

2 THESSALONIANS: PAUL'S REVELATION ABOUT THINGS TO COME  
SESSION 3 | 2 THESSALONIANS 2:6-9

2 THESSALONIANS 2:6-12 | NOW...AND THEN

- These verses, building on verses 1-5, give information that relates to *now* and also to *then*.
  - Now: there is a restrainer.
  - Then: there is a deception.
- Verse 6 –
  - Reading this verse carefully with its grammar will help interpretation greatly.
    - The word **now** is an adverb and could modify either **ye know** or **withholdeth**. In Greek, the word order is important and strongly favors *now holds back over now ye know*. That is, *now something withholds but someday it will not*.
    - Since the Thessalonians **know** this information, and we are not aware that Paul has revealed this information, we would assume that the information is available in the Hebrew Scriptures, and thus relates to the prophetic program.
    - The one to **be revealed in his time** is the **man of sin** (v. 3).
    - The words **what withholdeth** are *neuter* in Greek, and thus *the restrainer* can ONLY be something that would also be in the neuter.
      - The Holy Spirit is neuter.
      - The *church* is feminine.
      - God or Jesus is masculine.
      - A *place* would be neuter.
  - This verse tells us that some *thing* has the ultimate hold on the Antichrist and will have this hold until **his time** comes.
  - A proposal for consideration: the *thing* that **withholdeth** the Antichrist is *a place*, namely, *the abyss* (that is, the Bottomless Pit of Revelation). This theory suggests that the Antichrist is *Nephilim* (for that is who lives in the abyss). To defend this position, consider the following two passages:
    - [Revelation 9:1](#) - A **star falls from heaven unto the earth** and has **the key of the bottomless pit**. See notes on Revelation study for defense that:
      - The star is Satan
      - The timing is the beginning of the seven years of Jacob's trouble (with the first four seals being the "beginning of sorrows")
      - The released inhabitants are the **spirits in prison** ([1 Pet. 3:19](#)) from the days of Noah's flood (Nephilim).
    - [Revelation 11:7](#) - The Antichrist is unquestionably one **that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit** (where he is currently being withheld). If he ascends out of this pit, the only logical conclusion would be *that he is being withheld in this pit today*.
- Verse 7 –
  - Verse 7 is an explanatory and supplementary to verse 6.
  - There is a **mystery of iniquity** which is *already working* (that is, working today). But what is this mystery?
    - It is *one thing*, and Paul uses the Greek word *μονος* [monos], translated **only** to tell the Thessalonians what this one thing is.
    - Do not make the mistake of taking **only** to be a *contrasting conjunction* (as in, "except").
  - The mystery of iniquity is that there is now one who **letteth**, but someday this one will **be taken out of the way**.
    - The verb **letteth** is the same as **withholdeth** in verse 6.
      - However, in verse 6 it is neuter, here it is masculine.

- Some *thing* has ultimate hold in verse 6, Some *one* has ultimate hold in verse 7.
    - The one having ultimate hold in verse 7 is key to the **mystery of iniquity**.
    - Furthermore, this one will someday **be taken out of the way**. That phrase is literally *taken out of the midst*, thus it is not “taken from blocking the way” but simply “taken away.”
  - I understand verses 6-7 as follows: *the Antichrist is currently being held in the abyss, until his time is come. But even now in this time there is a mystery of iniquity, and it is this one thing: Satan has full grip, but Satan will someday be taken away.*
- Verse 8 –
  - Both verse 6 and verse 8 speak of the antichrist being **revealed**.
    - This seems to be more than *released* but actually *identifiable*.
    - I think that the antichrist is not *undeniably identifiable* until the midpoint of the tribulation, when he takes the throne as if he was God.
  - Verse 8 begins with the word **then**, using the Greek *τοτε* [tote], which is *at that time*. Thus *at the time that Satan is taken from the midst* (v. 7), then the *full revelation* of **that Wicked** one will take place. This requires the following chronology:
    - Antichrist begins walking the earth at the beginning of the seven years, with the breaking of the fifth seal ([Rev. 9:1](#)).
    - Antichrist is not fully identifiable until Satan is **taken out of the way**, or *out of the midst*, namely *out of the midst of heaven*, which takes place in [Revelation 12:7-9](#).
    - This seems to coincide with the abomination of desolation described in [Revelation 13:4-5](#).
  - The demise of **that Wicked** is described as taking place by the Lord Himself at the Second Coming, a teaching which aligns with the book of Revelation.
- Verse 9 –
  - Some characteristics of the work of the antichrist are given in these verses:
    - He uses the same schemes of the devil.
    - He utilizes three tools:
      - **Power** - throughout history power has been used more for harm than for good. A society that cares about freedom and prosperity should do all it can to limit the power of any one individual or institution. The word here could refer to *political power* or any manifestation of power.
      - **Signs** - the *meaning* of his work will be more important than the *content* of his work.
      - **Lying wonders** - The word **lying** is *pseudos*, helping us understand the “miracles” of the antichrist.
    - He will use **all deceivableness of unrighteousness** - that is, if he can twist words and actions for his own benefit, he will not think twice about doing so.
  - This will all be done to **them that perish**.
    - Why do they perish? The text answers: **because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved**.
      - The word **because** is *ἀντί* [anti], which is *in place of*. They perish *in place of* receiving the truth.
      - By the time the antichrist comes, they will have already rejected truth, and the opportunity for salvation will be past.