

2 Thessalonians 2:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.

Analysis

For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way—the mystery of iniquity (to mystērion tēs anomias, τὸ μυστήριον τῆς ἀνομίας, secret of lawlessness) is already operative, though restrained. Mystērion means 'hidden reality now revealed.' Lawlessness works secretly, preparing for open rebellion.

He who now letteth (ho katechōn, ὁ κατέχων, the restrainer) is now masculine (personal agent), possibly the Holy Spirit or an angel. **Will let, until he be taken out of the way** (ek mesou genētai, ἐκ μέσου γένηται, removed from the midst)—when restraint is removed, the man of sin appears. Evil advances incrementally until God permits its full unveiling.

Historical Context

First-century Christians witnessed increasing moral decay, emperor worship, persecution, and false teaching. Paul assures them this isn't chaos but controlled progression toward God's appointed climax. Evil only advances as far as God's sovereign restraint permits.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How do you see the 'mystery of lawlessness' operating covertly in society today?
2. What does it reveal about God's character that He currently restrains evil rather than immediately judging it?
3. How should Christians respond to increasing cultural lawlessness—panic or confident trust?

Interlinear Text

τὸ γὰρ μυστήριον ἤδη ἐνεργεῖται τῆς ἀνομίας· μόνον
G3588 **For** **the mystery** **already** **doth** G3588 **of iniquity** **only**
G1063 G3466 G2235 G1754 G458 G3440

ὁ κατέχων ἄρτι ἕως ἐκ μέσου γένηται
G3588 **letteth** **he who now** **will let until** **out of** **the way** **he be taken**
G2722 G737 G2193 G1537 G3319 G1096

Additional Cross-References

Acts 20:29 (Parallel theme): For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.

1 John 2:18 (Parallel theme): Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.