

The Destruction of the Man of Lawlessness

2 Thessalonians 2:7-12

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2 Thessalonians 2:7-12 English Standard Version (ESV)

⁷For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work. Only he who now restrains it will do so until he is out of the way. ⁸And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming. ⁹The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders, ¹⁰and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. ¹¹Therefore God sends them a strong delusion, so that they may believe what is false, ¹²in order that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

- are you ready for the coming of Jesus?

- while people make _____ and name call people as “antichrists”, let us be a people who are ready and prepared for the _____ of Jesus as if He was coming today!

- what is far more important for us is that we are ready for the 2nd coming of Jesus instead of trying to figure out all the details surrounding the antichrist

- Paul wrote this letter for three main reasons

1) Paul wrote this letter to _____ these Christians in the midst of the _____ that they were experiencing from the Jews

2) Paul wrote this letter to deal with the _____ teaching that the _____ of Jesus had _____ come

3) Paul wrote this letter to deal with the issue of the ongoing _____ in the _____

- so this letter is for encouragement and for instruction

- now we can continue on the topic of the man of _____

1) (2:7-8) God Will Kill the Man of Lawlessness

(2:7) For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work.

- Paul calls this lawlessness a _____

- this word “mystery” is used by _____ in many instances in his letters

- often Paul uses this word “mystery” to speak about the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ

Colossians 2:2 that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, to reach all the riches of full assurance of _____ and the knowledge of God's mystery, which is Christ,

- “mystery” : Jesus was _____ in the Old Testament but now Jesus is now _____

- the person and work of the Lord Jesus was prophesied about, now Jesus has been made

- so what was a hidden or _____ is manifested and _____

- in 2 Thessalonians the man of lawlessness is a mystery but he will be _____ at his time (2 Thessalonians 2:6)

- now Paul is _____ teaching that this man of lawlessness will rise up in his lifetime as some might think

- Paul says that this lawlessness which is a _____ is at work, this means the world is being _____ for the coming of the man of lawlessness

- this wickedness is working because sin and _____ are always working

- there is no break from sin or rebellion against God in the world as we most definitely see in North America and in fact all over the world

- as you can see lawlessness or rebellion against God's ways is a major _____ in this section (2 Thessalonians 2:1-12)

- 2:3 – there is a rebellion

- this man of lawlessness is against the law of God

- 2:4 the man of lawlessness opposes God, he opposes the worship of God

- he sits in a place of worship and exalts himself as God

- idolatry and blasphemy is a great _____ against God

Only he who now restrains it will do so until he is out of the way.

- we see that there is a restraining on this lawlessness and then this _____ will stop and the man of lawlessness will be _____

- this is a very difficult verse of scripture

- "the one who restrains" and "he is out of the way" are not clearly defined by Paul

- the Thessalonians were told these things by Paul and we were not there so there are blanks in what is being said here (2 Thessalonians 2:5)!

- do you remember what I quoted from Leon Morris? This is still true!

Leon Morris writes " This passage is the most obscure and _____ in the whole of the Pauline Writings and the many gaps in our knowledge have given rise to extravagant speculations"

- there are many views on what is _____ this evil, here are 4 possibilities of what could be restraining this lawlessness:

i) the Roman empire or any empire or government

- this is the interpretation that God uses the state to restrain _____, the rebellion and the coming of the man of lawlessness

- we see this teaching in Romans 13 where the government is described as servants of God

ii) Satan

- this interpretation is unique because you have a an _____ force restraining an evil force

iii) the preaching of the _____ restrains this man of lawlessness

- as you will remember, the end will not come until the gospel is preached in the whole world

iv) the Holy Spirit of God the Father

- of course in the context of the passage this is probably the best option

- since the Lord is sovereign over all things, over government, over Satan and over all people, we would be very right to say that the _____ of the Lord has restrained things!

