of indifference are unequalled. Lack of a relationship strikes at God’s heart. (*“Depart from me, I never knew you.”* -Jesus). An uncaring attitude is one of contempt.

Think of the greatest of the Lord’s commands:

*“Hear O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.”*

*Deuteronomy 6:4-5*

Indifference is contrary to God’s greatest commandment. We love things while rejecting, neglecting, forsaking and ignoring the Savior’s love. All will regret being too preoccupied to heed God’s instruction or to seek his face; however, there may still be time to change.

I used to say: “I am a Pan-Millennialist. It will all pan out in the end.” Many times I used this clever line with a double meaning to explain my indifference to prophecy. Pan means all, such as it will “pan out.” How foolish I was! What does God say?

*But as for you who forsake the LORD  
and forget my holy mountain...*

*I will destine you for the sword,  
and you will bend down for the slaughter.  
for I called but you did not answer,  
I spoke but you did not listen.  
You did evil in my sight  
and chose what displeases me.*

*Isaiah 65:11a, 12*

Indifference is rooted in self. To ignore what God decreed in prophecy removes our only good option. If we do not answer when the Lord calls and listen when He speaks, we will be counted among the wicked. We will be destined for the sword (*Jeremiah 6:10*).

Saints delight in the Lord's instruction by meditating on it day and night (*Psalms 1:2*). Wholehearted devotion is required for our souls to be saved (*Psalms 119:9-16, 2 Chronicles 16:9*). Truth is its own reward gained by passionate desire (*Matthew 13:44-46*).

Where in the Bible does it state the indifferent receive God's reward? We are to love truth (*Zechariah 8:14-19*). Love is never indifferent. Another flippant answer about prophecy is "I'm a Christian. I'm going to heaven. God will save me from whatever happens." This is presumption. And what of our children or friends? What use are we to them if we cannot discern a lie? Where did the "confident though indifferent" attitude originate? It came from the pit.

Through the prophet Hosea, God said,

*"...my people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.*

*"Because you have rejected knowledge,  
I also reject you as my priests;  
**because you have ignored the law of your God,  
I also will ignore your children."***

*Hosea 4:6*

### *Indictment*

What has been will be again, but next time on a global scale. The age-old lack of prophetic truth will result in a great turning away and then a slaughter. The warnings are clear. Ignorance is no excuse for disobedience. Judgment is about to be pronounced. It begins with the family or *the household of God* (*1 Peter 4:17*).

Read Jesus' words in *Luke 21:5-36*. Consider what the future holds for the saints. How is this warning received by our Christian family and friends? Think about the effect of not knowing what will soon take place. Hear what Jesus spoke in *Mark 13*.

*"Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child.  
Children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death. All men will hate you because of me, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved."*

*Mark 13:12-13*



To whom is the Lord directing his prophecy? It is to the same disciples that he said, *“Watch out that no one deceives you” (Mark 13:5)*. Our Lord is not alerting the wicked, because they are already deceived. The target is disciples or Jesus would not have warned them. The Lord teaches that many will be deceived. *Many will turn from the faith and will betray and hate each other and the love of most will grow cold*. The wicked cannot turn from a faith they do not have. It is the love of Christians that will grow cold.

This is an indictment on the way we have been making disciples. When buying an expensive vehicle, we want something built to last. The unintended consequences of omitting prophecy from discipleship are it produces Christians who will not endure tough times. The saints are to be built on a solid foundation of prophetic truth (*Matthew 7:24*).

Why will many turn from the faith and unite with the Antichrist? Why will Christian son betray his father to death, and a Christian father his son? Will it be that the consequences of their treachery were never understood. Candidates for elite military service will come up short at the end if they do not take “Hell Week” seriously. We are in trouble if we do not take to heart the phrase *“a time of Great Distress.”*

Jesus spelled out what happens to Christians who in comfortable times confess him as Lord, yet deny him when tested by persecution (*Matthew 10:33*).

*“Do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that can do no more. But I will tell you whom you should fear: Fear Him who, after killing the body, has power to throw you into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him.”*

Luke 12:5-6

Any questions? “Oh,” but you say, “that is not what **our** teachers believe.” They ask, “What kind of God would hurt those who trust Him?” They argue that our God would never torture or kill his own, but they err. They do not know Scripture nor the power of God. For God *did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all (Romans 8:32)*. Christ, our high priest, was made perfect through his suffering (*Hebrews 2:10-18*). Does the same apply to the saints?

*Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.*

Hebrews 2:18

## *Thrown To The Ground*

The Lord has a charge against those claiming they are Christian yet hold to man's tradition. Choosing man's instruction rather than God's word will mean their undoing.

Contempt for prophecy in Christian circles involves a mutual "I know nothing" relationship between priest and people. Even today people seek pastors, teachers and prophets who *will say what their itching ears want to hear* (2 Timothy 4:3).

*"If a liar and deceiver comes and says,  
'I will prophesy for you plenty of wine and beer,'  
he would be just the prophet for this people!"*

*Micah 2:11*

We find this solemn word in *Hosea*:

*"Woe to them,  
because they have strayed from me!  
Destruction to them,  
because they have rebelled against me.  
I long to redeem them  
but they speak lies against me."*

*Hosea 7:13*

Do we know what contempt looks like? Rebellion, lies, rejection of knowledge, disregard for God's law, priests and prophets who lead people astray; no one seeks understanding; no one pursues truth.

### ***Basic question***

Let us test your knowledge of prophecy. "According to the clear teaching of Scripture, in the last days who will appear first to receive worship: Will it be the Antichrist, or will it be Jesus Christ?"

Think of the importance of this question to every Christian. Consider how basic it is to our understanding of prophecy, yet many reject the entire premise of the question. Many who believe they are Christian deny that Jesus will physically come in the clouds of glory. They also reject a literal, physical Antichrist, or devil in the flesh. This is because their spiritual leaders teach by their own authority. Like Pharisees in Jesus' day, they are blind guides who appear to lead many into the pit.

Back to our question: Did we hesitate as we weighed our options? Do we lack certainty? Who appears first to receive the praise of millions? We cannot have a more important revelation; but if we hold prophecy in contempt, we cannot be sure.

In general, this is the muddled state of today's Christianity. It is the product of our rebellion. Scripture was once the standard for truth, but now many do not see it that way. Many refuse to believe that Antichrist or Jesus Christ will soon appear. They dismiss the question about who comes first and resent those who know the truth. These are the scoffers who appear in great numbers in the last days (*2 Peter 3:3*).

Before we answer who comes first, we should become familiar with *2 Thessalonians 2:1-3*. What is the plain meaning of these verses? Then ask, "What are the implications of Paul's teaching?" Write this down. Christians who have a settled opinion will likely balk at this exercise. Enlightenment will only come if we pour over the Scripture. Open your no-frills Bible and prepare to uncover the truth.

\*

*You who bring good tidings to Zion,  
go up on a high mountain.  
You who bring good tidings to Jerusalem,  
lift up your voice with a shout,  
lift it up, do not be afraid;  
say to the towns of Judah,  
“Here is your God!”*

*Isaiah 40:9*

*They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. “Men of Galilee,” they said, “why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.”*

*Acts 1:10-11*

## Chapter 2

\*

### About Christ's Coming

*“Concerning the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him, we ask you brothers...”*

*2 Thessalonians 2:1*

As a young pastor, I managed to hold things together a few years before seeing some encouraging growth; but then my ignorance was exposed. My elders recognized some liberal positions on the Bible I acquired during my seminary years, specifically about *Genesis* and *Revelation*. I prided myself on my academic record as well as my evangelical roots, but I had been infected with untruths about Scripture. I sensed my esteemed professors' contempt for “literalists”; or fundamentalists who taught the Bible's creation account in *Genesis* 1-3 was fact and Jesus' return was physical and near in time.

The Lord had to break me. My humiliation began when, as a test, the elders asked that I teach from *The Book of Revelation*. It was a trap. In the end, God rescued me because I cared about truth. I was judged harshly then condemned, but the Lord was not done with me.

The worst critics of what you are about to read will not examine the arguments for accuracy or logic. They will skim the material to take statements out of context. Their intent will be to discredit, not to discover truth. Beware of the wolves that dress in sheep's clothing.

How does this relate to “Does Antichrist or Jesus Christ appear first?” I shared my story as a warning that being on the wrong side of truth has consequences. The psalmist speaks about this:

*Teach me knowledge and good judgment,  
for I believe in your commands.*

*Before I was afflicted I went astray,  
but now I obey your word.*

*You are good, and what you do is good;  
teach me your decrees...*

*The law from your mouth is more precious to me  
than thousands of pieces of silver and gold.*

*Psalms 119:66-68, 72*

Listening to every well-intentioned and intelligent teacher can be dangerous. I am a witness. Scholars with teaching gifts, charming personalities and all the right credentials, may give false security. I was educated by some renowned academics of that era, but it all collapsed when it was tested.

