



Coptic Orthodox Diocese of the Southern United States

# The Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Thessalonians

## Chapter 2

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# Introduction

- Some of the Thessalonians had the impression that the day of Christ had come
- St. Paul explained to them that two signs must happen before the second coming: Apostasy and revelation of the man of sin
- Those who do not love the truth will be easily deceived
- St. Paul also encouraged them to abide in the truth and to hold to the Holy Tradition



# Do not Be Troubled (2:1,2)

- In verse 1, St. Paul confirms that the rapture and the second coming of the Lord will be at the same time
- We should discern the apostolic teaching from the false teaching
- False teaching can be in the form of spirit (vision), word (preaching), letter (books)

# Signs of the Second Coming (2:3-12)



- There are two signs before the second coming:
  - ❖ The falling away from Christ and the Church
  - ❖ Revelation of man of sin (the antichrist)
- Man of sin because he will be the tool of Satan
- Man of Perdition because God will destroy him and this is his final destiny

# Signs of the Second Coming (2:3-12)



- He will oppose Christ, church, the believers, and the worshippers
- Exalts himself above God
- Sits as God in the temple of God (OT temple, NT temple, our hearts)
- Showing himself that he is God
- We need to be taught and reminded with these things always

# Signs of the Second Coming (2:3-12)



- “What is restraining” is a power appointed by God to restrain the man of sin from appearing till he will be revealed in his own time
- Yes, lawlessness is at work but as a mystery, in a hidden way, till the time of man of sin
- When his time comes, this power will be taken out of the way and the man of sin, the lawless one will be revealed

# Signs of the Second Coming (2:3-12)



- Could “what is restraining” be the Holy Spirit or the church of gentiles? Why not?
- The Holy Spirit abides within us forever
- The rapture will happen during the second coming and not before it
- The Lord will consume him by the breath of His mouth
- He will be destroyed by the brightness of His coming

# Signs of the Second Coming (2:3-12)



- Before St. Paul spoke about the deception of the lawless one, he mentioned the power of the Lord over him to encourage us and give us hope
- He is called the lawless one because he will entice the people to practice lawlessness
- Here are some of his features:
  - ❖ He will come according to the working of Satan
  - ❖ He will come with all power, signs, and lying wonders (be careful in dealing with signs)



# Signs of the Second Coming (2:3-12)



- ❖ He will come with all unrighteous deception (homosexuality, abortion, sex before marriage, tolerance and acceptance...etc)
- Who will believe him? Those who did not receive the love of truth
- Love of truth leads to salvation, while rejecting it leads to perdition
- Let us teach our children not only the truth but the love of the truth

# Signs of the Second Coming (2:3-12)



- Because they did not receive the love of truth, God will send them strong delusion
- Not to deceive them since they already love the falsehood
- But to expose them and to differentiate between His children and the children of the world
- That they should believe “the lie” (antichrist is God)

# Signs of the Second Coming (2:3-12)



- “Thus says the Lord God: ‘Everyone of the house of Israel who sets up his idols in his heart, and puts before him what causes him to stumble into iniquity, and then comes to the prophet, I the Lord will answer him who comes, according to the multitude of his idols, that I may seize the house of Israel by their heart, because they are all estranged from Me by their idols’” (Ezek 14:4,5)

# Signs of the Second Coming (2:3-12)



- Their exposure is important to show the justice of God
- So it will be clear for everybody that they will be condemned because:
  - ❖ They did not believe the truth
  - ❖ They had pleasure in unrighteousness
- After the Apostle warned them from the antichrist, he is now encouraging them to stand fast in faith and Holy Tradition

# Stand Fast in Faith and Holy Tradition (2:13-17)



- Looking at the punishment that awaits the unbelievers, makes the heart move and feel bound to give thanksgiving to God always for the believers because:
  - ❖ The Son loved us and died for us
  - ❖ The Father chose us for salvation from the beginning
  - ❖ The Holy Spirit sanctified us (the sacraments)
  - ❖ We accepted the truth

# Stand Fast in Faith and Holy Tradition (2:13-17)



- How to accept the truth without hearing about it?
- The importance of evangelism in fulfilling God's will
- Our gospel: our preaching, the apostolic teaching (Holy Tradition)
- The ultimate goal of salvation is: to obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ
- Therefore we need to stand fast in faith and hold the Holy Tradition

# Stand Fast in Faith and Holy Tradition (2:13-17)



- Holy Tradition can be either oral or written (e.g. the Holy Scripture)
- St. Paul concludes by a prayer (for their hardships)
- He appeals to God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ
- Because He has loved us and sent us His grace to give us everlasting consolation and good hope
- That He may comfort us (heart), establish us in every good word (mouth) and work (work)



# Conclusion

- What are the two signs that will happen before the second coming of the Lord?
- What are the features of the man of sin?
- What did St. Paul mean by “what is restraining”?
- Who will believe him?
- Why will God send them strong delusion?
- What are the elements of salvation?
- What is the Holy tradition?