

"The Timing of the Rapture Revealed"

WARNING: You are entering the "TRUTH ZONE". You may not like what you read. At times it may make you feel uncomfortable. That is not my goal. My goal is to speak truth that will provide spiritual guidance for you and your family in a time of great spiritual darkness. You can be sure that what you read here will be TRUTH!

2 Thessalonians 2:3 is one of the most highly debated verses in the Bible and has always been a problem for me because it doesn't seem to fit the context of everything else Paul wrote in his two letters to the persecuted church at Thessalonica.

In his first letter, he clearly encouraged the church to expect the return of Jesus and spoke of this great event in every chapter with the most detailed reference presented in chapter 4:15-18.

(King James Version used throughout this article unless otherwise noted.)

15: "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

16: For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first.

17: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

18: Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

In Paul's second letter, he tells them not to be upset or troubled by a teaching claiming the day of God's wrath had arrived.

2 Thessalonians 2:1-2

1: "Now we beseech you, brethren, **by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him.**

2: 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."

So far, so good; everything fits contextually and everything makes perfect sense. But, then comes verse 3 and the debate begins.

2 Thessalonians 2:3

3: "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition."

This does not appear to fit with the rest of what he has written and certainly would not have brought them comfort. It also leaves us wondering what we should be looking for, the coming of Jesus or a great apostasy followed by the rise of the antichrist? Consistently Paul has been talking about the return of the Lord, and suddenly without explanation, he appears to go in a different direction. Why? These are questions that demand an answer and the answer should not be just someone's opinion, but rather the result of careful study of the Greek texts.

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I found what I was looking for when I studied the English word "**come**" which is found in the original Greek text. Let's look at verse 3 as it reads in Greek.

3 "Let no man deceive you by any means: for except **come** away first, and man sin revealed, son perdition..." (Awkward in English but accurate.)

For sure, something is coming **before** the man of sin is revealed, but what is it? We have concluded it is either a great falling away from the truth, or it is the rapture (departure) of the church. For many years I have used Spiros Zodhiates' work to study Greek verb tenses. Greek verb tenses reveal if an action is ongoing, or a one-time event. Using Zodhiates I found that "**come**" in 2 Thessalonians 2:3 is in the aorist subjunctive tense and not the present subjunctive tense.

UNDERSTANDING WHAT THIS MEANS WILL GIVE US THE ANSWERS WE SEEK.

If "**come**" were in the present subjunctive tense it would indicate Paul was talking about an ongoing action that continues or is present over a considerable period of time. If such were the case, then like it or not, we would have to agree that Paul was talking about a great apostasy because something like that would be happening for many months and more likely, even years.

But in Greek, "**come**" is not in the present subjunctive tense, but rather the aorist subjunctive tense, and according to Zodhiates, this reveals that it is referring to a simple one-time action.

A work published in 1860 by Dr. William Goodwin, (Professor of Greek Literature at Harvard University) entitled 'A Syntax of Greek Verbs' agrees with this. In it he says, "**The Aorist Subjunctive denotes a single or momentary action...**"

There is no way this can be describing an apostasy... instead, it is a perfect description of the rapture!

1 Corinthians 15: 51-52 "Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, **In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye**, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

I started this study mostly because I wanted to settle this issue once and for all in my own mind. I firmly believe I have uncovered absolute proof that Paul was telling the church to be looking for the rapture, not the revealing of the antichrist and an outpouring of God's wrath. I can now confidently tell you not to be troubled by anything you hear taught or see happening today. Jesus is coming back and we should be looking for Him, not the antichrist. We should be looking for the great hope of the church, not the great tribulation. We should be listening for the sound of a trumpet and the voice of an angel calling us to the great marriage supper of the Lamb. We should be expecting our Saviour and Lord to come soon for His beloved!

END OF DEBATE!