

Re. Podcast June 6, 2020

The original of this message was presented Nov 1, 2015, almost five years ago. One can compare the then, and now, and assess the value of this perspective.

2Th 2:1 Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered to Him: We ask you, brothers,

2Th 2:2 not to be easily upset in mind or troubled, either by a spirit or by a message or by a letter as if from us, alleging that the Day of the Lord has come.

The Apostle is writing to correct misunderstanding and confusion concerning the second coming of Jesus. The period under consideration is from the time of this writing to the end of the age and the return of Messiah.

2Th 2:3 Don't let anyone deceive you in any way. For *that day* will not come unless the apostasy comes first and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction.

People are often deceived because they allow themselves to be. The Special Messenger commands believers not to permit deception. This should be emphasized today.

Paul tells the believers at Thessalonica that the return of Messiah will not occur until after two significant things have happened. What are those things, and how are we to understand them?

First, the Apostasy will come. This will be a “falling away from”, a “forsaking”, or a “defection” from the truth. This will take place among Christian assemblies in a widespread fashion. He is writing about the churches, not unbelievers, but those who profess to be followers of Jesus. Paul uses similar words in his first letter to Timothy, chapter 4, and verse 1:

1Ti 4:1 Now the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will depart from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and the teachings of demons,

This is a departure or falling away from a former condition and the cause of the apostasy is openness to deception. Many who refuse to accept that a believer can fall away from the faith insist that the Apostle is describing those who were Christians in name only – they never were genuine believers, they say. Their logic is that since it is impossible for a true believer to fall away, those who do must not be true in the first place. This is an example of theological belief forcing the interpretation of scripture. We are called to conform to the spirit and letter of inspired scripture and never to require the text to conform to our personal beliefs. Failure to accept that this coming Apostasy involves believers departing from the faith due to acceptance of error and demonic teaching, is to misunderstand the special message Paul is delivering.

If people who have never genuinely believed abandon their profession that does not cause seismic waves in the spiritual realm. They were in the domain of darkness before as they are after – nothing significant has changed. However, when true believers in large numbers embrace deceiving spirits and depart from the true faith because of that error, this means a spiritual earthquake that changes the face of the planet. This is what the

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Apostle Paul is stating will come. This means that the spirits of those former believers in exceptionally large numbers will experience a profound change. They will continue to possess the spiritual faculties of **Intuition**, **Conscience**, and **Communion**, but the place of fellowship will have shifted to the Domain of Darkness. The place within them intended as a temple for God's Presence, purchased by Jesus for that purpose alone, the place that no longer is the exclusive property of the individual, is made available to the Adversary. Can we understand this? This is the Apostasy.

Second, the man of lawlessness is revealed. This man of lawlessness has always existed as a "mystery" a concealed spiritual reality that opposes God and Christ. This is the antichrist spirit that has always been in the world. But now, because of this unprecedented Apostasy, the formerly hidden is revealed into the earth.

2Th 2:4 He opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he sits in God's sanctuary, publicizing that he himself is God.

There is considerable debate among scholars concerning the Greek text here. Is this an individual man, a kind of humanity, or a series of individual men? This is a place where we should be cautious and prayerful before drawing conclusions that will determine how the rest of the passage is understood. This is a good place to raise our eyes to heaven and say, *"Lord, I do not know how to understand this. Unless the Holy Spirit opens this and leads the study, I can not know and I will not guess, or be fully persuaded by the voice of one among many scholars. I know Your written word is like a symphony. Tune my spiritual ear to the*

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notes of harmony and permit me to know the discordant note as well. I will wait, Lord, upon You”.

The nature and character of this “man of lawlessness” is to exalt himself to the position of Supreme authority. He recognizes no superior. He worships no one. His opinions and judgments are the final word on all things. His self exaltation is to the degree that he will occupy God’s temple as if he himself is God. How we understand this is influenced by what we think Paul is referring to in his reference to temple. The question is: what sanctuary is this? It is God’s sanctuary, but where is it? Is it the temple in Jerusalem? If so, obviously the temple must be rebuilt there, and a sacrificial system of worship reinstated. Those who interpret Paul in this way use this passage to support an end time scenario. It presumes that the “man of Lawlessness” is an end time individual who will enter the sanctuary of a restored temple in Jerusalem and be dislodged and destroyed by Jesus at His return.