The church went through a falling away. As a result, some of the most promising of the flock separated from God. Couples who had grown as Christians were scattered to the winds. Later, I plunged into despair. I had studied church success models and attended the best conferences, yet I had built a house on sand. Praise the Lord. He is the God of the second chance!

### *Where are answers found?*

So who appears first? Is it Jesus? “According to the clear teaching of Scripture,” applies to where truth is found. Verse one of *Second Thessalonians*, chapter two, does not really say who comes first. The verse speaks of Christ’s return, the “blessed hope” of every believer.

Why the disinterest? Why have we not heard a sermon or in-depth teaching on this key Scripture? Verse one through twelve should be memorized by every child of God.

In Paul’s second letter he attempts to get the Thessalonians back to basics. It was his purpose to refresh his students’ knowledge in the Word of God before Satan gained more of a foothold with his lies.

In Thessalonica, Jesus’ return was eagerly anticipated by all. It is likely they were eager for the Lord’s appearance because of passages like *Isaiah 40:9-10*. There were promised rewards for the righteous at Christ’s coming. However, Paul’s teaching relied heavily on the second half of *Daniel*, a practically forgotten book by rabbis because of its end time prophecy.

Concerning Christ’s coming and what it means for the people of God, Paul the teacher may have cited this:

*But the court will sit, and his [another king or Antichrist] power will be taken away and completely destroyed forever. **Then the sovereignty, power and greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be handed over to the saints, the people of the Most High.** His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all rulers will worship and obey him.*

*Daniel 7:26*



The return of Christ created a lot of interest in the church. Everyone wanted Jesus' rewards, but the truth did not support that conclusion. To arrive at *Daniel 7:26* and the rewards, truth seekers read the verses in context, especially what was spoken in verse 25.

*After them another king will arise, different from the earlier ones; he will subdue three kings. He will speak against the Most High and oppress his saints and try to change the set times and the laws. The saints will be handed over to him for a time, times and half a time.*

*Daniel 7:25*

(From these two verses in *Daniel*, we have the answer to our question of "Who arrives first?" So, why do Christians typically not know who comes before Jesus?)

Conflicts among the Thessalonians arose over what preceded the Lord's Coming. All agreed that Jesus would return to reign over his saints, but that is where consensus stopped. In the spirit of tolerance, elders allowed false teachers to address the sheep, who fed the flock information that conflicted with Paul's prophecy. Elders should have challenged the phony arguments then sent the imposters off. Instead, they invited trouble. Among church leaders, a few adopted the belief that Jesus' coming already happened and they missed it (2 *Thessalonians 2:2*). Imagine the toll on unity. Lies about prophecy may seem harmless at first, but then confusion begins to reign.

How did Paul, the teacher, try to restore what was lost? In his letter, he began with a point on which they would all agree: The literal and physical coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Our Savior will return, but when, and what will the signs be of His coming? Always, truth creates a conflict the worldly minded cannot accept.

### *Words mean things*

Some research into the New Testament Greek is required. The word Paul chose for "coming" is significant. He could have used *erkomai* which has the sense of "coming and then going," but *parousia* was chosen. *Parousia* means coming to establish "an abiding presence." It pertains to "the coming of a king or a general to take control or make permanent a land claim." In the Olivet Discourse, Jesus' disciples asked, "*What will be the sign of your coming [parousia] and of the end of the age? (Matthew 24:3)*

Read: “Concerning the Lord’s coming to abide and remain as our King... “ (2 *Thessalonians* 2:1) There was no argument about what Paul meant, yet in today’s Christianity, there are many who distort *parousia*’s definition. The evil purpose is to convince vulnerable students the word means something God and Paul never intended.

The accepted definition of the Greek *parousia* is one clue among many for rightly understanding 2 *Thessalonians* 2:1-12 and the Olivet Discourse. This is one big reason false teachers avoid a careful verse-by-verse study that typically involves defining key words. Deceivers do not want accuracy, only a favorable result.

