

# GOD'S PROVIDENCE AND CARE FOR THE CHURCH IN REBELLIOUS TIMES

## 2 Thessalonians 2

*Is God really in control of everything during these times  
when everything seems out of control?*

*Paul reminds the church of four realities —*

### 1. THE REALITY OF THE LORD'S RETURN (vv. 1-2)

### 2. THE REALITY OF REBELLION (vv. 3-5)

### 3. THE REALITY OF RESTRAINT (vv. 6-12)

### 4. THE REALITY OF GOD'S REDEMPTION (vv. 13-15)



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## *Hymn Story: "It Is Well with My Soul"*

Late in 1873 Horatio G. Spafford (b. North Troy, NY, 1828; d. Jerusalem, 1888) and his family were scheduled to travel from the United States to Europe. Delayed by pressing business, Spafford sent his wife and daughters ahead on the French liner *Ville du Havre*. The ship collided with the English ship *Lochearn* on November 22 and sank in just twelve minutes. Spafford's wife was saved, but his daughters perished. After arriving in Wales, Mrs. Spafford cabled her husband, "Saved alone." Spafford then left by boat to meet her. Near the tragic scene on the high seas he wrote this text. Upon hearing the news, evangelist Dwight L. Moody, a friend of the Spaffords, traveled to England to comfort them. Philip P. Bliss, another family friend, wrote the tune for Spafford's text. Bliss's tune is named *Ville du Havre*, after the ship on which the children died.

In 1856, several years before writing this text, Spafford had moved to Chicago, Illinois, where he established a law practice and became a professor of medical jurisprudence at Lind University (now the Chicago Medical College). He served as director and trustee for the Presbyterian Theological Seminary of the Northwest in Chicago and became acquainted with Dr. Piazza Smith, a Scottish astronomer, and through him became interested in biblical archeology. Heavy losses in the Chicago fire of 1871, the death of his four daughters in 1873, and the death of his son in 1880 caused Spafford to be accused of some secret sin by uncharitable church members.

In 1881 he, his wife, and some friends moved to Jerusalem and founded an American colony there; the family's story was told by another daughter, Bertha Spafford Vester, in *Our Jerusalem*.

– from the *Psalter Hymnal Handbook*  
on [hymnary.org/text/when\\_peace\\_like\\_a\\_river\\_attendeth\\_my\\_way](http://hymnary.org/text/when_peace_like_a_river_attendeth_my_way)



## *Scripture References within the Text*

Stanza 1 — Philippians 4:7

Stanza 2 — 2 Corinthians 12:7, 1 Peter 5:8

Stanza 3 — Colossians 2:14

Stanza 4 — Isaiah 34:4, 1 Thessalonians 4:14, Revelation 1:7