

2Thessalonians 12-09-28b

We pick up our study now in second Thessalonians chapter 2 we saw just before the break this connection between the Departure that comes first and then the revelation of the man of lawlessness notice it is not the man of sin and Repeatedly throughout this section it is on Namas on no Mia What does a law imply? There is some Reference there is some authority that says this is the law You start up a government. I've been reviewing for many weeks now the inception of our nation under the Continental Congress and then the Constitution and the first president George, Washington and the Creation of many of our national institutions during those first eight years the National Bank and the Authority for taxation and what would happen with the Native Americans and what would happen with? between the states and the federal government who would have Cognizance who would have say so who would have control? How is the judiciary going to work? And So when you have a law, there is some authority. There is some basis for it if someone is lawless If they it isn't that there are no laws.

It is that they refuse to be governed by any laws, right? I Disregard the law I am not subject to the law. I'm above the law. I'm beyond the law.

I Spit on the law. I have no regard or interest whatsoever in the law and therefore no respect for its source So this is not just sin sin Largely is the breach of something that we know we ought to do This guy says there is no ought to You can't tell me what I ought to do or ought not to do it most criminals will say well, yeah I broke the law. I I did something you're not supposed to do.

This guy says I Reject the notion that there is something I'm not supposed to do. I am lawless so This man of no law this lawless one the principle Under which he operates is already at work. We saw that down in verse 7 the mystery the hidden thing of Lawlessness is already at work but the man who is going to bring it to a head who is going to make an art form out of it who is going to promulgate a whole new System of dominance in the earth with this Is not yet revealed and Notice in verse 3 week.

I had you kind of connect the dots there There were three things about the the departure what holds back the restraining at present and then he is revealed But notice that this this individual is going to be uncovered. He is going to be Apocalypsized he's going to be Revealed you can find it in verse 3 The departure comes first and the man of no law the lawless one is Revealed revealed make a note make a mark revealed look down in verse 6 and You have remembered that which now holds back with a view toward him what to be revealed This is something that is a known quantity, but it's hidden and it's going to be no longer hidden revealed then look down at verse 8 then will be revealed the lawless one revealed revealed revealed and So we see in this passage this this tension this Contrast between that which is hidden the moose day Rion and that which is revealed this guy operates under the moose day Rion the mystery the hidden thing of lawlessness Most of the time in history we think well, there's laws and there's people that break them You know, there are those with guns and those who dig there's just two things That and

that's it. This guy says, you know what? I've got an innovation.

I reject the whole paradigm. It's not a matter of You thinking that you have something you want done and forcing me to do it. I reject that whole notion I am the man that says we're gonna create a new Paradigm now, it's already at work.

I'll give you an example What is the new paradigm for child management we don't set standards and Expect the child to conform we use a completely different Environment it's about reward or no reward So when you do things that we like we reward you if you do things we don't like we just don't reward There's no punishment. There is no right and wrong. There is simply desirable and not so desirable Desirable things we reward Undesirable things we don't The mystery of lawlessness is already at work grades Make people competitive they differentiate they cause divisions and strife and loss of self-esteem.

I got a bad grade I'm inferior. Oh woe is me. So we won't give grades.

We will simply give applause Everyone's a winner. Everybody passed everybody did well the mystery of lawlessness is already at work the mystery of standardless ness The mystery of no standards. We're not gonna hold you to a standard Moral standard well as long as the only standard is you shouldn't hurt other people You shouldn't hurt a child.

You shouldn't hurt others But as long as you're not causing damage Policeman look at this person. Well if they're not if they're not Endangering life or property leave them alone. Don't pursue don't ask him a question Somebody wants to come down and vote It's harassment to have a standard that they have to demonstrate that they're qualified to vote That's gonna hurt people's feelings that might discourage them from voting.

