

**THE RAPTURE PRECEDES “THE APOSTASY,” THE REVELATION OF THE “MAN OF LAWLESSNESS,”
THE “DAY OF THE LORD,” THE “GREAT TRIBULATION,” AND THE SECOND COMING**

“Let no man deceive you by any means.” (2 Thess. 2:3.)

Quick Summary

At 1 Th. 3:13, the apostle Paul, using the phrase “coming of our Lord Jesus *with all His saints*” (italics added), refers to the Second Coming when Jesus will physically return to earth from heaven and bring all Christians with Him. In 1 Th. 4:13-18, Paul teaches on the “coming of the Lord” (1 Th. 4:15) and on the rapture of Christians that occurs when they are “caught up” (1 Th. 4:17) to meet the Lord in the air. (The “coming of our Lord Jesus *with all His saints*” (1 Th. 3:13, italics added) is different from the “coming of the Lord” (1 Th. 4:15)). In 1 Th. 5, Paul examines whether Christians will be present on earth when the dark and fearful “day of the Lord” comes. The “day of the Lord” includes the “great tribulation” and the later Second Coming. In 2 Th. 2, Paul instructs on the rapture, “the apostasy,” the revelation of the “man of lawlessness” (the Antichrist), and the “day of the Lord.” Paul again addresses whether Christians will be present when the “day of the Lord” comes.

Moreover, 1 Th. 5, and 2 Th. 2, show that *before* Paul wrote First Thessalonians, he had *orally* taught the Thessalonian Christians about the rapture generally, and about “the apostasy,” the revelation of the “man of lawlessness,” the “day of the Lord,” and whether the rapture would precede the rest of those events. In 1 Th. 4, Paul addressed a specific issue about which he had not previously informed the Thessalonian Christians: whether Christians who had died before the rapture would go up in the rapture and be present with Christ during the Second Coming; he taught that they would.

According to 1 Th. 5, the rapture precedes the “day of the Lord” because Christians belong to the “day” (a period of spiritual light), not to the “night” (a period of spiritual darkness), and the “day of the Lord” comes in the “night.” This is the first reason that the rapture precedes the “day of the Lord.” Moreover, 2 Th. 2 proves that as long as Christians are here on earth, Satan, through “the mystery of lawlessness . . . at work,” restrains or hinders the revelation of the “man of lawlessness.” Therefore, the rapture precedes the revelation of the “man of lawlessness” and, because that revelation precedes the “day of the Lord,” the rapture precedes the “day of the Lord.” This is the second reason that the rapture precedes the “day of the Lord.”

2 Th. 2 also identifies the nature of “the apostasy” and shows that the apostates will be unbelievers and that they were never Christians. “The apostasy” is one event in a continuum of events involving unbelievers who live through the rapture.

2 Th. 2 teaches that the rapture precedes the “day of the Lord” because as long as Christians are here, “the apostasy comes,” i.e., it has not yet occurred, and “the apostasy” precedes the “day of the Lord.” This is the third reason that the rapture precedes the “day of the Lord.”

Finally, the above three reasons that the rapture precedes the “day of the Lord” also provide reasons that the rapture precedes the “great tribulation” and Second Coming, because the “great tribulation” and Second Coming occur during the “day of the Lord.”