- even though we might not know every detail in the Word of God, we can have supreme _____ in the sovereign work of the Lord over the universe

(2:8) And then the lawless one will be revealed,

- this same word “revealed” is used with the Lord Jesus coming to earth and the Lord Jesus _____ to earth at His 2nd coming

- just as Jesus was _____ present at His 1st coming and He will be physically present at His 2nd coming, this man of lawlessness will make a physical _____ on the earth

whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming.

- do you see the devastating _____ of this “man of lawlessness”?

- he will be _____ by the Lord Jesus

- the word “Lord” is the Hebrew word “Yahweh” that is attributed to _____ in the Old Testament

- Jesus is Lord because He _____ God

- not only do we see the Lord Jesus as the sovereign _____ but also as the Lord will _____ this man of lawlessness

- the word “kill” is mainly used to speak about the Lord Jesus being killed or people seeking to kill the apostles because they are preaching the gospel

- but here we see that the Lord Jesus who is sovereign over all will _____ this man who exalts himself as God and even _____ to be God

- there is nothing more exciting when you are watching a superhero movie than seeing the supervillain get obliterated by the good guys

- you see the harm, pain and destruction that these supervillains cause and you want them gone

- when these supervillains are removed you feel at ease
- we see this with the person of the man of lawlessness
- he has great pomp and great pride but in the end he is brought low by the _____ of the Lord Jesus Christ

- How does Jesus execute this _____? With the breath of His mouth
- this refers to the power of the _____ of Christ
- this imagery of the _____ of Christ and the sword is actually used several times in the book of Revelation

Revelation 1:16 In his right hand he held seven stars, from his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full _____.

Revelation 2:16 Therefore repent. If not, I will come to you soon and war against them with the _____ of my mouth.

- we see that Jesus comes to execute _____ with the power of the _____ of God

- do you see what else Jesus will do? He will bring to nothing this man of lawlessness

- this will be a humbling thing for this man of lawlessness
- do you remember what Paul said he was all about?
- in 2 Thessalonians 2:4 this man is arrogant for 4 reasons

- i) he _____ God
- ii) he _____ himself against God
- iii) he takes his seat in the Temple to be _____
- iv) he _____ to be God

- those are some pretty lofty actions but in the end it will all be for nothing because the Lord Jesus will lay him low
- he will be killed because he is just a mere _____ and will be made nothing

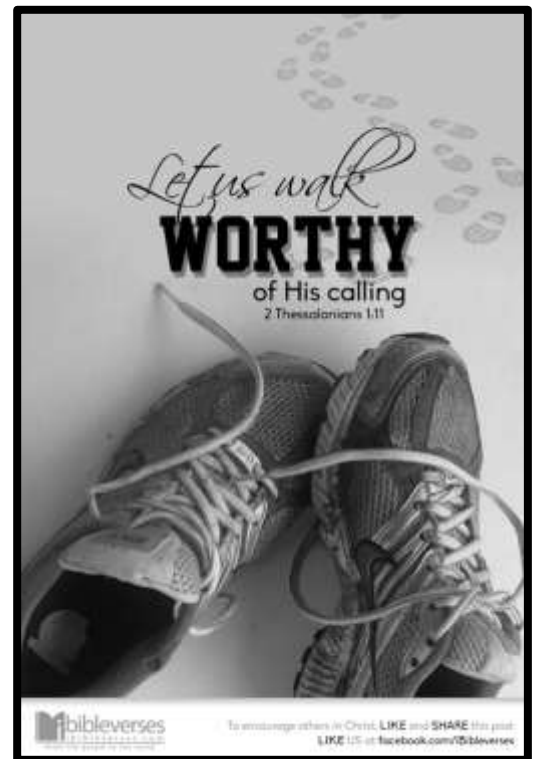
- this is like a skinny minnie guy going up against Andre the Giant, the skinny guy is going to get crushed
- same with the man of lawlessness

2) (2:9-10) God is Sovereign over Satan

(2:9) The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan

- here we see that the lawless one is not working alone, he is under the control of _____
- the man of lawlessness is getting his cues from the supreme lawless one
- he is controlled by the activity of Satan which would reveal he is a servant of Satan

- from the book of _____, chapters 1 and 2, we see that Satan is not on par with the power of God



- this is not dualism where there are two equal powers who battle it out and the _____ one wins

- no we even see that Satan is on a short _____ and is under the sovereign _____ of the Lord

Job 1:12 And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your hand. Only against him do not stretch out your hand." So Satan went _____ from the presence of the LORD.