We can't have that the mystery of lawlessness of Standardlessness is already at work and believe me when I tell you it's a working and a working and a working It is working exponentially. It is working actively it is Increasing at a manifold multiplied rate look around at the demolishing of standards Why is it I've got to prove 16 different ways who I am when I'm younger to get a driver's license now Nobody has to prove anything. Oh, you look like you came from over the border, but hey one driver's license Here you go.

Want to be president? Here you go. Want to do lawlessness? The mystery of lawlessness is already at work What is the mystery? What is the hidden thing of lawlessness? Well, I I went back and I thought you know, you see this word mystery a lot, especially mustarion in the New Testament So what are the mysteries that are mentioned in Scripture? Well You can enumerate them different ways. Jesus uses the word once Paul uses it 21 times I've sort of subsumed them into about ten categories Number one.

This is Jesus use of the word Matthew 13 11 To you it has been given to understand the mystery or mysteries of the kingdom of heaven Now this statement by the Lord. Jesus is given three times

Matthew Mark and Luke in Matthew and Luke it is plural mysteries in Mark. It is singular to you.

It has been given to know the mystery Mysteries of the kingdom of heaven well Kingdom of heaven itself is mystery singular the details the Aspects the characteristics and nature of it are the sub mysteries. So they're both right This is the Lord Jesus using mustarion Matthew Mark and Luke. You can find it starting in Matthew 13 11 number one kingdom of heaven now Who to whom is this revealed? To the disciples Jesus says To those who are outside everything is in parables So the seeing they will see and not perceive hearing they will hear not understand but to you it has been given It is a hidden thing that is revealed about the kingdom number two the mystery of Israel's blindness Romans 11 25 I Show you a mystery Paul says Blindness has happened in part to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles comes in Didn't see that coming is one of the hidden things in God's plan that he would set aside Israel and run this 2,000 years Perhaps more of church history.

That was a hidden thing prophets of old Didn't see it coming the blindness of Israel and and the setting aside of Israel so that the church could come in number number Three now those two kind of go together. Those are sort of Old Testament type Revelations Jesus revealed the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven to the disciples when they were still disciples and messengers to Israel Right. Jesus was preaching the kingdom to Israel.

They didn't get it, but he said I'm gonna explain it to you my disciples so one and two kind of pertain to Israel in their initial phase but they bridge the gap into the church don't they because those disciples become apostles and Paul as The replacement twelfth apostle is going to be preaching the kingdom. It's the very last statement in Acts, right? Spent two years under house arrest preaching and teaching the kingdom of God. So number three and three four five six and seven are all church mysteries three through seven number three The mystery of all things united in Christ Turn with me because several of these are gonna be in this vicinity go to Ephesians chapter 1 we're gonna do these pretty quickly because I want to get back to Thessalonians, but It'll help us to understand exactly what these mysteries are Ephesians chapter 1 verse 9 He's he's talking about in him.

Look up at verse 7 Ephesians 1 7 in him We have redemption through his blood forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace which he made to abound toward us the grace abounded to us how in wisdom and Prudence wisdom and prudence. Let not your hearts be troubled be wise be prudent be stable Having made known to us the mystery of his will this is the mystery of the mustary on of God's will Well, is this just all God's inscrutable his ways are above our ways. No, what does the context tell us? What part of God's will is this mystery referring to the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure? Which he purposed in himself that verse 10 In the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ That's the mystery of God's will that is mentioned here they didn't know in earlier days and in earlier times that all things were going to be brought together were going to intersect we're going to culminate and Find their pinnacle and their apex in Christ all things united in Christ This is mystery number

three Ephesians 9 through 19 through 13 all things united and noticed in Christ underline it all things united in Christ number three number four The flip over a few pages in Ephesians 2 chapter 5 verse 32 Ephesians 5 32 We are members of his body in verse 30 of his flesh and of his bones for this reason man should leave his father and mother Don't be joined to his wife.