### *Confused*

To the confused Thessalonians, Paul desired to reveal the spirit of prophecy, the testimony of the Lord Jesus (*Revelation* 19:10b). In his previous letter, he reminded them that he received his teaching from the Lord (1 *Thessalonians* 4:15). For instance, Jesus’ coming from heaven will be accompanied by a gathering of the saints in the air (a.k.a. “rapture”). Titles like *First* and *Second Thessalonians* and the chapter numbers came centuries after the letters were written. It is likely *First Thessalonians* was available so they could compare the “gathering” in 4:13-18 with the one in 2 *Thessalonians* 2:1: “Concerning the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ **and our being gathered to him...**”

As made clear in 1 *Thessalonians* 4:13-18, Jesus’ “coming” along with the saints’ gathering are simultaneous events, meaning they “occur at the same time.” Comparing Scriptures, we see God’s plan: Jesus’ coming in the clouds and then the gathering of the elect is a glorious rescue. Saints will be in mortal danger because of the beast’s power (*Daniel* 7:23). If the last 42 months of the seven years—the time prophesied in *Daniel* 7:25 and 9:27—were not cut short, then none of the elect would survive. Therefore, those days must be shortened (*Matthew* 24:22). God’s people do not vanish, as imaginative fiction writers suggest. Instead, they will be huddled together praying “*Maranatha!*” (“Lord, come quickly!”) before being snatched upward.

Christians die unexpectedly every day, so all must be ready to face God’s Judgment, but teachers who link Jesus’ coming with taking his elect up to heaven as in eternity commit a serious error. Commonly, false teachers merge Paul’s instructions in 1 *Corinthians* 15 on the general resurrection at the end of the ages (i.e. *the last day*) with his

teaching on the gathering up of the saints near the end of this age (1 *Thessalonians* 4:13-18). The *last trumpet* and *we will be changed* applies to the general resurrection, not to the soon coming rapture. At the coming of Christ, heaven-going is not part of the plan but being saved by Jesus is. We will not be changed as in becoming immortals, because there is one more promised age. It is the Millennium.

Scenarios like pilots raptured midflight confuse our understanding. They imply a believer's lifestyle remains unchanged in the time of the end, but this is false. (Think of Scripture's rescue analogies like the Hebrews with their backs to the sea as Egypt's chariots closed in.) Jesus taught that before the saint's rescue in *Matthew* 24:31, there would be *a time of great distress, unequalled from the beginning of the world and never to be equaled again* (24:21). What does "great distress" (Greek, *thlipsis megala*) mean? We have "stress" as a clue. There are many Christians who have never known peace and safety, but this distress will be global. No one will escape.

Our blessed hope as saints and the longing of all the oppressed is in *2 Thessalonians* 2:1. So we do not lose heart, we must hold on to the promise of Christ's return or risk falling short of his rescue.

O what a day that will be! Our King is coming. Our victory will be won. Yet the beast wants to nullify God's promise and undermine our faith in our Deliverer. Through his false prophets, the devil wants to create a paralyzing fear that erodes faith.

As we ponder these things, keep in mind millions of Christians have been taught to reject all of the above, including the passages where clear teaching appears. Not only do they dismiss the snatching up of the saints *to meet the Lord in the air* (1 *Thess.* 4:17), but they also dispute Jesus' literal, physical return to earth as our King. They ignore prophecy and show contempt for Jesus' and Paul's testimony. In effect, they are declaring God a liar. This is rebellion! It began a long time ago in Christian schools of theology and famed seminaries.

From where did the Christian intellectual acquire this oppositional attitude? How did they come to challenge the plain meaning of Scripture? Why did they decide to sit in judgment of God's word? It is how rebels are, even well-educated, sophisticated ones. Like their spiritual influence, they seek to upset God's laws and set times.

The strategy that caused turmoil among the Thessalonians is used in religious circles today. Christians who refuse to study prophecy will exalt false teachers and also share in their punishment.

*Daniel, the controversial*

The Thessalonian's confusion persisted despite having Paul as their teacher ("*Don't you remember that when I was with you I used to tell you these things?*") So, the apostle tried again to steer them back to calm seas. They witnessed Paul's skillful use of his navigational instruments and knowledge of the heavens. The "Captain of many a storm" spoke to his crew. He reminded them of the safe harbor to which they had all been directed, but only if they avoided siren voices that wanted a shipwreck. Paul began with the goal, "the Coming of the Lord," and "the gathering of the elect." His obvious source was *Daniel*.