Job 2:6 And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, he is in your hand; only spare his life."

- although many people _____ Satan and evil, in the Lord Jesus there is _____ to fear

- Satan and his servants are under the _____ of a sovereign God who rules over all things

with all power and false signs and wonders,

- here we see that this man of lawlessness can also perform powerful signs and wonders

- often people see signs and wonders as a confirmation that a person is a servant of God

- but we know that in the Old Testament even evil magicians could perform signs and wonders

- we saw this in the book of Exodus when the Egyptian magicians could perform some of the plagues that Moses performed by God's power

Exodus 7:11 – the Egyptians magicians were able to reduplicate the miracle of the staff into a snake

Exodus 7:22 – the Egyptians magicians were able to reduplicate the miracle of the water to blood

Exodus 8:8 - the Egyptians magicians were able to reduplicate the miracle of the frogs out of the water

Exodus 8:18 - the Egyptians magicians were NOT able to reduplicate the miracle of the gnats

- so signs and wonders need to be discerned by discerning the person

- if you look at signs and wonders you really do not see the full picture

- this man of lawlessness will be able to perform signs and will have a following, but he is just a servant of Satan!

(2:10) and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing,

- but this man of lawlessness will bring great _____

- and we see this deception in those who _____ the Lord Jesus

- we see the _____ in society in the area of sexuality where basically almost anything that you can think up, society encourages that you go for it

- they call any expression of intimacy "love" and this "love" they call good and it is encouraged to be celebrated

- that is just one of the great deceptions in our culture

- this man of lawlessness will bring even more deception than we see in our culture

- we are talking a serious, worldwide, great rebellion and deception

- those who are _____ are those who are _____

- Paul speaks about the destruction of those who _____ the gospel in his 1st letter to the Corinthians

1 Corinthians 1:18-19 For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. ¹⁹ For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart."

- those who are perishing, _____ alongside of the man of lawlessness who is the son of destruction (2 Thessalonians 2:3)!

because they refused to love the truth and so be saved.

- they refuse or they do not grasp or they do not _____, or they do not accept the truth

- the truth of course is the person and work of the Lord _____ Christ

John 14:6 Jesus said to him, "I am the _____, and the _____, and the _____. No one comes to the Father except through _____.

- the truth of the gospel is a glorious _____ and a wonderful _____ that is received by believers

- the truth is that God is a _____ God who _____ sin

- God stands as set _____ and is "other than" us humans who are _____

- we as humans have been alienated and put out of fellowship with God because of our rebellion or _____ against this Gracious and Holy God

- But God in His grace gives us His Son

- Jesus shows us His extreme grace, kindness and love by dying on the Cross in our place taking the punishment for our sin

- Jesus goes in our _____ as a substitute taking our _____

- because of Christ those who receive His grace and kind act have their sins wiped clean

- this is the _____ of the gospel!

- but this is the truth that these followers of the man of lawlessness _____ to accept

- and the end result of their rejection of the Lord Jesus is they are not _____

- they are _____ delivered or saved or rescued from the judgment and punishment to come

3) (2:11-12) God Sends a Delusion

(2:11) Therefore God sends them a strong delusion, so that they may believe what is false,

- here we see a verse that many might not be comfortable with but God's word says what is says

- God sends a strong _____ over them, and that keeps them believing what is _____

- we see a similar working of God with the prophet Micaiah

2 Chronicles 18:18-22 And Micaiah said, "Therefore hear the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing on his right hand and on his left. ¹⁹ And the

LORD said, 'Who will entice Ahab the king of Israel, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead?' And one said one thing, and another said another. ²⁰ Then a spirit came forward and stood before the LORD, saying, 'I will entice him.' And the LORD said to him, 'By what means?' ²¹ And he said, 'I will go out, and will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.' And he said, 'You are to entice him, and you shall succeed; go out and do so.' ²² Now therefore behold, the LORD has put a lying spirit in the mouth of these your prophets. The LORD has declared disaster concerning you."