The two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery mustary on but what am I speaking about? Christ in the church us in Christ, it's the mystery in the same way that they to become one we become one with Christ We are in Christ if any man be in Christ He's a new creation old things passed away all things become new not revealed in earlier days a mustary on a hidden thing so Number four us the church in Christ underline in Christ We stay we on in Christ number five flip over a few pages to Colossians chapter 1 Galatians Ephesians Philippians Colossians chapter 1 verse 24 Paul says I rejoice in my sufferings for you For the sake of his body, which is the church Interesting got another mystery passage and we're talking about the church of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God Which was given to me for you to fulfill the Word of God verse 26 the mystery which has been hidden From ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to his saints to them God will to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is what? Christ in you the hope of glory mystery number five Christ in you Number three all things united in Christ number four us in Christ number five Christ in us Christ in you the hope of glory It's it's one of God's great purposes. It's one of those mysteries of God's will You can you can put with this flip over to look at chapter 2 verse 2 of this same book I Want you to know what a great conflict I have for you and those in Laodicea for as many as have not seen my face That their hearts may be encouraged being knit together in love and attaining to all riches of full assurance of understanding to the knowledge of the mystery of God You should know this mystery of Christ in you the hope of glory.

You should know the mystery of yourself in Christ You should know the mystery of God filling all in all at the end of Ephesians chapter 1 The mystery of God both of the Father and of Christ in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge Flip over a page to this in the same book to chapter 4 and verse 3 Colossians 4 verse 2 continue earnestly in prayer vigilant with Thanksgiving praying for us God would open to us the door for the word to speak the mystery of Christ for which I am also in chains Paul is the steward of the mysteries One of the reasons Paul uses this word 21 times is if you go to 1st Corinthians chapter 4 verse 1 Right after Romans 1st Corinthians 4 what does Paul say? Let a man so consider us as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries the mystery on plural of God so To flip over to 1st Timothy chapter 3 verse 16 for number 6 mystery number 6 1st Timothy 3 16 Paul says in 14 I write to you Timothy though I hope to come to you shortly but if I'm delayed I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God which is the Church of the Living God the pillar and ground of the truth Don't listen to fables. Don't listen to rumors Don't listen to stuff purporting to come for us go to the pillar and ground of the truth And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness What is the mustary on of godliness? He gives it God manifest in the flesh justified in the spirit seen by angels preached among the Gentiles Believed on in the world and received up

in the glory. What is that mystery? It's God in Christ, right? God manifest in the flesh God justified in the spirit God seen by angels God preached among the Gentiles God believed on in the world Through Jesus Christ received up in the glory.

This is the incarnation the God-man Jesus Christ fullness of deity and bodily form So mystery number six God in Christ 1st Timothy 3 16 underline in Christ number seven mystery number seven First Corinthians got to go to the left First Corinthians 15 51 This I say brethren flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God nor does corruption inherit incorruption One of the mysteries of the kingdom is that flesh and blood cannot inherit it Behold, I tell you a mystery on we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. It is the rapture Mystery number seven is the rapture This is the church gathered in Christ This is entering the kingdom in Christ inheriting the kingdom in Christ It's the rapture 1st Corinthians 15 51 now Three four five six and seven are all kind of of a piece Those are the mysteries that are really centered in Christ the first two kind of kingdom Israel's blindness there. They missed the kingdom.

They're set aside The kingdom for them is delayed Jesus was trying to those are the the mysteries of Israel's struggling with the kingdom Now we've got three more. I've given you seven mysteries. We've got three more to go number eight is our passage 2nd Thessalonians 2 7 the mystery of lawlessness and it is of a piece with mystery number nine and mystery number ten Mystery number nine is Revelation chapter 1 verse 20 Jesus says to John write the things which you have seen and the things which are and the things which will take place after this The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in my right hand and the seven golden lampstands The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches and the seven lampstands, which you saw are the seven churches this is the mystery of The stars and the lampstands now, what do stars and lampstands both do? What is their common characteristic? They give off light right they shine they illuminate Right, by the way, you know, everybody says what a great thing to be a pastor How bright is a star compared to a lampstand if you're gonna go try to make it to the outhouse in the middle of rural? Oklahoma do you want to go by the light of a star or do you want to go by the light of a lamp? Church shines a lot brighter than its messenger Just so you know, but stars and lampstands are illuminators.