But what sanctuary of God is the Apostle considering as he writes this letter? The context and the entire special revelation given to Paul by our Lord Himself, strongly suggests that Paul is writing about the temple of God in the spirit of believers both individually and collectively. This is new covenant worship as prophesied in the O. T. and instituted on the Day of Pentecost. This is the true Church in the world comprised of both Jew and Gentile, in whom God’s presence is pleased to dwell in baptismal measure. Jesus had prophesied the destruction of the Jewish temple in Jerusalem, and all the Apostles knew that was about to take place. How would the Apostle Paul view a rebuilt Jewish temple complete with all the O.T. sacrificial system, when he knew by special revelation that all the old types and shadows had been fulfilled in Messiah? He would certainly not refer to any such

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structure as being a sanctuary of God. Failure to see this indicates a serious flaw in our understanding of the New Covenant and what it is.

Paul is writing about a profound Apostasy that will come in the end days. Believers will progressively permit themselves to be deceived by false spirits and demonic instruction, and this will result over time in a departure from the true faith by much of the visible church in the world. This will obviously degrade the spiritual life of many until the faculties of the human spirit (Intuition, Conscience, and Communion), which have been reserved as a sanctuary for God, will be occupied by satanic influence. This will permit the manifestation of the “man of lawlessness”. The Apostasy will permit that which was concealed to be revealed in the earth.

The Spirit filled and Spirit led Church in the world has always restrained the manifestation of evil. Darkness always yields to light and can not manifest when light is present. This is true in both the natural and spiritual realms. The degree of darkness is determined by the degree of light.

When the “man of lawlessness” occupies the sanctuary of professing Christians and when the spirit faculties are corrupted the result is what we are beginning to increasingly see around us today. **Intuition** becomes increasingly man centered and reason is captivated by worldly ideology. **Conscience** is not responsive to God’s moral law. Conviction of sin becomes increasingly difficult as the sense of right and wrong is altered by the unholy fellowship in the spirit. **Communion** is with the god of this world and all the ideas and values of a fallen world order. The values and world view will become increasingly humanistic and rebellious. The character of the “man of lawlessness” will become more evident in those who commune with him. They will wax

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arrogant, authoritative, and less tolerant with any who may oppose them. They will yearn for power and influence over all the institutions of society with a zeal that is fueled from within themselves.

As the end of days nears, this manifestation will increase until it will be difficult to find any institution (governmental, courts, law making and enforcement, education, church government, public policy, legal counsel) that will not be dominated by this antichrist spirit. The “man of lawlessness” will have many laws, but these laws will originate with himself as the ultimate authority – God will be denied. Human beings will be intoxicated with a man centered authority and will not realize that they are but pawns, moved by a spirit of deception.

The Apostasy does not touch every believer. There will be a great number who will not be deceived. This simply means that the Apostasy will be widespread and will influence much of the visible church in the world in the ways already described. There will always be a genuine church comprised of all nations and languages that will worship God in spirit and in truth until the very end.

2Th 2:5 Don't you remember that when I was still with you I told you about this?

2Th 2:6 And you know what currently restrains *him*, so that he will be revealed in his time.

The “man of lawlessness” can only be revealed because of this “falling away”, this “departing from” the true faith. The Restrainer, then, must be the Spirit filled Church (Collective and Individual)

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walking in genuine fellowship with the Father and the Son. This is true.

The “One” who restrains is a state or spiritual condition of the church manifest in the world – not just an individual. One could say the Holy Spirit is the restrainer, but it is more accurate to say that the Restrainer is the Spirit led and Spirit filled church manifesting in the world.

When the spiritual condition of the visible church in the world suffers apostasy, restraint is removed and the man of sin (lawlessness) is made manifest. It moves from the mystery of lawlessness to the man of lawlessness, revealed.

2Th 2:7 For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work, but the one now restraining will do so until he is out of the way,

“Mystery of lawlessness” is the “hidden principle of rebellion”, the spirit that influences to lawlessness. Example: **“has God really said...”** This spirit questions God’s words and rules and offers another view or interpretation. It appeals to unbelief and disobedience.

But! There has always been one who restrains him. The “Restrainer” is referred to as “he”. Does that mean the restrainer is an individual? Ultimately, yes. Ultimately, the restrainer is the Holy Spirit, but in context it is the influence of the Holy Spirit within the Sanctuary of the believer(s) manifesting through this body of believers in the world that accomplishes the restraint.

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Therefore, the prophesied Apostasy is the falling away from the New Covenant model until the life of God is no longer being manifested into the world through the body of believers.

Jdg 16:15 "How can you say, 'I love you,'" she told him, "when your heart is not with me? This is the third time you have mocked me and not told me what makes your strength so great!"

