

13. Footnote 2 documents a wide swath of Western Europe, the Levant, and North Africa. What ten nations are involved and from which Gentile nation the Beast Dictator emerges are the subjects of unsourced and futile speculation.
14. Throughout the Church Age, the activities of Lucifer and the fallen angels are restrained due to the presence of the Royal Family of God and the indwelling and filling ministries of the Holy Spirit.
15. This restraining ministry is advanced in our next verse:

2 Thessalonians 2:7 - For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way. (NASB)

1. The first word in the verse is the noun **μυστήριον** (*mustérion*): “mystery.” It is a term that goes back to the ancient mystery cults which were in prominence between the seventh century B.C. and the fourth century A.D.
2. Here is some background on the origin of and meaning of **μυστήριον**:
 1. Something on which silence must be kept. These secretive mysteries are contained in cultic rights.
 2. Integral to the concept of the mysteries is the fact that those who wish to take part in their celebration must undergo initiation.
 3. The uninitiated are denied both access to the sacred actions and knowledge of them.

In the Eleüsínian cult, whose devotees experience the Eleusinian night of consecration only after long preparation, the first cultic celebrations are also called mysteries.

Receiving the mysteries is linked to certain conditions which are difficult to attain. By dedication the candidate is separated from the host of the uninitiated and enters into the fellowship of initiates who know each other by confessional formulae or symbolical signs. (p. 804)

In the Gospels the term μυστήριον occurs only in the obscure saying of Jesus about the purpose of parables which the Synoptics interpose between the parable of the Sower and its interpretation. Mark 4:11: “To you has been given the mystery of the kingdom of God, but those who are outside get everything in parables....” The saying differentiates between the disciples and those who are without. This differentiation is the basis of the rule of Jesus in His preaching to speak to the uncomprehending people only in parables, not in order to bring them by an appropriate method to understanding, but to withhold knowledge and complete their hardening, Mark 4:12, “... so that while seeing, they may see and not perceive, and while hearing, they may hear and not understand, otherwise they might return and be forgiven.” There is in the saying a specific understanding of Jesus’ general method of teaching in parables. This method serves to conceal the mystery of the divine rule—a mystery disclosed to the disciples but not to others.¹ (p. 817)

3. With these two examples in mind, we now turn to our passage and its significance with regard to the “mystery of lawlessness.”

In 2 Thessalonians 2:3ff. the successive phases of the last events preceding the *parousia* [Second Advent] are revealed: apostasy, and the manifestation of Antichrist. The time of apostasy is mysteriously described in 2:7: “for the mystery of iniquity is already at work.” This is the eschatological mark of the present, that in it, in hidden yet no less effective fashion, the Antichrist is manifested. As yet he is restrained only by the κατέχω [*katéchō*: restrainer] but this will soon be set aside, and then he will be fully revealed until the Lord destroys him at His appearing. In so far as the work of the Antichrist is already seen to be a μυστήριον, he is disclosed as a power which hastens not only towards its full manifestation but also towards its destruction by the κύριος [*kúrios*: Lord].² (p. 823)

4. This mystery is revealed to the Church and it identifies the Beast-Dictator as being **ἀνομία** (*anomia*): “lawlessness.”

¹ G. Bornkamm, “μυστήριον,” in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1967), 4:804, 817.

² *Ibid.*, 4:823.

5. This indicates an absence of law and rejection of establishment principles. In addition, this man is in total rejection of divine policy regarding the gospel and the guidance provided by the Word of God.
6. Mystery indicates something that is hidden from the knowledge of the uninitiated. Lawlessness is the sense of rejection of truth in all three categories: establishment, the gospel, and Bible doctrine.
7. This mystery is only made lucid to believers who have advanced in the study of the Word of God and in our context, are fluent in their understanding of eschatology.
8. This lawlessness is evident in Client Nation America. People develop lies in order to gain power while avoiding prosecution. They lie to prosecutors, they lie to the media, they lie to God.
9. Those who lie vote for those who are liars. In order to promote their hidden agenda, those in office lie while in doing so put those who voted them into office in jeopardy.
10. Politicians who seek the highest office in the land lie unabashedly in order to gain power over the liars that would place them in power.
11. The godlessness that is prevalent in our nation today is evident to those who know Bible doctrine, but the unwashed masses are willing and anxious to hear the lies of the liars and cheer them on for the lies they tell.
12. Yet, during the Church Age and even now, Luciferian strategies are restrained by the Holy Spirit. Following the Rapture, the Holy Spirit will be removed from the earth as a restraining power allowing the dispensation of the Tribulation to sink into unrestrained chaos.