

THAT MAN OF SIN

In 2 Thess. 2:3, Paul refers to “that man of sin.” The following verses describe the time of his appearance, his destiny and the destiny of those deceived by him. This is not to be an “in-depth” commentary on this “man” but a sort of “summation” about him.

v. 1 contains Paul’s plea to hear what he has to say, as he addresses the “brethren” in the church in Thessalonica (Acts 17), and the first church to receive an inspired letter from him. His exhortation is based on two “bys”: (1) “By” the coming of the Lord (probably alluding to His coming at the end of the world, used several times in 2 Thess. 2; and (2) “By” our gathering together unto him. True, we gather together to worship on earth, but the context indicates that it is a reminder of “our” being able to be with Him when He comes at the end of the world.

v. 2, “That ye be not soon shaken in mind” based upon “spirit” (of any so-called inspired message”, “word” (perhaps passed by word of mouth, or any claim of his word, or by any “letter” attributed to the inspired Paul. They were to avoid believing **that** “the day of Christ is at hand” or very near.

v. 3, “Let no man deceive you by any means” There are 2 things in which they were not to be deceived: (1) “That day shall not come till AFTER a “falling away,” (2) And “that man of sin be revealed (also called the son of perdition.” Paul is NOT saying that day will not come “at all”, but there were these 2 things that shall occur before that coming. The falling away could refer to a complete abandonment of the truth, or the corruption of the teachings.

Paul refers to “a falling away”, “the” falling away in most translations, with scholars and commentators virtually are ALL in agreement that this is referring to the “great apostasy” of the church in it’s early days. Paul (this same person) warned the brethren in Ephesus, Acts 20:17), that wolves would enter into the eldership, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them (vs. 28-30). Paul also wrote Timothy that some would “depart from the faith” by giving heed to doctrines of demons, and would create such dogmas as “forbidding to marry” and commanding to “abstain from meats” on certain days. This is one of Paul’s many exhortations to avoid being “deceived”.

Associated with the REAL “falling away” would be the “revealing” of “that man of sin”, OR “the son of perdition.’ (Cf John 17:12; Phil. 2:28; 1 Tim. 6:9; Heb. 10:39; 2 Pet. 3:7; Rev. 17:8; 17:11)

Note also that the term “that man of sin” begins with the word “that”, which is from the Greek word *ekeinos*, and this is the only time this word is used in this entire epistle. The word means “that very” (Young’s Concordance, p. 970), meaning **this** (being described in this chapter is the only one being considered here, and NOT some “antiChrist” as described in John’s general epistles. The word “antichrist” simply means “against Christ” in the sense that it involves a denial of Christ as the Christ or anointed One (1 John 2:22), of which there are “many” (v. 18). Paul emphasizes that the one man being described in this chapter (“that man of sin”) is the one who exalts himself as God, and performs many false miracles and deceives many regarding salvation. “That day” of 10 does not describe just any day in

general, but the very day of the Lord's return. So, "that man of sin" is not the antichrists or one of "many" of the antichrists, but one particular man being described here. The word "man" doesn't necessarily describe only one literal person, but could also describe one of many who fits the role under consideration, just as a president of the U. S. can refer to many of the office through the years. The point is that "that man of sin" is not necessarily "the antichrist" described by the apostle John.

v. 4 describes the blasphemous life of this "man of sin", who is doomed to perdition. 1st, he opposed GOD, and all that is called God; 2Nd, he is above all or any beings who a worshiped; that HE "as God" **sitteth in the temple of God, showing that he is God.**" This is the first statement of the blasphemous action of the man of "SIN." In opposing God, it was BY His effort to be ABOVE God, and a declaration that he IS indeed God.

The Pontiff wears a crown on his head, reading "*Vicarius Filli Dei*", meaning "vicar of the Son of God," suggesting that HE fully represents the Son of God in religious matters.

Now, in connection with the "falling away" there arose a "**man**" who takes on a high position of being God. This reference has to do with the "temple" of God, which is the "church" (1 Cor. 3:16; 2 Cor. 6:16). All this signifies a RELIGIOUS APOSTASY, as a falling away or a departure from the truth. Cf 1 John 2:19). **Who might this man BE?** Well, associated **WITH** the "falling away" was the **ARISE** of a religious leader known as the "Pope", of the Roman Catholic Church.

