

The Man of Lawlessness

2 THESSALONIANS 2

The Man of Lawlessness

Who is in the midst?

We read in verse 4 that the man of lawlessness takes his seat in the temple of God.

Is it possible that antichrist can take the place of honour in a gathering of true believers? We find the answer in verse 7. Literally translated this reads, “He who restrains (will do so) until he becomes *out of the midst*”. Yahshua said, “Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there I am in their midst” (Mat 18:20). If Yahshua is in the midst, there is no room for the man of lawlessness.

If Yahshua becomes *out of the midst* there is then a vacuum waiting to be filled. Note the passive of the word gathered. Yahweh does the gathering, not we ourselves. The people of Yahweh come together in different ways. Some are truly drawn together by His Spirit and genuinely meet in the name of Yahshua.

Yahshua is then in the midst according to his promise. Others meet of their own or someone else's will, or through habit, or because they think they should. Yahshua has given no guarantee that he will be *in their midst*.

Church history illustrates and clarifies this for us. The early believers met together often against opposition and in personal danger, but they continued to meet, as they were powerfully drawn by the Holy Spirit and by love for one another.

Time passed and the initial flame burnt down. They still met, but *Ichabod* (*Where is the glory?* - [1 Samuel 4:21](#)) was written over their gatherings. The glory of Yahweh had departed. Yahshua was no longer in their midst. Ezekiel's vision of the glory of Yahweh leaving the temple and the city (chs 10,11) had a second fulfilment.

There was now a vacant seat. The man of lawlessness was ready to take it. Men began to dominate and rule and exalt themselves over the flock of Christ. Their claims became more and more blasphemous and their titles more and more exalted as the centuries passed.

Many people imagine that as long as they are assembling, they are satisfying Yahweh's requirements. The instruction of Hebrews 10:25, "... not giving up our own assembling ...", is only obeyed if Yahshua is in the midst. The same Greek word episynagoge is used there as in verse 1 of our passage.

It implies meeting together upon him. If he is not in the meeting, it is better if we aren't either. Paul told the Corinthians plainly that they came together **not for the better, but for the worse** ([1 Cor 11:17](#)).

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**Destruction of the Man of
Lawlessness**

In verse 8 we read of the end of the antichrist. The Lord(Master) will slay him with the breath of his mouth. What does this sentence imply? Revelation chapter 19 describes the same event.

We should not imagine some star wars conflict between good and evil. Yahshua will be accompanied by heavenly armies. His weapon is described by Paul as the breath of his mouth, and by John as a sharp sword in his mouth.

Breath and spirit are the same word both in Greek (Pneuma) and in Hebrew (ruach). The sword of the spirit is the word of Elohim.

Thus it is the word of Elohim, spoken in the power of the Holy Spirit that will destroy the evil one.

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Love of the Truth

In our last verse we find the reason people are deceived.

“They did not receive the love of the truth and so be saved.” Truth

is far more than accuracy of factual information or doctrine.

Truth is reality; things spiritual and natural as they really are.

10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

11 And for this cause Elohim shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:

We must be willing for the truth about ourselves, our families, our friends, our spiritual leaders, and everything that touches our lives. Sometimes the truth will hurt us; sometimes it will delight us. **But it will always set us free.**

Today we face a flood of deception. False ideas, false information and false impressions are thrown at us with all the power of modern technology. False teaching is easier to propagate and there are more people with inclination to receive it than ever before.

The first weapon in Paul's armoury was to have the "loins girt with truth". More than ever we need that now. Yahshua himself is the truth. The central message of this study is, "Look to Him; Come to Him; Assemble in Him; Follow Him."

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Unlike the judgments of the Gentiles ([Amos 1:3 - 2:3](#)), Amos charges Judah for breaking His commandments, specifically lying.

Amos 2:4-5

4 Thus saith Yahweh; For three transgressions of Judah, and for four, I will not turn away *the punishment* thereof; because they have despised the law of Yahweh, and have not kept his commandments, and their lies caused them to err, after the which their fathers have walked:

5 But I will send a fire upon Judah, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem.

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Judah's despising of Elohim's law and Israel's commanding the prophets to stop preaching His Word (Amos 2:12) reflect exactly the same moral condition: Both refused the voice of Elohim as spoken through His prophets.

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What Elohim intended to be their privilege through revelation of Himself and His law had turned out to be their central peril. It is another way of saying, "To whom much is given, from him much will be required" ([Luke 12:48](#)).

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Despising truth is an inward attitude that outwardly reveals itself in immorality, and this is the condition Elohim found in ancient Israel. The people had become complacent about His revelation to them.

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They zealously sought after knowledge - even religious knowledge - but they did not really love the truth ([Romans 10:2-3](#)). This was reflected in their immorality; if they had loved Elohim's truth, they would have been living it, and Elohim would have had no cause for judgment.

Romans 10:1-3

1 Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to Elohim for Israel is, that they might be saved.

2 For I bear them record that they have a zeal of Elohim, but not according to knowledge.

3 For they being ignorant of Yahweh's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of Elohim.

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In this information age, we accumulate mounds of data - regarding ethics, solutions to social ills, and the like - yet our morals decline. Intelligent, educated individuals have written many Bible commentaries, but they still refuse to keep the Sabbath or holy days.

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They write that Christmas and Easter have pagan origins and are not commanded in the Bible, but they still observe them. They do not love Elohim's truth enough to change. This was Israel's problem, and it could be ours if we are not careful.

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Because Elohim has revealed His truth to us, each individual Christian has a responsibility to conform to it and grow. A greater diversity of distractions compete for our time and attention than at any other time in the history of mankind.

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If we are not extremely careful, and if we lose our sense of urgency, we will gradually lose our understanding of what is true and what is not.

Our ability to distinguish between right and wrong will become blurred. We must make sure that Elohim, His Word, and His way are always first in our lives.

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Christ said that if we keep the truth, the truth in turn will keep us free ([John 8:31-36](#)). If we live it, the revealed truth of Elohim will protect us from sinking back into slavery to sin. But first we must love the truth we have been given.

John 8:26-36

26 I have many things to say and to judge of you: but he that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him.

27 They understood not that he spake to them of the Father.

28 Then said Yahshua unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.

29 And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.

30 As he spake these words, many believed on him.

31 Then said Yahshua to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;

32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

33 They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?

34 Yahshua answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.

35 And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever.

36 If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

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Humanly, we pursue what we love. Elohim wants a father-child or teacher-student relationship with us. If we do not love truth, and if we do not pursue it and Elohim Himself, we will seriously undermine our relationship with Him, and He could interpret our attitude as despising His truth.

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Love of the truth comes from Elohim through His Holy Spirit and must be nourished through our response to it. We must not only *learn it* but also *apply it* in our lives. This will make the difference between being saved and perishing ([II Thessalonians 2:9-12](#)).

9 Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,
10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

11 And for this cause Elohim shall send them
strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:
12 That they all might be judged who believed
not the truth, but had pleasure in
unrighteousness.