- here again we see the _____ of God and these people do not embrace the truth but in contrast they embrace _____!

(2:12) in order that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

- the outcome for those who follow the man of the lawlessness is the same as the _____ of the man of lawlessness
- the word "judge" or " _____ " refers to God executing His _____ on sinners
- who are those who will experience the anger or _____ of God alongside of this man of lawlessness?
- those who :
 - i) do not believe the _____ of the gospel
 - ii) those who had pleasure in _____
- those who receive condemnation do not have their _____ set upon Christ, His glory and His greatness, but on wickedness and unrighteousness

Application

1) Trust in God and His Sovereignty

- like we talked about last week, the _____ of God is the dominating theme in this section
 - 2:1, 9 – Jesus Christ is called Lord which means He is a sovereign God
 - 2:6 – God's sovereignty restrains the man of lawlessness
 - 2:8 – the Lord Jesus will kill the man of lawlessness
 - 2:10 those who follow the man of lawlessness will perish under the sovereign hand of the Lord Jesus
 - 2:11 God sends a strong delusion so that they believe what is false
- although we really _____ know all the details concerning the man of lawlessness, the _____ of the man of lawlessness and the timing of the man of lawlessness let us be very clear about something right now!
- we can be very clear about the _____ of God!

- just like we read in 2 Chronicles

2 Chronicles 18:18 And Micaiah said, "Therefore hear the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing on his right hand and on his left.

- the Lord does not step off His throne, and He never will, but He has the Lord Jesus at His right hand

- no matter what happens with our government God is on His throne as a Sovereign God
- no matter what happens with our health God is on His throne as a Sovereign God
- no matter what happens with our family God is on His throne as a Sovereign God
- no matter what happens with our any event on earth God is on His throne as a Sovereign God
- I know the last year has created worry, stress, anger and many other emotions, but cling to this truth!
- shut off the news and tune into the Word of God and _____ His sovereignty
- you see His _____ and glory in every book of the Bible, even in Esther where the Lord is not even mentioned.

2) Trust in God and His Grace

- 2:10-12 we see the judgment of God, but then see the flip side which is the _____ of God
- 2:10 there is condemnation for those who refuse to _____ the truth and be saved
- but for those who receive and love the truth of Jesus Christ there is salvation

Romans 8:1 There is therefore now no _____ for those who are in Christ Jesus.

- 2:11 – these people believe what is false, we are commanded to believe and embrace the truth of Christ
- 2:12 – those who are condemned do not believe the truth and pleasure in unrighteousness
- but those who _____ the truth and _____ in righteousness are not condemned
- they will pass from death to _____!

- this is the glorious _____ of the Lord Jesus Christ
- our sin has condemned us, lust, pride, greed, selfishness, arrogance, puts us at _____ with God
- but thanks to God through _____ for His wonderful grace!
- through _____ in the gospel of Christ our sins are wiped clean

3) Trust in God and His Hope

- we see in this section of Thessalonians what we see as the dominating theme in the book of Revelation which is the hope of Heaven
- many people get obsessed with this and that in Revelation and they spend all their time trying to figure out less important truths than this!
- Revelation teaches that God reigns and _____ and there is great _____ in the work of the Lord Jesus Christ
- Satan is _____ and those who trust in Christ will be _____ together to be with Christ

2 Thessalonians 2:1 Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him, we ask you, brothers,

Prepare for next week: 2 Thessalonians 2: 13-16