A well-studied rabbi friend once said *Daniel* was the least accepted of the books in the Hebrew Scripture. Issues with *Daniel* may include outcomes Jewish scholars did not like, such as nations included in the dominion of the God of Israel. This meant a future union between Gentile and Jew, a distasteful development for the bigoted Jew. Perhaps, another objection was the righteousness ascribed to Gentile kings like Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon or Cyrus and Darius of Persia. Perhaps the most damning aspect of *Daniel* was the original text written in Aramaic, the language of Gentiles who surrounded the land of Israel. While the first six chapters were in Hebrew, the language of Israel, the prophecy of the last six was in Aramaic.

With these "problems," *Daniel* has been ignored by learned Jews. Except for the first half and its accounts of heroes like Daniel and his three friends, Meshach, Shadrach, and Abednego, prophecy in chapters 7 to 12 is passively rejected by many Christians as well.

Contempt for *Daniel 7-12* is not of recent origin. Paul's "great learning," as described by the Syrian governor, Felix (*Acts 26:24*), had to include his earlier hostility toward non-Jews and *The Book of Daniel*. Then he was Saul of Tarsus, a Pharisee of the strictest sect, but Christ called him to be His chosen instrument and carry His name before the Gentiles, their kings and before the people of Israel (*Acts 9:15*). To this end, the name Paul (Paulus), Greek in origin, was given to the apostle. To fulfill his calling to the scattered flock of Israel among the nations, *Daniel's* prophecy would prove a valuable, authoritative source.

There are several places where Paul instructs from the words of Daniel's divine interpreters, the angels. Daniel was a prince or noble of Judah at the time of his prophecy. He served kings in at least three kingdoms: Judah, Babylon then Persia. It would be a help if readers paused here, then reviewed the last six chapters of Daniel's prophecy.

### **Gathered to him**

As Jesus looked on the Holy City, sadness filled his heart.

*“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! Look, your house is left to you desolate. I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.’”*

*Luke 13:34-35*

As much as God's children want to be kept under His wings, Jesus' longing to gather his own is greater. We hear it in Christ's lament over Jerusalem's future destruction. As destruction came by the Romans in 70 A.D., it must be again at the end of this age (cf. *Daniel 8:13*).

*“When you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, you will know that its desolation is near. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those in the city get out, and those in the country not enter the city, for this is the time of punishment in fulfillment of all that has been written...Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.”*

*Jesus, Luke 21:20-22, 24*

Two anticipated events, first, Christ's return to reign as King and then the gathering of his saints—two yet unfulfilled promises, one immediately after the other. It is a tragedy that these events will not be joy-filled for many who now claim they are Christians. Had they heeded God's prophets instead of false teachers, Jesus' coming would have inspired endurance to overcome. But their faith in the Word of God has been undermined. Like those who deceived them, their condemnation is hanging over their heads.

\*

*From the least to the greatest,  
all are greedy for gain;  
prophets and priests alike,  
all practice deceit.  
They dress the wound of my people  
as though it were not serious.  
“Peace, peace,” they say,  
when there is no peace.  
Are they ashamed of their conduct?  
No, they have no shame at all;  
they do not even know how to blush.  
So they will fall among the fallen;  
they will be brought down when I punish them,”  
says the LORD.  
Jeremiah 6:13-15*

*“As for the person who hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge him. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save it. There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; that very word which I spoke will condemn him at the last day. For I did not speak of my own accord, but the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it. I know that the command leads to eternal life. So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say.”*

*John 12:46-50*

*We must pay more careful attention, therefore, to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away. For if the message spoken by angels was binding, and every violation and disobedience received its just punishment, how shall we escape if we ignore such a great salvation?*

*Hebrews 2:1-3a*



## Chapter 5

\*

### Not Until

*“...for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction.”*

*2 Thessalonians 2:3b*

First things first. No dessert until we finish our vegetables. There is something sweet waiting, but not until the green beans disappear. So it is with the Lord's return; we eagerly anticipate His coming in the clouds, but this does not take place until our testing is complete.

Our faith rests on delayed gratification. This is so we prove our patience, the evidence that our love is genuine. If we are to dwell in Jesus' Kingdom forever, we must endure the storms of life. Our King will come to the rescue, but *not until* we demonstrate that we are His.

#### *In order*

The *coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him* will happen simultaneously. Also occurring at the same time will be *the rebellion and the revelation of the man of lawlessness*. “Who comes first?” is clearly answered. It is the man of lawlessness.

