

The Last Days

WHAT DOES THAT LOOK LIKE?

*The Promised Departure
To Heaven*



BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION 101

The context in which a word or phrase is used must be carefully considered to be able to correctly assess the meaning of that word or phrase in that particular verse or in that particular portion of Scripture. This is especially important when the words or phrases being interpreted can have different meanings.

ἐν (en)

= in, inside, with, within

Matthew 1:18

Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be ἐν child from the Holy Spirit.

ἐν (en)

= in, inside, with, within

βαπτίζων (baptizo)

= immerse, submerge, dipped like fabric into a dye

Acts 1:5

John baptised ἐν water but you will be baptised
ἐν the Holy Spirit not many days from now.



The nearest context must be given the most weight in interpretation.

- the near context of the sentence
- the paragraph
- the book
- even the author

The interpreter should look at all the context in which a word or phrase is used, the near context, then the wider context to be able to correctly assess the meaning of that word or phrase in a particular portion of Scripture.

2 Thessalonians 2:1

1. Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ
and our being gathered together to Him,

2 Thessalonians 2:1-3

1. Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to Him, we ask you, brothers,
2. not to be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed, either by a spirit or a spoken word, or a letter seeming to be from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come.
3. Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless **THE rebellion** comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction,

2 Thessalonians 2:4-6

4. who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God.
5. **Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things?**
6. And you know what is restraining him now so that he may be revealed in his time.

2 Thessalonians 2:7-8

7. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work. Only he who now restrains it will do so until he is out of the way.
8. And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of His mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of His coming.

1 Thessalonians 1:10

.... and to wait for his Son from heaven,
whom He raised from the dead, Jesus
who **delivers us from the wrath to come.**

1 Thessalonians 4:16-18

16. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.
17. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.
18. Therefore encourage one another with these words.

Three reasons ...

Paul explains that the Day of the Lord (the Tribulation) has not started yet because ...

- THE rebellion (verse 3a) has not occurred
Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless THE rebellion comes first
- the lawless one or Antichrist has not appeared (verses 3a-4)
- the restrainer has not been removed (verses 5-7)

apostasia

(from aphístēmi = leave, depart)

a compound Greek word

- apo meaningfrom
- stasia meaningleave, stand away

The core meaning of **APOSTASIA** refers to

- a leaving from, or more clearly
- a departure

Acts 21:21

and they have been told about you that you teach all the Jews who are among the Gentiles to **forsake (apostasia)** Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children or walk according to our customs.

Translation History

The first seven English translations all rendered the noun APOSTASIA as either THE DEPARTURE or THE DEPARTING.

- Wycliffe Bible (1384)
- Tyndale Bible (1526)
- Coverdale Bible (1535)
- Cranmer Bible (1539)
- Breeches Bible (1576)
- Beza Bible (1583)
- Geneva Bible (1608)

2 Thessalonians 2:3

(Tynedale Bible 1526)

Let no ma deceave you by eny meanes for the lorde
commeth not excepte ther come a **departynge fyrst** and
that that synfnll man be opened ye sonne of perdicion.



We who see that terrible things have begun, and know that still more terrible things are imminent, may regard it as the greatest advantage to depart from it as quickly as possible. Do you not give God thanks, do you not congratulate yourself, that by an early departure you are taken away, and delivered from the shipwrecks and disasters that are imminent?”

Cyprian: a bishop in the city of Carthage during the third century AD

Brief Chronology of Paul's Letters

Dates are approximate & A.D.

A.D.	
49	Galatians
51	1st & 2nd Thessalonians
56-57	1st & 2nd Corinthians, Romans
60-62	Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon, Philippians
62	1st Timothy, Titus
67	2nd Timothy

Other New Testament Books of interest

Dates are approximate & A.D.

64	1st Peter
66	2nd Peter
68-70	Jude

Biblical Interpretation 101

FIRST QUESTION

Does anything that Paul writes in either of these letters speak at all about a spiritual departure, a last days apostasy, a falling away from the truth? Is there any mention at all, in both epistles, of anything to do with falsehood, error or deception, apart from the false letter that was supposed to have been from Paul?



It would be somewhat of an oddity for Paul to focus upon the subject of an end-time spiritual departure in the very early Thessalonian epistles when this subject is not something that Paul emphasises until much later in his life & ministry.

Dr. Andy Woods

Biblical Interpretation 101

SECOND QUESTION


Does Paul in his writings to the Thessalonian believers speak about a physical departure, something leaving one physical place to go to another physical place? If so what is the physical departure that Paul speaks about in these letters?

1 Thessalonians 4:16-18

16. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.
17. Then we who are alive, who are left, **will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air,** and so we will always be with the Lord.
18. Therefore encourage one another with these words.

2 Thessalonians 2:6-7

6. And you know what is **restraining him now** so that he may be revealed in his time.
7. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work. Only he who now restrains it will do so **until he is out of the way.**



The overall context of **2 Thessalonians 2:3** indicates a physical departure as the sense of **APOSTASIA**. The rapture is the main subject matter of both books that Paul wrote to the Thessalonians; the apostle refers to it in every chapter of 1 Thessalonians. It was clearly on his mind as he wrote the second epistle to them.

Jonathan Brentner



2 Timothy 1:15

You are aware that all who are in Asia turned away from me.

Acts 20:29-30

29. I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock;
30. and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them.

Defining a Definite Article

2 Thessalonians 2:3

Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless THE APOSTASIA (THE departure) comes first.

The word THE is what is called a definite article.

A definite article is used before a noun to define it as ...

- something specific
- something previously mentioned or known
- something unique
- something being identified by the speaker

2 Thessalonians 2:5

Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things?

1 Thessalonians 4:16-18

16. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.
17. Then we who are alive, who are left, **will be caught up (harpazo)** together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.
18. Therefore encourage one another with these words.

Ephesians 5:25-27

25. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her,
26. **to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the Word**
27. and to present her to Himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.



If it is true (that THE APOSTASIA is a physical departure of the Church to heaven) then it is time to stop debating the timing of the Rapture. The debate is settled. The rapture of the Church will take place “first” before the Tribulation period begins. We can develop certainty in the return of Jesus Christ to take us out of the world physically before the events of the Tribulation period transpire. Titus 2:3 is indeed our firm blessed hope, which says, “looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour, Christ Jesus.”

Dr. Andy Woods



The Rapture

JESUS IS COMING READY OR NOT