



The Great Apostasy
during the "End Times"
in II Thessalonians 2:3
KJV "The Falling
Away" or the "Rebellion"
in NIV and ESV

Scripture; I John 4:1-10; II John 1:5-13

The Bible indicates that there will be a **great apostasy** during the **end times**. The "great apostasy" is mentioned in II Thessalonians 2:3. The KJV calls it the "**falling away**," while the NIV and ESV call it "**the rebellion**". And that's what **an apostasy is a rebellion, an abandonment of the truth**. The end times will include a wholesale rejection of God's revelation, a further "falling away" of an already fallen world.



The occasion of Paul's writing to the Thessalonians was to correct some of their errors concerning the end times that the believers had heard from false teachers.

1. The Day of the Lord has already come (II Thess. 2:2).
2. They were afraid that they had missed the rapture, and they were now in the tribulation. (I Thess. 3:16-17). Paul writes his second letter to assure them that, contrary to what they had heard, and despite the persecution they were enduring, the "Day



of Christ" had not yet come.

Paul makes it clear that the Day of the Lord, is a time of worldwide judgment (Isaiah 13:6; Obadiah 1:15), will transpire until two things happen.

1st The falling away, or great apostasy, must occur.

2nd The “man of lawlessness” must be revealed, he who is called the “son of perdition,” also known as Antichrist. Once this person makes himself known, the end times will indeed have come. Numerous speculations about the identity of the man of sin, beginning in the first century, have included Caligula, Caius Caesar, Mohammed, Napoleon, and any number of Roman popes. None of them were the Antichrist.



Apostasy or rebellion or falling away refers to a general defection from the true God, the Bible, and the Christian faith. Every age has its defectors, but the falling away at the end times will be complete and worldwide. The whole planet will be in rebellion against God and His Christ. Every coup requires a leader, and into this global apostasy will step the Antichrist. **We believe this takes place after the Church has been raptured from the earth.**

Jesus warned the disciples concerning the final days in **Matthew 24:10-12: “At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold.”** These are the characteristics of the great apostasy of the end times.



Man of Lawlessness

“Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the **rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction.**” Who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the

temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God." Do you not remember that when I was still with you, I told you these things?" and you know what is restraining him now so that he may be revealed in his time. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work. Only he who now restrains it will do so until he is out of the way." And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming," The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders, and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. (II Thessalonians 2: 3-10).



Those Opposed to the Gospel

Paul does not appear to know the precise circumstances that have brought about the Thessalonians' erroneous beliefs about the day of the Lord, but in verse 3 he does suspect nefarious activity. Paul labels any teaching opposed to the eschatological message of his gospel as an effort at deception (2 Thess. 2:10; Eph. 5:6; Col. 2:8). He then reasons that the Day of the Lord has not yet begun, since the world has not yet experienced the "rebellion" and the "man of lawlessness," both of which must precede the Day of the Lord.

II Thess. 2:10 "and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved."

Ephesians 5:6 "Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience."

Colossians 2:8 "See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ."

Rebellion against God and his law

Joshua 22:22 "The Lord God of gods, the Lord God of gods, he knoweth, and Israel he shall know; if it be in rebellion, or if in transgression against the Lord, (save us not this day,)"

(wicked or criminal)

2 Chronicles 29:19 "Moreover all the vessels, which King Ahaz in his reign did cast away in his transgression, have we prepared and sanctified, and behold, they are before the altar of the Lord."

Jeremiah 2:19 "Your evil will chastise you, and your apostasy will reprove you. Know and see that it is evil and bitter for you to forsake the Lord your God; the fear of me is not in you, declares the Lord God of hosts."

Acts 21:21

Signs and Timing of His second coming

1. **False messiahs and prophets** would precede his return.
2. **Tribulation against the church** (Matt. 24:4-13)
3. **The rise of deceitful spirits and teachings of demons** and also times of difficulty will be indicative of the last days (I Tim. 4:1; II Tim. 3:1; II Peter 3:3-7; Jude 17-19)
4. **Abomination of desolation** in the holy place of the temple (Matt. 24:15)
5. THE Abomination would **profane the Jerusalem temple** (Dan. 9:27; 11:31; 12:11).

Daniel 9:27 "And he shall make a strong covenant with many for one week, and for half of the week he shall put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator."

Dan. 11: 31 "Forces from him shall appear and profane the temple and fortress and shall take away the regular burnt offering. And they shall set up the abomination that makes desolate."

6. The **man of lawlessness** who is the son of destruction (2 Thess. 2:3, 8-9; Isaiah 57:3-4; John 17:12; Ps. 88:23)

Jude 17-19 "Remember, beloved, the predictions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. They said to you, "In the last time there will be scoffers, following their own ungodly passions. It is these who cause divisions, worldly people, devoid of the Spirit." (ESV)