

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

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	ἥδη	ἐνεργεῖται	τῆς	ἀνομίας·	μόνον
G3588	For	the mystery	G2235	doth	G3588	of iniquity	only
G1063		G3466		G1754		G458	G3440
ὁ	κατέχων	ἀρτι	ἔως	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.