Jdg 16:16 Because she nagged him day after day and pleaded with him until she wore him out,

Jdg 16:17 he told her the whole truth and said to her, "My hair has never been cut, because I am a Nazirite to God from birth. If I am shaved, my strength will leave me, and I will become weak and be like any other man."

Jdg 16:18 When Delilah realized that he had told her the whole truth, she sent this message to the Philistine leaders: "Come one more time, for he has told me the whole truth." The Philistine leaders came to her and brought the money with them.

Jdg 16:19 Then she let him fall asleep on her lap and called a man to shave off the seven braids on his head. In this way, she made him helpless, and his strength left him.

Jdg 16:20 Then she cried, "Samson, the Philistines are here!" When he awoke from his sleep, he said, "I will escape as I did before and shake myself free." But he did not know that the LORD had left him.

Philistine power over Samson and Israel is restrained "until" "He" is taken out of the way. The restrainer is the Anointing based on covenant with God manifesting into the earth through Samson. Samson did not know that the Lord had left him, i.e.. Left him to

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his own resources that were inadequate. The Restrainer, ultimately, is the Spirit, manifesting into the world through Samson. The one being restrained, ultimately, is the Adversary/Satan, who is manifesting into the world through the Philistines.

It is noteworthy that in the end the conditions for the anointing were restored and the anointed Samson is responsible for the destruction of the Philistines in a decisive victory. Will it be this way at the end of this Age?

2Th 2:8 and then the lawless one will be revealed. The Lord Jesus will destroy him with the breath of His mouth and will bring him to nothing with the brightness of His coming.

Then the lawless one is made manifest in the world. The “lawless one” is always ultimately Satan, but manifests through individuals once the restraining influence is removed.

How will this manifest into the earth? Again, the biblical precedent: **“you will be as gods, knowing good and evil”**.

Genesis 3:5

Mankind will become arrogant and devoted to self rule. Humanism – both religious and secular – will dominate. Humanist manifestos will be written, signed, and promoted. All public institutions will zealously promote the individual as the supreme authority on all things. Man will decide on all matters previously considered reserved for God. In other words, the place within man (his spirit) designed for the throne of God alone, will be occupied by a militant self; BUT, behind that arrogant self is the Adversary who has designed and influenced it all.

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Man will decide for himself on matters of abortion, sexual identity and practice, gender identity and change. Everything that God has declared to be subject to His moral law will be usurped and violated. This is ultimate rebellion and lawlessness.

Man will think he has evolved naturally to his destined privilege, but he is mistaken. He has welcomed the lawless one into the sanctuary of his life. What will result in those who welcome this deception? Man's spirit will be corrupted irreversibly. God has designed our spirit with features of **Intuition, Conscience and Communion**. These are intended for fellowship with God and are properly employed and developed to enable worship of God and care for our fellow man. The human spirit is not primarily material or physical. Our spirit is a portal. It is located now within our body and soul but is also capable of entering into God's presence and His presence can dwell in our spirit simultaneously. Our minds also have features that occupy the physical and spiritual realms. We can think our own thoughts and God's thoughts in the same moment and distinguish between the two.

“Do you not know that you are a temple”?

When the man of lawlessness assumes the highest seat in the human spirit, the **Conscience, Communion, and Intuition** are corrupted and held hostage by the evil one. The **Conscience** will not be grieved by sin against God. **Communion** in the spirit will consort with demons and other fallen beings masquerading as truth bearers. **Intuition** will affirm and testify to the error being consumed and there will be a satanic “witness of the spirit” that the individual is in a healthy place. This is the condition described as receiving the mark of the beast or the number of his name (Revelations 13:17).

The oldest Greek text of portions of the book of Revelations on Papyrus is the Chester Beatty Papyrus. This text dates to the 3rd

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Century about 200 years after the original was written by the Apostle John. This is the English translation of Revelations chapter 13, verse 18:

Rev 13:18 Here is wisdom. The one therefore having [wisdom], let him calculate the number of the beast: for it is the number of man, and it is 666.

This very ancient document states: the number is the number of Man – not “a man”, but “Man”. Does this passage refer to an individual man or does it describe a condition of humanity? The number 666 has been applied to numerous individuals throughout history by using the number value of the Greek alphabet. The church of the reformation presented compelling arguments for 666 pointing to “The Latin Kingdom” and to the Papal system. More recently, an interesting view has been advanced that the passage points to end time humanism – both religious and secular.

There is, however, a common theme that is found in both approaches to the above passage. Whether one considers the Papal system or the branches of humanism, they all result in a man centered corruption of the human spirit – the place designed for God’s spirit. We are beginning to see the paths of the Papal system and humanism (both secular and religious) converge. This is happening now.

