

**HANDLING FEARS OF THE END TIMES**  
**I. Avoiding Fear Inducing Deceptions On The End Times**  
**(2 Thessalonians 2:1-3a)**

**I. Introduction**

- A. As in the case of the new believers in Thessalonica of the Apostle Paul's era, many Christians today live in fear of the end times due to their exposure to errant teachings on Bible prophecy.
- B. 2 Thessalonians 2:1-17 was written to address this issue, and we study 2 Thessalonians 2:1-3a on the subject of the fear of the end times itself for our insight, application and edification (as follows):

**II. Avoiding Fear Inducing Deceptions On The End Times, 2 Thessalonians 2:1-3a.**

- A. "(T)he persecutions" Paul's Christian readers at Thessalonica "were experiencing seemed" to them "to be what the prophets had predicted" on "the day of the Lord" end times, and the "Thessalonians apparently had received instructions from other teachers . . . that they were indeed experiencing . . . the Great Tribulation" (Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 717). Paul thus wrote 2 Thessalonians 2:1-17 to counter this troubling error.
- B. First, Paul urged his readers not to fear the end times, for such fear meant that they had been deceived, v. 1-3a:
  - 1. The 2 Thessalonians 2:1b phrases of "the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him" refer to the Rapture of the Church, *Ibid.* Since Paul exhorted his readers "by" this event, he implied that the Rapture is the reason and thus the hope why believers were not to fear the end times!
  - 2. Paul directed his readers not "hastily" (*tacheos*, U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 715; Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 814) to **start** to be "disturbed" (*me* negative particle with an **aorist** passive infinitive *saleuthenai*, *Ibid.*, U. B. S. Grk. N. T.; The Analyt. Grk. Lex., 1972, p. 362) from their "calmness of mind" (*nous*, *Ibid.*, U. B. S. Grk. N. T.; *Ibid.*, Arndt & Gingrich, p. 546-547), 2 Thess. 2:2a.
  - 3. The cause of Paul's order was that by some spirit, word or epistle alleged to be from him, a teaching had circulated that the "day of the Lord" had "come" (*enesteken*, perfect tense of *enistemi* that means "have come," *Ibid.*, U. B. S. Grk. N. T.; *Ibid.*, The Analyt. Grk. Lex., p. 140; *Ibid.*, Arndt & Ging., p. 266), v. 2b.
  - 4. The verse 2 KJV reading "day of Christ" reflects later ninth century A. D. minuscules where the early manuscripts all read "day of the Lord" (*Ibid.*, U. B. S. Grk. N. T.; Nestle-Aland, Nov. Test. Graece, 1973, p. 524), so Paul urged his readers not to be disturbed at hearing some claim that he or his team had stated that the Tribulation Period had arrived, that the persecution his readers faced was part of the end times "day of the Lord" Bible prophecies! Indeed, had his reader's trials been part of the Tribulation, Paul's past teaching to his readers on the pretribulation rapture in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 with 5:1-11 would be false!
  - 5. Paul thus called his Thessalonian readers not to let anyone "deceive, lead (them) astray" (*exapatao*, *Ibid.*, Arndt & Gingrich, p. 272) by any "way, guise" (*tropos*, *Ibid.*, p. 835), 2 Thessalonians 2:3a.
  - 6. Since Paul had urged his readers by the hope of the Rapture of the Church not to be disturbed from their calmness of mind by some claim that the Tribulation Period was upon them, he implied that the Rapture came **before** the start of the Tribulation Period to provide his readers escape from the Tribulation Period!
  - 7. Thus, any teaching that leads believers in the Church era to be afraid or to be disturbed into thinking that the Tribulation Period is upon them is false, and those who are disturbed by such teaching have been deceived to hold to an errant belief! Believers in Christ are not to let themselves be deceived this way!

***Lesson:*** Paul urged his Thessalonian Christian readers by the believer's hope in the pretribulation Rapture of the Church not to be deceived to adopt any unedifying view that they would face any end time Tribulation Period trial.

***Application:*** (1) May we not fear the end time trials that will come upon the world, for the pretribulation Rapture will be our escape from the "day of the Lord" end times. (2) Fears people have about trials they face now are NOT part of the Tribulation Period, but like what Paul's readers in Thessalonica faced, they are trials of the Christian life that are to be handled by reliance on the Holy Spirit for the wisdom and the power to live well (cf. Galatians 5:16; 2 Timothy 1:6-7). (3) Indeed, as we have often before stated, Revelation 3:21 with 7:17 implied a Mini-Great Tribulation for our era of Church History that God would use to urge people to get right with Him, so we should respond to current trials by relying on the Holy Spirit to obey the Lord! [(4) One fear in particular that people today face is the alleged threatening development of Artificial Intelligence. The solution is a believer's reliance on the indwelling, Almighty God the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:16 with Acts 5:3-4) for needed teaching (1 John 2:27; John 16:13), guidance (Romans 8:14) and even parenting (John 14:16-18 NIV, ESV) that we believers might be comforted and established to perform every good word and work (2 Thessalonians 2:17).]