Well, why do you need illumination? You can say it because it's dark right? It's dark. You're surrounded by darkness. It's black we shine like lights in the midst of a darkness a crooked and perverse generation Among whom you shine as lights in the world, right? So what is the situation for the seven stars and the seven lampstands? They are situated in darkness When do you see the stars? When it is black as night the sky is black and the little pinpoint stars are shining When do you see lampstands people don't light them in the middle of the day? They light them at night They light them in the darkness.

They are needed in the midst of great darkness so mystery number nine is Light in the dark the light in the darkness is the church light in this age is the church There's the mystery of

lawlessness. There's the mystery of darkness. There's a mystery of this hidden Working behind the scenes men love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil There are those lights that shine in the midst of that darkness these two kind of go together the anamas the anomia and The stars and the candlesticks that shine in that darkness and then you have the great culminating mystery of history Which is mystery Babylon the great harlot of Revelation 17, that's mystery number 10 and this really Draws everything together in one because you have the mystery of lawlessness that is uncovered with the man of lawlessness But you've got mystery Babylon, which is this great harlot riding the beast and it and labeled mystery Babylon hidden thing of Babylon Those are the ten mysteries now, how does that help us in our study? Well How many of these are still? hidden things nine of the ten Have been fully explained Have they not you could speculate on exactly what mystery Babylon is that one is still in the future all the rest of these Kingdom of heaven has been revealed Israel's blindness has been revealed all things united in Christ revealed us in Christ Revealed Christ in you the hope of glory revealed God in Christ revealed in the person of Jesus Christ The rapture is revealed.

We know it's coming. There's nothing mysterious about the rapture to us The the mystery of lawlessness that's already at work. We see it.

We know what it is. We know how it works We know what its components are the seven stars the seven candlesticks Jesus tells John they are the churches and the messengers of the churches that mystery is solved that hidden thing is revealed and We know that there will be the great harlot, but that's somewhat symbolic, but these things are revealed. So the wonderful Revelation is we should not be in the dark We should not find things mysterious Because we have the wisdom from God Paul says do you not remember? I told you these things You shouldn't be in the dark.

You shouldn't be mystified. You shouldn't be destabilized Your heart should not be troubled. Your mind should not be soon shaken because it's not a mystery to you You know why you are persecuted, you know, why you struggle, you know, why you suffer, you know That you're wrestling not against flesh and blood but in the realm of ideas Principalities powers rulers of what? the darkness of this age We shine as lights in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation We know what's going on and that knowledge Gives us strength.

It gives us freedom. It gives us power Jesus told the disciples you will know the truth and the truth will liberate you It frees you from the bondage of darkness we've been transferred out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of the son of his love and So these things are not of the night We are not of the night or of the darkness that the day should overtake us like a thief Thieves sneak in when you don't know they're coming. It's a hidden thing.

It's a mystery when the thief comes Stuff goes missing. Well, when did that happen who had access do we have a was there a security camera did it? Did anybody see anybody come or go when did when can we narrow it down now? Can we get a fingerprint? Yeah, how can we solve