Remember, in Paul's first recording warning of a "falling away", he said it TO the elders of the church, indicating that the wolves would enter in, not sparing the flock. Paul did not mean that those men who were physically there would be the one's misled, but that any men, holding the office of the eldership, would be involved in the departure. Among the elderships of many congregations, there arose the exaltation of one elder in each congregation who was exalted above the others. Then, the various "head" elders began to meet together, and eventually met in councils to legislate doctrine. There were four leading provinces in the Roman Empire, at Antioch, Alexandria, Constantinople and Rome. By the end of the 4th century, Rome was considered the greater of the four. By this time, the exalted bishops were called *papa*, meaning "father". Around 600 A.D., the development of the "papacy" was complete, and since that time the "Popes" have ruled in the Roman Catholic Church. Jesus taught that we should call no man "father" (Matt. 23:9).

The history of the Catholic Church has been one of immorality and corruption, with adultery and homosexuality being dominant among the popes and church leaders. One of Martin Luther's objections to the Pope was that the priests were keeping young boys with them for sexual pleasure. Since that time, there have been literally thousands of priests who have been charged with Pedafidelity, but whose "punishment" was NOT one for the civil powers, but were merely re-assigned to another spot by the higher-ups in the papal system. Were their priests allowed to marry, such immorality would not be so serious. They now have a position of "deacons", which is another work of some priests, but *they* are allowed to marry and have children. The history of the leadership in Catholicism is one of adultery of all sorts. This can be confirmed by an examination of The Catholic Encyclopedia, available in your local libraries. **No wonder that from these there would develop the term "man of sin".**

v. 5. Paul now reminds them that these were things he had revealed to them when he was at Thessalonica.

v. 6. Now Paul reminds them that some power was standing in the way of the “man of sin” being revealed in his full power. History tells us how that the Roman Empire was in **full power** of the empire till the time of the rise of the “popes”, who then began to exercise their power.

v. 7. The “man of sin” is now revealed as the **“mystery of iniquity.”** He was already at work, but was being held back, or had his power manifested. The word “mystery” suggest it had been revealed in the way it was to be after his being held back.

v. 8. Now, the “man of sin” is given yet another “name”--“Wicked”. His destiny is now declared in two ways. First, he will be consumed by the Lord and the spirit of His mouth (His word, Rev. 19:13-15). Second, he will be destroyed, (made useless, without power) with “the brightness of his coming” (the coming of Christ).

v. 9. Next, Paul characterizes the coming of of the “Wicked” as “after the working of Satan, with power and signs and lying wonders. Not that every pope has to work miracles, **but**, after the death of each pope and before he can be canonized as a saint, he **MUST** have performed at least 2 miracles in his reign—according to certain standards. However, the whole system of Catholic belief is surrounded by the claims of miracles, which miracles are held on to by Catholics to be convinced that Catholicism is the way of God.

v. 10. Not only does the “man of sin” function through false signs and wonders, but through the acts of “unrighteousness.” Through the widespread of homosexuality and moral corruption, the Pope is able to main in control of all Catholic congregations. The immorality of the priests is quickly overlooked by the average Catholic, and is not a sign to them that something is wrong with the papal system.

v. 11, 12. All the things described in verses 9 and 10 serves as a “strong delusion’ to cause Catholics to “believe a lie”, and prevent their salvation, as they take great pleasure in unrighteousness. There is hardly anything most folks consider wrong that is not acceptable by Catholics. Their approval of gambling and drinking and similar actions is not only allowed, but with the practice of these evils, and then with free access of confession to the priests gives them the security they enjoy in the “pleasure of unrighteousness.”

It is not known WHY some in the church choose not to believe that the “man of sin” has anything to do with Catholicism, unless it seems too negative or unkind, since it is not clearly **stated** (in so many words) that the papacy is the “man of sin.” Most scholars of the non-Catholic religious world have little difficulty in seeing the connection. The implication and context of the “falling away” makes it easy to see.

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