



A Systematic Expository Study of the Word of God

Study 6: THE ANTICHRIST'S MYSTERY OF INIQUITY AT WORK 2 Thessalonians 2:6-9

The spirit of the Antichrist is already at work in the world and in the visible church. At the end of time, the Antichrist, an influential, international leader, one who will be indwelt and empowered by Satan, will appear. In Scripture, he is called the man of sin, the son of perdition, the beast, the false prophet, the prince that shall come, the king of fierce countenance, the Antichrist. Some events are predicted before the full manifestation of the Antichrist. There will be a "**falling away**" of many individuals, local churches and major denominations from "**the faith once delivered unto the saints.**" "**The mystery of iniquity**" already at work in the world and in the apostate Church will intensify and spread to an alarming extent. "**He who now letteth** (restraineth) **will let** (restrain), **until he be taken out of the way.**" When the restraining influence of the Holy Spirit is removed, the Antichrist's nature of evil in its diabolical wickedness will be fully manifested. At the moment, the mystery of iniquity, the hidden power of the originator of evil, the spirit of rebellion, operates behind the scenes. The present-day mystery of iniquity, the hidden "**depths of Satan, as they speak**" (Revelation 2:24) is preparing the way for the uncontrollable rebellion of the man of lawlessness. Though this "**mystery**" and "**spirit**" existed already in Paul's day and John's day, it will increase on an accelerated scale and become prevalent at the end of the age, to welcome the Antichrist.

DIVINE RESTRAINT ON THE ANTICHRIST

2 Thessalonians 2:6,7; Genesis 6:3-5; Isaiah 59:19-21; Job 38:11; 1 John 2:18; 4:3-6; Galatians 5:16,17; Revelation 20:1-3.

"And now ye know what withholdeth that he (the man of sin, the son of perdition) might be revealed in his time". There's a restraining influence hindering the full and unlimited manifestation of the man of lawlessness, the Antichrist. That irresistible power, strong enough to restrict and limit Satan himself (Job 1:12; 2:6), will continue to restrain the Antichrist until the appointed time. Who is the restrainer? From the time of the Flood until now, and from this time until the appointed time of the manifestation of the unlimited "**mystery of iniquity**", the restrainer is the Holy Spirit (Genesis 6:3; Isaiah 59:19). During the period just before the Flood, the restrainer of overflowing evil was not Noah or his family, it was the Holy Spirit. When the Holy Spirit, the permanent Indweller of the Church during this Church age, withdraws His restraining influence after the Rapture of the true Church, the restraint of lawlessness will be gone.

"For the mystery of iniquity doth already work; only He who now letteth (hindereth) **will let** (hinder), **until He be taken out of the way.**" Neither Israel in the wilderness nor the Church in the world is strong enough to restrain the mysterious evil of lawlessness in the world. The Holy Spirit is the mighty One who is keeping "**the mystery of iniquity**" in check, withholding, holding it back from overflowing and overturning the world.

DECREED RUIN OF THE ANTICHRIST

2 Thessalonians 2:8; Daniel 7:10,11,26; Job 4:8,9; Isaiah 11:4; 2 Thessalonians 1:8,9; Revelation 19:15,20,21; 20:10.

"And then shall that Wicked be revealed." The "**Wicked**" referred to here is 'the wicked one', the culmination and sum total of all wickedness. His wickedness will exceed all the wickedness of Pharaoh, Ahab, Jezebel, Nebuchadnezzar, Herod, Nero, Hitler, etc. all put together. His wickedness will cause great suffering "**such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time**" (Matthew 24:21). The worldwide terror and wickedness will be the worst, the most deadly the world has ever seen. During that period of seven years, which will seem to be as long as eternity to those who will be suffering, men, women and children will

prefer to die than live. **“And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them”** (Revelation 9:6).

But the Wicked, the Tormentor, the Antichrist, the Adversary, the fierce King, the murderous Prince, the son of perdition will not continue his earthly career of lawlessness forever. **“Whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming.”** The Lord Jesus will slay him by the breath of His mouth. He will bring him to nothing by the manifestation of His coming. A word from Christ and the raging impostor is brought to his end. One moment, he appears to reign in terror, the next moment, he is ruined by terror.

DIABOLICAL RESOURCES OF THE ANTICHRIST

2 Thessalonians 2:9; Revelation 13:11-15; 16:13,14; Matthew 24:24,25; 7:21-23; 2 Corinthians 11:13-15; Revelation 19:20.

“Even him whose coming is after the working of Satan.” The Antichrist will be Satan incarnate, manifesting the characteristics of Satan. Satan **“is a liar and the father of it”**; the Antichrist will operate with lying and deceptive policy. **“And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand”** (Daniel 8:25). His activities will be **“with all deceivableness of unrighteousness”** (2 Thessalonians 2:10). The Antichrist will be diabolical; he will look like a lamb to those who are deceived by him but he will speak **“as a dragon”** (Revelation 13:11). The dragon, that is, the devil, Satan, will give him power to work miracles (Revelation 13:4;12:9). Like Satan, who is the authority and power behind the Antichrist, he will destroy and kill without pity or feeling. **“And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practise, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people”** (Daniel 8:24).

“Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders.” The man of sin, the Antichrist will be energized by Satan and will display all kinds of miracles and signs and wonders to deceive. It is important to note that not all miracles are of God. The devil and his agents can perform miracles. The Antichrist, the man of lawlessness, will also perform miracles - signs and lying wonders.

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