this mystery? We don't know who it was We don't know when they came all we know is we have suffered a loss That day will not overtake us like a thief because we are not of the night or of the darkness We are not lost in mysteries God has given us knowledge now What is the application of this we all have little but by the way, here's here's a question I was thinking of this earlier today Why does God do the whole mystery thing? Why do we have these ten mysteries and and you could you could organize others for example, you can go to first Corinthians 14 When it talks about people speaking in tongues Or though I you know in 13 remember when Paul says if I know all mysteries and have not love But in 14, he says the one speaking in tongues is communicating mysteries Well, why does God even do mysteries Why didn't you just tell everything flat-out? Isn't this the big argument from the atheist? Why does God hide himself? Why does God make it so hard to find out? Why doesn't he just rip the fabric and stick his head through and show us all that he's there Why do we have to deduce it? Why why is the Bible so hard to understand? Why why why? Well, are we not built? to love solving a mystery Do you tell the punchline of the joke at the beginning? Oh You're gonna love this story. The guy is gonna quack like a duck, you know, and then you tell the story Well, no you you've spoiled it Do you show the do you read the last page of the book and then go back and read the mystery story? No, do you do they show you the ending the the culmination and the day new mall of the of the story? And then you go trudging through how you got there Typically not we like Being held in suspense.

What does it do? What does suspense do for us? By the way? This is a musical principle. There is Tension and then there is release you're building up to something and you're waiting for it. Wait for it Is the theme going to return is there going to be a climactic orchestral? Culmination over here somewhere There is tension there's a build-up you're you know, wait for it wait for it wait for it And then we see the result you you watch a sports contest.

Why because you don't know who's going to win So it don't tell me I didn't see it. It's on tape. Don't tell me who won.

Don't tell me who won I want to I want to enjoy the game tell somebody who won they don't know what's the game, right? We love what why why does not knowing? Attract us It Stimulates our interest People watch a mystery and try to figure it out. You watch Agatha Christie. You watch Sherlock Holmes You watch something you watch for the clues you watch monk or anything that why are these detective stories? So popular because people are sitting there trying to pick up clues trying to solve it.

I want to figure it out I want I want to I want to get that jump. Well, God knows this he built us and We are built to love a mystery. It draws us it interests us It stimulates our thinking we puzzle over it.

It stimulates our Contemplation our meditation our pondering Got to figure it out. I don't know if God gave us a map and said this is the test You're gonna have tomorrow tomorrow. Somebody's

gonna come up and say a really unkind thing.

So here's a verse you should read right now Tomorrow when that happens, you'll be all set He doesn't tell us what's gonna happen tomorrow Does he sufficient under the day is the evil thereof and I don't know what the evil is gonna be even this afternoon we We are we move into the unknown you think about the organization of history it time doesn't have to be sequential God knows the end from the beginning How come we don't we could be like him made in his image and we would know all things before they happen But we don't God hides the future from us. We can only see in one direction. We see the past If we can remember it We can we can look backward in time.

Why can't we look both directions? This is a great question in physics. Why aren't things reversible? Why don't teacups jump back up onto the table and reassemble themselves time go only goes in one direction and we cannot see ahead We can make informed predictions. Why? mystery mustary on it is it Stimulates us to love and good works.

It's without faith. It is impossible to please him and what is faith? evidence of things not seen Confidence in a future that has not yet happened. It's it's the very fabric of our existence and What does it ultimately do when all is said and done when all of my illustrations have? Laid down and died.

What does mustary on do it draws us to God in Christ in Christ in? Christ in Christ God in Christ us in Christ Christ in us that Hidden thing that the prophets longed to see that angels bend down to look into Reveals Jesus Christ reveals What if you've got saved and you instantly knew everything there was to know about Christ? No, we we progress we build we we move against resistance to learn more than we knew yesterday Mustary on well, there are Positive things for us in these mysteries and the mystery of lawlessness now to whom is this on Omia a mystery a Mystery is not a mystery to the person that writes it or knows it, right? Remember when that JK Rowling woman was writing all of her Harry Potter books and They said oh, what when's the next one coming out? What's it about? What can't tell you wait till it comes out on the stands Why does she hold back and not tell him what was in it? Well in this one, you know Harry dies and you know, the curly-haired girl falls in love with his friend or whatever But why why did she why did she not give away the plot? Much more interesting for people to wait build the suspense sell more books Create create a bigger buzz. Nobody knows Why did everybody stand in line to get an iPhone 5? Never seen one before it's a mystery You don't see anybody standing in line down there now. Do you it's the same phone? Same phone.

