

THE MAN OF SIN PART 2

June 25, 2012

After having considered some of the characteristics of the “man of sin,” we will notice some theories regarding his identity. We may not be able to positively identify the “man of sin,” but we can know who he is not.

Some say that he is Satan himself, but that cannot be the case because Satan was not a direct part of “the falling away,” though he was the foundational influence of it (vs. 3). Also, the “lawless one” was to come “after the working of Satan” (vs. 9). Because of this, we can positively know that the “man of sin” is separate from Satan the individual.

Some identify him as no specific power or person, but rather as a principle or idea of evil. According to this theory, a specific evil principle or idea would present itself in different historical periods and give opposition to the truth. It might be that it would present itself as the religion of Islam, Fascism, Communism, or any other thing that might be considered evil and contrary to Christianity. However, this does not fit the specific description given in the text. We are told of a particular movement, “the falling away” (vs. 3), which does not refer to Communism or the religion of Islam. This is a too personal and specific description given by the apostle for it to be a mere personification. The description itself is “**the** man of sin,” with the definite article which points to a definite or particular influence.

A very popular idea is that the man of sin is a Roman ruler, perhaps, Nero, Caesar, Domitian, or another. This, again, does not fit the description given. No Caesar “fell away” from the faith (vs. 3). In addition, the Roman rulers have long since been relegated to history, have no bearing on Christianity, and are not in existence today.

Those that support the false notion of pre-millennialism contend that the man of sin is the future Anti-Christ. This individual embodies anti-God power and is still to arise before the future day of the Lord. Hal Lindsey calls this hostile person “the Future Fuehrer,” and spends much time in his book trying to prove that the events of our time are setting the stage for his entrance. Paul tells us, however, that the characteristic of the “man of sin” was “already at work” (vs. 7) in the time of Paul; not that he would begin his work thousands of years in the future.

Each of these theories about the identity of the man of sin can be proven false. In the next article, we will begin the process of trying to identify who this godless person was and the significance it holds for us today.