Who is in for more difficulty: The Christian who argues Jesus' coming will not be a physical return or those who have the order switched? They are equally in danger. To satisfy their traditions, they have nullified prophecy, thereby rejecting the truth (*Mark 7:13*).

For either story to be believed, “Scripture twisting” must take place with *2 Thessalonians* as well as the Olivet Discourse in the Gospels. Our verse, “*not until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed*” has to be confused, ignored or grossly misinterpreted or their false argument will be exposed.

What does the preposition “until” mean? (We do not need to be told since it is commonly used.) “Something must occur before the next thing can happen.” (Ex. “Diplomas are not awarded *until* the school's graduation requirements are satisfied.”) Simple to understand, right? However, when a crafty, slick talking and cunning opponent argues the case, we learn that “until” may mean something different.

If false teachers read *2 Thessalonians 2* in “its most normal, natural and customary sense,” they might be saved from a terrible fate. The wrong sequence of events is an affront to our Sovereign Lord. He is not a God of confusion, but of perfect order (*1 Corinthians 14:33*).

The rebellion and the revelation of the man of lawlessness are two signs that have yet to occur—but they are about to. Some theologians teach they have happened in the past, but what Paul describes in *2 Thessalonians 2:3* does not take place *until* the last seven years of this age begins. God’s order is *before* the Lord returns for his saints the Antichrist (Man of Lawlessness) will be revealed to the world.

### *What are we waiting for?*

Patience comes easiest when our hopes are high (*Romans 8:22-25*). For the saints, knowing what follows the conditional “*not until*” is vital to enduring all that precedes it.

Paul was emphatic: *Our present suffering is not worth comparing to the glory that will be revealed* [at Christ’s coming]. We can be sure the Thessalonians heard this from Paul like his other churches did. We see it repeatedly: Facing trials comes before our rescue.

Jesus was clear, but disciples like Peter failed to understand.

*From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.*

*Mark 8:31*

Did they take heed to the last part—*on the third day be raised to life? Raised to life* cannot happen until *he must be killed* comes first. Peter did not listen that far into it. Perhaps he was stuck on his new status as “the rock” (cf. *Matthew 16:15-19*).

In vss. 22-23, Satan spoke through Peter. This episode provides saints with Jesus’ lesson on what it means to follow him.

*“If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it. What good will it be for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?”*

*Matthew 16:24-26*

Patient endurance must be the saint's mindset. A great reward is given for waiting, one that should raise expectations to the limit. But rewards are conditional. They are based on a "not until" or an "If." If we carry our cross, and if we follow, if we lose our life for Jesus' sake and if we endure patiently, a "then" will follow. (*Then we will be granted rewards that are beyond comparing with anything in this world.*)

*For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what he has done.*

Matthew 16:27

If we stand firm to the end, then we will be saved. Patient endurance or long-suffering are fruit of the Holy Spirit. To take part in Jesus' glory we must participate in his suffering. This is what the Bible teaches (ex. *Romans 8:15-18*). Let it be understood; there is no reward for the soldier who abandons his king in the heat of battle. There is only an execution for desertion.

What is there about Jesus' coming that strengthens our resolve? For his elect, the Lord is coming with rich blessings for loyalty and love. For his foes, Jesus carries an iron scepter with which he will *dash them to pieces like pottery (Psalm 2:9)*.

### *The rebellion*

The Greek word *apostasia* is translated "rebellion" or "turning away from the faith." It also conveys the idea of breaking with God then joining his enemy. This occurred in heaven as Satan and angels rebelled, then were hurled to the earth. From the beginning, fallen angels seduced men into rebelling against the Lord and against His Anointed One (*Psalm 2:1-6, Revelation 12:7-12*). Resisting established authority is what rebels do and the devil is rebel-in-chief.

Nations are collapsing as time for Antichrist draws near. Where did Paul receive his facts about the coming rebellion? First, we look at a major source for end time prophecy, *The Book of Daniel*.

*In the latter part of their reign, when rebels have become completely wicked, a stern-faced king, a master of intrigue will arise.*

Daniel 8:23

Described in *Daniel* are simultaneous events: Rebels become completely wicked then a stern-faced king, a master of intrigue, arises. More will be said of this king as Paul continues his warning.

Rebels will not inherit the Kingdom of God, only those who love their King and demonstrate it through their faithfulness.

In *The Book of Hebrews*, readers are encouraged to be faithful.