Why aren't they standing in line down there now? It's not a mystery anymore. Everybody knows it's got problems Everybody knows I've got to send it back because it's scuffed right out of the box Not a mystery anymore Think about it. Think about it lawlessness is not a mystery to us because we are in Christ and God has given the stewardship of those mysteries to the Apostles They are revealed in his word and we are as we learn and grow we solve these mysteries We come to

know the answers to these questions The hidden things are revealed and the more we progress the more we learn the more we can see the more Detail I was thinking the other day You remember when we first had the internet and those JPEGs would come up on your screen But they were blurry and then they would sharpen Because the bandwidth is so slow suit they said well, we don't want to wait and show you nothing So we'll show you a blurry thing and then it'll get sharp and and for years, you know, the old displays blurry sharp blurry Sharp.

Well, this is us. We we see things through a glass darkly, but then face to face now it's distant but it draws ever more near and as we get closer more and more detail and This this is the life that God has given us. It's a gift the mysteries and Understanding these hidden things is a gift.

It draws us to Jesus Christ in him are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge He is our righteousness and peace and sanctification Jesus Christ is The intersection point for all of these mysteries He himself Solved one of the greatest mysteries. How is God going to redeem the human race? It was foreshadowed there were hints there were clues, but it wasn't until he came that that mystery was solved so this mystery of Lawlessness is already at work It's not a problem for us because we know Paul says remember when I was with you I've told you these things now you have known what it is that restrains until it is taken out of the way now You know, isn't it cool? Isn't it great? Doesn't it stabilize and calm you? Aren't you able to put this persecution and challenge and difficulty in perspective because you know these things that are not commonly known You have been it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom. That's what Jesus told his disciples It has been given to us to know and we've got power in that knowledge we've got confidence and comfort and stability in that knowledge and It ought to make a difference.

Do you act like somebody that's bumbling around in the dark? Do you bumble around like somebody that doesn't know the answers to these ten mysteries? Why? We have no excuse doing we know better. It has been given to us to know So this is our challenge to remember who we are to remember what has been given to us to remember the advantage that Jesus Christ died on the cross to give us we are in him He is in us God is in him God is in us We are in the world. We are in the darkness the darkness has got its Magic working got its power working But greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world and there is a mystery that we know the answer to that the world has not figured out and They will hate us for it.

They will persecute us for it. They will marginalize and sideline and shout us down for it But we know What scripture reveals so that is the what you might call the doctrine of the mystery the doctrine of mysteries and when we come back next time we're going to conclude our study in this portion of 2nd Thessalonians chapter 2 and Resume at Verse 11 and talk about the strong delusion. What is that strong delusion? That mystery is also already being revealed we can see and I mentioned in the first session tonight some of the elements and components of that strong delusion and It's not just delusion.

It's strong delusion It's not weak medicine. It's not weak influence. It's strong You look at the influences that are circulating in the world today.

How strong is that influence compared to days past? How much influence did the media have a hundred years ago compared to now? strong Delusion that's what we'll pick up next time. But let's close here in a word of prayer father Thank you for the truth of your word Thank you for the gifts that you have given us in the Lord Jesus in him and through him. We are possessors of so much Information so much knowledge so much power So great a peace such an opportunity for righteousness by faith For inheritance in the kingdoms that are yet to come to See our place Strategically and tactically in your plan and in history.

We pray the God the Holy Spirit will keep us ever mindful of these truths that we will appreciate and cherish these gifts that you have given us the insights that you have imparted to us and the Holy Spirit that you have given us to lead us and to guide us and to Stabilize us in times of trial. We pray that as a result our lives will reflect your glory and We'll bring glory to the Lord Jesus Christ. We pray it in his name.

Amen