

CLASS NOTES -- Second Thessalonians

See a detailed study of the Thessalonian epistles, with regard to the pre-tribulation Rapture, in my book "Help in Hard Places." This book is out of print, at present, but the text of the book is available on computer diskette upon request. ¹

1:3. Faith and love are commended here, but not hope. They had two problems with their hope, both dealt with in this epistle. Some were postponing the Rapture by teaching it was a post-tribulation event. Others were date setters who neglected their responsibilities, evidently thinking Christ would come immediately (3:11, 12 & context).

1:7. Those coming with Christ when He returns in glory are not believers, but angels. Therefore 1 Thess. 3:13 must refer to those accompanying Him at the Rapture (1 Thess. 4:14). White linen clothing is referred to as the "righteousness of saints" (Rev. 19:8), and those accompanying Christ when He comes to reign are said to be "clothed in fine linen, white and clean" (Rev. 19:14). However, it is said that angels also are clothed in "pure and white linen" (Rev. 15:6) -- and the "armies which were in heaven" (Rev. 19:14) are said to be Michael's angels (Rev. 12:7).

Those accompanying Christ in His coming in glory could hardly be kingdom saints either, for their resurrection is spoken of in Rev. 11:18 and there is no mention of them being taken to heaven, or even in the air, to return with Him. The only resurrected kingdom saints who could possibly come from heaven with Him would be those few raised to life in connection with Christ's resurrection (Matt. 27:52, 53). When the coming in glory takes place (2 Thess. 1:7 b, 8) we will be resting with Paul (2 Thess. 1:7).

1:7 - 9. My note at John 18:36 reads: *As Charles Baker points out (A Dispensational Theology -- page 316), this does not mean that His kingdom will not be on earth, for He said of the disciples, "They are not of the world" (John 17:16) -- but surely they were on earth!*

Later, when it is the political kingdom which is to be established, His people will fight to establish it (the Jews -- Zech. 12:3 - 9; His angels -- 2 Thess. 1:7 - 9).

See Isa. 66:15 - 17.

1:7. The Rapture is referred to, in a way that shows a relationship, four times in Second Thessalonians. The Rapture:

1:9. With reference to the Tribulation -- is to be an absence, we will not be here!

2:1. With reference to Christ Himself -- is our arrival in His presence in the air.

2:3. With regard to the world -- is a departure (the meaning of the word translated "falling away")

2:7. In relation to Satan's plan to put his man in charge of a world empire (the "mystery of iniquity")-- is a removal. We will be taken out of Satan's way.

1:8. This disproves the hyper-Calvinist teaching that Christ died only for the "elect." **IF** Christ did not die for these people, there could have been no gospel (good news) for them to

¹ Send request to: William P Heath, 423 Burke Ave., Leavenworth, WA, 98826, USA or contact the home office of "Things to Come Mission," 2200 English Ave., Indianapolis, IN 46201-4000, USA

reject. **IF** Christ did not die for them, how can they be blamed for not believing that He **did**? If they had believed that Christ died for them they would (in that case) have believed a **lie!** Men must believe that Christ died for **all, including themselves** (2 Cor. 5:14,15), for they will be judged if they do not!

1:10. See John 17:10; Gal. 1:24.

2:1. The "coming" here is the Rapture -- not the coming in glory. See the note above at 1:7.

2:2. The verse is saying, "Do not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed ... to the effect that the **Day of the Lord has come**" (NASB). If Paul had not taught them that the Rapture was to be before the Tribulation, then (being told that the Day of the Lord was already present), they should have been lifting up their heads in anticipation, as the apostles had been instructed in Luke 21:28. But, since the pre-tribulation Rapture **had been** taught to them in First Thessalonians, they were understandably deeply disturbed -- thinking either that Paul had been wrong or that the Rapture had taken place and they had missed it!

2:3. The word translated "falling away" can (and should in this context) be translated "departure" (that is, the departure of the Body of Christ, that one new man of Eph. 2:15, from the earth). See the author's book "Help in Hard Places" pages 226 & following in the first edition or pages 208 & following in the second).

2:3 - 9. The order of events outlined here is as follows:

The one who hinders the mystery of iniquity (the "one new man" of Eph. 2:15 -- the mystical Body of Christ) must be taken out of the way. This is the Rapture. The very presence of the Body of Christ in the world today prevents the man of sin from being revealed, for his coming on the scene has to do with the prophetic program, and that program cannot be reinstated until this age of grace, which interrupted it, is completed.

The "mystery of iniquity" (this does not have to do with the **seriousness** or **extent** of **sin** in the world, but with the **revelation** of the "**Man** of sin") is finally consummated. Finally, Satan is able to put his man over the nations of the world, something he has been unsuccessfully trying to do ever since he tempted Christ to be that man of sin (**what blasphemy!**) at the temptation in the wilderness (Matt. 4:8 -10).

The man of sin will hold sway for seven years with all power and signs and lying wonders, deceiving those who received not the love of the truth, giving them the lie instead.

Christ will destroy this man of sin with the brightness of His coming.

2:8 - 10. "Many in Europe especially seem to be already looking for ... a super leader. The mood is well expressed by Henri Spaak, one of the early planners of the Common Market and Secretary General of NATO. 'We do not want another committee,' he has said, 'we have too many already. What we want is a man of sufficient stature to hold the allegiance of all people and to lift us out of the economic morass into which we are sinking. Send us such a man and, **be he god or devil, we will receive him.**'" -- From Moody Monthly magazine, March 1974, page 44. An article entitled "Prophecy and the Common Market" by Edgar C. James.

2:9. See Ex. 7:11, 12, 22; 8:7, 18, 19; Rev. 13:13, 14; 19:20.

2:10. It is not because they are not "elect" that they perish, but because they received not a love of the truth. See John 12:40.

2:11. Ezek. 14:9 (NASB) reads: "But if a prophet is prevailed upon [margin -- 'enticed'] to speak a word, it is I, the Lord, who have prevailed upon [enticed] that prophet, and I will stretch out my hand against him." Compare 1 Kings 22:19 - 23.

2:11, 12. They will be deluded and damned, **not** because they were **predestined to go to hell**, but because they **received not the truth**.

3:2. This is usually translated "not all men have faith" -- which is much better than "all men have not faith" in the KJV.

3:3. See 1 Thess. 5:24.

3:5. Compare 1 Thess. 1:10. They were not waiting for the Tribulation or the **Anti-Christ**, but for **Jesus Christ!**

3:7 - 9. See 1 Thess. 2:1 - 11.

3:9. Paul had the authority, but chose not to use it unless necessary. See 1 Cor. 9:6.

3:14. They were not to allow these lazy moochers to impose on them. It does not say to "kick them out of the church."

--- William P Heath

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