*Therefore, holy brothers, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, the apostle and high priest who we confess. He was faithful to the one who appointed him, just as Moses was faithful in all God's house... And we are his house, if we hold on to our courage and the hope of which we boast.*

*Hebrews 3:1-2, 6b*

The Bible's appeal is to a faithfulness like that witnessed in Jesus and Moses. To be faithful we must hold on to courage and hope in God, the builder of everything (3:4). This is a clue to what is coming.

The wicked prepare the way for the rebellion, the opposite of faithfulness and loyalty. Where have we seen an example of rebellion? If we do a word search, we will easily find it.

*So, as the Holy Spirit says:*

*"Today, if you hear his voice,  
do not harden your hearts  
as you did in the rebellion,  
during the time of testing in the desert,  
where your fathers tested and tried me  
and for forty years saw what I did...*

*So I declared on oath in my anger, 'They shall never enter my rest.'*

*See to it, brothers, that none of you has a **sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God...***

*Hebrews 3:7-9, 11-12 (cf. Psalm 95:6-11)*

The warning is to brothers. Today they may be *holy brothers* (3:1), but tomorrow they may turn their back on God. His special creation has a history of being led astray or hardening their heart. Past performance gives little indication of future results. (There is a condition for our entrance into God's rest as there was for inheriting the Promised Land: If we have a sinful, unbelieving heart when called

to obey, then we will deny Him and be denied.) *We have come to share in Christ if [another condition] we hold firmly till the end the confidence we had at first (3:14).*

Something is still future that will test our souls and demand all the courage we can muster. On the other side is our hope, the Promised Kingdom. Joshua and Caleb are our examples in *Numbers 14*. Among Israel's men of fighting age, they alone entered God's rest while the others perished in the wilderness. What test did they pass?

The enemy's ultimate threat is revealed in *Job 2*.

*Then the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one on earth like him; he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil. And he still maintains his integrity, though you incited me against him to ruin him without reason."*

*"Skin for skin!" Satan replied. "A man will give all he has for his own life. But **stretch out your hand and strike his flesh and bones, and he will surely curse you to his face.**"*

*Job 2:3-5*

Give the devil his due. He is an expert on fallen humanity. He knows how to incite men—even good men—to rebel, curse God and die. Just *strike his flesh and bones*.

After Satan afflicted Job with painful sores, his wife said,

*"Are you still holding on to your integrity? Curse God and die!"*

*He replied, "You are talking like a foolish woman. Shall we accept good from God, and not trouble?"*

*In all this, Job did not sin in what he said.*

*Job 2:9-10*

Satan never encountered a man like Job. He is the prototype for all the righteous innocent who suffer for Jesus' sake, yet never turn away. At the end of this age, the faithful like Job will be so numerous they cannot be counted (*Revelation 7:9-14*).

*"Now have come the salvation and  
the power and the kingdom of our God,  
and the authority of his Christ.*

*For the accuser of our brothers,  
who accuses them before our God day and night,  
has been hurled down.*

*They overcame him  
by the blood of the Lamb  
and by the word of their testimony;  
they did not love their lives so much  
as to shrink from death.*

*Revelation 12:10b-11*

### *Numbers 14*

In the Bible's history we have shapes, shadows and patterns that foretell things to come. The Israelites have much to teach us, particularly about what *not* to do.

By his mighty hand, the Lord led his people out of Egypt, through the Sinai desert, through the Red Sea and to Mount Sinai. From the holy mountain, He revealed himself and gave his Law. Soon after, his people were led to Canaan's border. God sent out spies, one from each of the twelve tribes.

In *Numbers 13* the spies returned with a large cluster of grapes. They reported it was a good land, just as God promised. However, the large fortifications and the giants who lived in the land were a surprise. Nothing had prepared them for that. Ten of the men spoke in fear.

*"We can't attack those people; they are stronger than we are."  
And they spread among the Israelites a bad report about the land they had explored. They said, "The land we explored devours those living in it. All the people we saw there are of great size. We saw the Nephilim there (the descendants of Anak come from the Nephilim). We seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes, and we looked the same to them."*

*Numbers 13:31b-33*

Twelve credible witnesses, yet two saw things different than the others. Joshua and Caleb remained faithful while the ten spoke of rebellion. All twelve were exemplary elders, that was *until* their courage and faithfulness were tested.

A spirit of fear and dread swept through camp.