This verse also describes the destruction of the man of lawlessness. He will be destroyed and brought to nothing. How do we understand this great and wonderful deliverance that is coming upon the earth? Our views will again be governed by our understanding of Paul’s use of the word temple. Is this Messiah’s bodily return to evict and destroy the Antichrist from a rebuilt temple in Jerusalem; or, does this envision a powerful

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manifestation again in the earth of the Authority of Jesus? The “spirit of His mouth” is the mighty wind of His authoritative word that changes the face of the earth. He replaces darkness with light, opens prison doors and releases captives. This mighty wind destroys the man of sin and reclaims the rightful place and use of the temple that is in men.

What? Do you not know that you are the temple ...?

The revelation of Messiah is a brightness that permits no work of darkness to remain.

The Apostasy has already begun and will increase; BUT, this great victory over apostasy and the man of lawlessness is certain to follow.

2Th 2:9 The coming *of the lawless one* is based on Satan's working, with all kinds of false miracles, signs, and wonders,

Satan has, from the beginning, sought to convince mankind that God’s rules are too restrictive and limiting. In the original Garden he suggested that there was knowledge, experience, and an elevated position that God’s rules were holding them back from enjoying. The satanic suggestion was “you shall be as gods ...” and God is keeping you from your full potential. The man of lawlessness will, and is, using the enticement of advanced education to convince mankind that he is evolving toward a higher plane. This false “angel of light” will teach that traditional Christian views are outdated and harmful to the advancement of mankind. Concepts of love, compassion and acceptance will focus on promoting the things in fallen man that Jesus came to deliver us from. As the revelation of the “man of lawlessness”

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increases in the earth, satanic deception and lying wonders will increase exponentially. The persecution of those who practice genuine Christian beliefs will increase with nearly unanimous public approval. The text of scripture and other monotheistic religions will be reinterpreted with cunning genius to gain near universal support for the concept of elevated mankind. “You will be as gods ...” Will the “man of lawlessness” ultimately be revealed as a unique individual in the earth? This may come to pass, but it is likely that the manner is yet to be fully understood. It is clear however, that the individuals who will rise to leadership positions in the earth will be possessed of this spirit of lawlessness. It does not mean that they will not employ laws; it means that they will be lawless in terms of God’s law and will employ laws that advance their personal goals. Arrogance and superiority will characterize them. They will not respect the limitations on power imposed by their fathers and will radically alter governmental and social structures.

2Th 2:10 and with every unrighteous deception among those who are perishing. *They perish* because they did not accept the love of the truth in order to be saved.

The deception will have complete power over all those who do not possess a genuine love of the truth.

2Th 2:11 For this reason God sends them a strong delusion so that they will believe what is false,

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The strong delusion that God sends is like God hardening Pharaoh's heart. When Pharaoh rejected the manifest power of God and the anointed leaders sent to him, his heart was hardened consequently. It is true to say therefore that God hardened Pharaoh's heart, and it is also true that Pharaoh hardened his own heart by the choices he made. The law of gravity causes the fall, and the man causes his own fall by stepping off the cliff – both are true.

The strong delusion at the ending of the age operates in the same way.

2Th 2:12 so that all will be condemned--those who did not believe the truth but enjoyed unrighteousness.

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There are several conclusions that can be reasonably drawn from this podcast:

- Covid-19 continues to be a dangerous and not yet fully understood virus.
- Among the higher at risk are our seniors and those with compromised immunity.
- Many in our governing bodies and health care system are true public servants, but many are eager to use this crisis to further an agenda of societal change.
- True Christian influence has rapidly declined in public institutions, such as, education, legislation, MSM, public policy, and most places of societal influence, including

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churches. This decline results in the rapidly growing anti-Christ spirit that is explained in 2 Thes. 2.

- This anti-Christ influence is coming in like a Tsunami and many people are caught and are being swept up by it – people you never would have expected are being enveloped by it.
- This explanation of 2 Thess 2 is solid scriptural exposition, and it is being fulfilled before our eyes – right now. Those waiting for another interpretation are missing it while they wait.
- This means we are close to the end of this Age. A restoration of Pentecost and the Return of Jesus are near.
- Our eyes turn south to the USA due to its place of global influence. What will happen there in November? Is President Trump a barrier to this rising tide? Or, is his influence an accelerant for it? It's too soon to tell, but soon we'll know the answer.

As always, the answer to ALL of this is the gospel proclaimed in the power of the Spirit of the Lord. When the harvest is completed it will be time to hear the midnight cry, “go ye out to meet Him”. Be certain that your lamp is filled with oil and ready to be trimmed.