

### **THE MAN OF SIN – Part 1**

June 21, 2012

The identity of the “man of sin” has been discussed and debated for hundreds of years and it will likely continue as long as the world stands. There is no quick and easy answer concerning this topic. However, we can search the Scriptures and do our best in determining what Paul meant when he spoke of the man of sin, also known as the son of perdition (2 Thess. 2:3).

In Paul’s first letter to these brethren, he talked about the second coming of Jesus Christ and the great blessings that would be a part of that presentation. Because of some evident misunderstandings regarding the second coming of Christ, he wrote to them a second time in order to correct their misconceptions concerning this great event.

He said, “Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and *by* our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand” (2 Thess. 2:1-2). Evidently, some had been teaching that the Lord had already come the second time or that it would happen at any moment, and that His second coming had been an invisible coming much like that taught by many of the Adventist groups today. This teaching is known as “Realized Eschatology.” Those that were spreading that doctrine had been writing letters in the names of the apostles in order to gain the confidence of the people in this matter.

Paul made the argument that this teaching was false because “the falling away” must develop prior to the Second Coming of Christ. Not just the falling away, but that the man of sin must also be revealed. Since such had yet to happen, it was impossible that the Lord had already come back the second time.

Paul then began to describe the traits of the “man of sin.” He would oppose God, exalt himself above God, and claim to be God. It was likely that he would appear because of the falling away and since he was yet to be revealed, his movement had not evolved to the point that it could be recognized by the early Christians. He was called the “son of perdition” because he sought to destroy all that the Lord had taught and because his end would ultimately result in destruction by the hand of the Lord.

He was also called “the lawless one” (vs. 8). One with that type of mindset holds no respect whatsoever for the authority or the law of God. One of his techniques was to pretend to be a follower of God, which was accomplished by his being found in the temple, but in reality he had an evil, diabolical character and his work would be “according to Satan” (vs. 9). He would deceive those that did not love the truth (vs. 10) by virtue of “lying wonders” (vs. 9) or as some have said “pretended miracles.” This is something that is still happening in our day and time.

Though the man of sin had his beginning in ancient times, he would endure in some fashion until the end of the world and the second coming of Christ. Consider the man of sin and his identifying traits as we continue our study next week.