*That night all the people of the community raised their voices and wept aloud. All the Israelites grumbled against Moses and Aaron, and the whole assembly said to them, "If only we had died in Egypt! Or in this desert!"*

*Numbers 14:1-2*



Be careful what you wish for. Forty years later, their bodies laid rotting in the desert.

To seal their act of rebellion, the people brought accusations against God. The Lord in turn showed his wrath. That which they feared will soon happen to their spiritual offspring.

*Why is the LORD bringing us to this land only to let us fall by the sword? Our wives and children will be taken as plunder.*

*Numbers 14:3a*

Moses spoke for God. He was the people's choice rather than hearing the Lord for themselves (*Exodus 20:18-19*). With their integrity abandoned, their anger turned to God's anointed (cf. *Psalms 2:3*).

*"Wouldn't it be better for us to go back to Egypt?" And they said to each other, "We should choose a leader and go back to Egypt."*

*Numbers 14:3b-4*

This is the way of rebellion: Abandon the course set by God and select a new captain. On the high seas it is called mutiny. Moses, Joshua and Caleb spoke faithfully. They boldly declared,

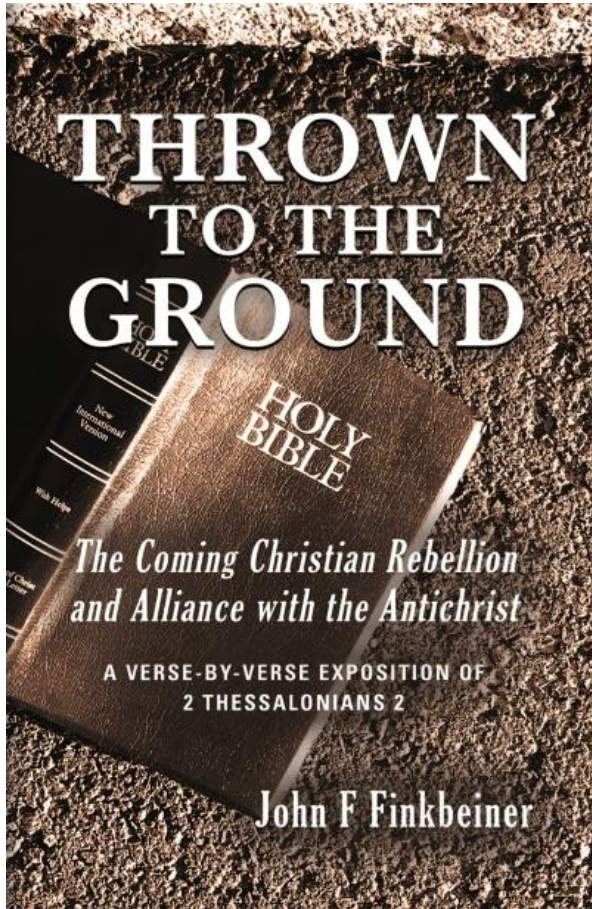
*If the LORD is pleased with us he will lead us into the land. Only do not rebel against the LORD. And do not be afraid of the people of the land, because we will swallow them up. Their protection is gone, but the LORD is with us. Do not be afraid of them.*

*Numbers 14:8-9*

The rebels among the Israelites had become completely wicked. As to Moses, Joshua and Caleb, *the whole assembly talked of stoning them (14:10)*. It was then the Lord stepped in and displayed his fierce anger. Who were the objects of his wrath? It was the men among his own people, *"I will strike them down with a plague and destroy them."* (*Numbers 14:12a*)

God testifies about Himself, *"I the LORD do not change"* (*Malachi 3:6*). History in the Bible is the window to the future. For reasons related to fear for their lives, rebels among the great multitude of Christians in the world will soon rise up against God. In his fierce anger, the Lord will then strike them down and destroy them. There will be no cowards in the coming kingdom of God.

\*



*In these days of deceit, lies and glaring omissions emerges a supreme cover-up. What is the Christian establishment hiding? Why are so many unsure whether Christ or Antichrist appears first? Christians everywhere must read "Thrown to the Ground."*

**THROWN TO THE GROUND:  
THE COMING CHRISTIAN REBELLION AND  
ALLIANCE WITH THE ANTICHRIST**

By John F Finkbeiner

**Order the book from the publisher [Booklocker.com](http://Booklocker.com)**

**<https://www.booklocker.com/p/books/11638.html?s=pdf>**

**or from your favorite neighborhood  
or online bookstore.**