

fact that the people have set it up by entirely democratic processes? Then few governments in the world's history have been lawful. And even here, a great demagogue can find in democratic government one of the easiest methods of securing autocratic power. Hitler gained power through strictly democratic processes, whatever means he used to hold it afterwards. Lawful government is not the restraining force.

No alternative interpretation that I have ever heard suggested comes anywhere near meeting the requirements of the passage. It must be a restraining power which actually prevents the man of sin from gaining his power, and which will be removed and thus facilitate his progress. The only view that is satisfactory is that it is the Holy Spirit, acting through the body of true believers. This view is entirely satisfactory, if petty and unreasonable objections to it are laid aside.

Thus we see that the proposed interpretation of the Greek word apostasia in verse 3 is justified by the use of the word in Greek literature; that it is in line with the New Testament use of the verb from which the noun is derived; that it fills the requirements of the passage; and that it does away with an apparent contradiction between this chapter and the rest of the N.T. In v. 3, as in v. 7-8 we have the sequence which would be readily inferred from the rest of Scripture. The revelation of the man of sin comes after the departure of the church. The rapture of the church is the first clearly recognizable event in the complex of occurrences which revolve a round the second Advent of Christ. There has never been a day in the Christian era in which anyone could rightly say, "I know that the Lord will not call His saints to meet Him in the air today."

When John Robinson, the beloved pastor of the Pilgrim Fathers, was bidding them farewell as they started for America, he declared his confidence that God would yet cause new truth to break forth out of His Word. How he would have rejoiced to see the removal of an apparent contradiction, and the ending of a misinterpretation which goes back to the very early centuries of the Christian church. Misled by the fact that the other use of apostasia