

1 JOHN 2:18-25 | THE NATIONAL STATUS

- Verse 18 –
 - The author speaks to the **Little children** (the nation of Israel, in my interpretation), warning them that **it is the last time**.
 - The word **time** is translated from ὥρα [hora], from which we get the English word *hour*.
 - This is a word that can be specific (Jn. 19:14) or general (1 Thes. 2:17, where it is translated **a short time**). Here it is more general in nature.
 - Joel 2:28-32 prophesies that in the last days that God will send manifestations of His spirit.
 - This letter is written around 50AD, a time in which these manifestations were great, if not at their strongest (for the 50AD argument, see session 1).
 - Since the manifestations of the Spirit had been going for almost two decades, it is only reasonable to presume that they were living in **the last time**.
 - The verse speaks of **antichrist** who **shall come** and **antichrists** of whom **even now are there many**. This is the only time in the Bible when the word **antichrist** is used.
 - The Hebrew scriptures speak of the antichrist using other names, including:
 - The wicked one - Psalm 10:2
 - The man of the earth - Psalm 10:18
 - The head over many countries - Psalm 110:6-7
 - The Assyrian - Isaiah 10:5
 - The profane and wicked prince of Israel - Ezekiel 21:25-27
 - The little horn - Daniel 7:8
 - The prince that shall come - Daniel 9:26
 - The idol shepherd - Zechariah 11:17
 - Additionally, the Greek scriptures speak of him as:
 - The man of sin, the son of perdition - 2 Thessalonians 2:3
 - The wicked one - 2 Thessalonians 2:8
 - The beast - Revelation 11:7
 - From this it can be seen that *every Hebrew would know of a coming “anti-Messiah” even if they don’t use the name.*
 - The nation is told that there are currently **many antichrists**, which is used as evidence **that it is the last time** (last hour). The writer had doubtless heard Jesus saying that **many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ** (Mt. 24:5) and was warning the nation about this deception.
 - How can this epistle claim that it is *the last hour*, yet nearly 2,000 years have passed since that time? There are several positions taken in response:

- The author was simply wrong, and the Bible is thus not inerrant. This is the position of skeptics and religious liberals.
 - We have been living in the *last days* since the apostolic age. This is the position of most evangelicals. This position reduces the meaning of words.
 - The author was dealing with the only information revealed at that point, and later revelation would give information about the abeyance of the Kingdom offer and the parenthetical *mystery* age. This is the position of “right dividers.”
- Verse 19 –
 - There were some who were **not of us** or they would **have continued with us** but instead **they when out from us**. Who are **they**?
 - Almost all of evangelicalism says that **they** are *people who were once part of our church but now have left*. This verse is used endlessly for spiritual abuse, to imprison the followers into remaining faithful with “us.”
 - For example: “there will be some who are only in outward appearance united to Christ and His people, and in the matter or the manner of their disagreement with other believers, they will prove otherwise. As John explains, “They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us” ([1 John 2:19a](#)).”
(<https://www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/when-christians-dwell-unity>)
 - The verse clearly has the context of *antichrists abandoning Israel*.
- Verse 20 –
 - Most assume that having **an unction from the Holy One** means that the recipients are believers with the indwelling of the Holy Ghost.
 - If this be true, then why does the author long that **ye also may have fellowship with us** whose **fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son** (1 Jn. 1:3)?
 - The **Holy One** is undoubtedly God the Father, and not the Holy Ghost.
 - The **unction** is from χρίσμα [chrisma], which is a reference to the consecration of anointing done in the Old Testament.
 - In Oxford English Dictionary the word **unction** is defined as “The action of anointing with oil as a religious rite or symbol.”
 - The nation of Israel certainly has this *anointed position* from God. Viewing the passage in this way makes much more sense, in the context, than in the typical manner of “you have the Holy Spirit.”
 - Furthermore, the verse states that **ye know all things**.
 - The Greek simply says *you know all* and could be taken as *you know all these things*.
 - That is, the author is saying, “I am not giving you a new revelation, you already know this.”
- Verse 21 - Adding strength to the argument of the last part of verse 20, the author notes again, using different words, that he is not giving new revelation, but reminding them of old information.