

[Some prior verses for some context to the Bible Lesson: 2 Thessalonians 2:9-12]

9 The coming of the lawless one is apparent in the working of Satan, who uses all power, signs, lying wonders,

Throughout history various lawless ones have risen to power in business, politics, religion, and other areas of life. Lawless leaders not only disobey God's laws, natural laws, and the laws of governments, they also refuse to enforce laws they disagree with or enforce laws in biased and selective ways to achieve their goals. Satan helps those who are lawless do these unjust things, perhaps through miracles (if needed), but always through lying (by commission or omission) and the exercise of impressive authority, influence over others, or power.

10 and every kind of wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved.

All deception is wicked or evil – saying one thing or promising another thing to achieve a goal knowing full well that you will not do (or cannot do) what you have said or promised. Those who are easily deceived by lawless ones have their character traits that make deception easy: they refuse to love the truth and so be saved, they are perishing because they refuse to love, follow, or seek the truth and so be saved. Only the truth, loving the truth, will save someone from deception. If someone refuses to love the truth, they will be deceived by lies and signs and easily misled into destruction or destructive choices.

11 For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion, leading them to believe what is false,

People can choose to love the truth, seek the truth, live according to the truth, and when they do, they will find God in Jesus Christ, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. If they do not live the truth or if they do not want to live according to the truth, then God will punish them by giving them what they have opened their lives to receive – powerful delusions – perhaps into thinking that the lawless ones will save them or give them their desires. God will also lead them to believe what they want to believe – the opposite of what is true – because they do not love or want to know the truth so as to live by the truth. God's punishment is just.

12 so that all who have not believed the truth but took pleasure in unrighteousness will be condemned.

Those who do not believe the truth have first chosen not to believe the truth. As Paul wrote to the Romans, chapter 1, evidence that God exists is all around us, but some choose to believe the lie that God does not exist. They want to believe this lie, because they want to live immorally. They take pleasure in immoral living, behavior the Bible rightly condemns because it is so destructive – unrighteousness – and they will naturally be condemned for this way of living.

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