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# The Apostasia

by

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## Part 1

Scripture warns us that in the last days of the church age false doctrines and apostasia would develop within the universal church. Today we are seeing the fulfillment of those warnings. But what exactly was the scripture referring to? Many have felt this would occur during the tribulation. Do the warnings refer to a falling away from doctrine before the tribulation and before the rapture of the church? Let's examine the key scriptures relating to these warnings and see what the scripture actually has to say on this subject.

First of all, we should note that there will be 2 branches of deception. One branch will be held out to deceive the church and a second one will be to deceive unbelievers. Let's examine the first the branch of deception to be extended to the church. In doing so, we should recognize that the first deception recorded came in the infancy of the church. The book of Acts records this first deception as legalism.

**Acts chapter 10:1-48**

This passage shows us that Peter was given a special revelation concerning grace versus Law. Peter was shown specifically that adherence to dietary laws of the Jews was not necessary. It underscored that the Law was done away with in all matters, including diet, and especially the consumption of pork. This lesson seems to have come under scrutiny and the persecution of Peter and the other apostles came soon thereafter, which caused a temporary return to observance of the pharisaic traditions of Law.

## Acts 15:1-29

This chapter tells of the remarkable debate between Paul and the rest of the apostles in Jerusalem over the issue of the Law versus Grace. Thus we see that the first deception concerned the issue of Grace versus the Law. Paul finally showed the apostles their error and changed their position, albeit somewhat reluctantly. Old habits die a hard death.

The issue of the Law however, never has died. It sprang back soon thereafter in a region of Asia Minor known as Galatia. Paul had established several churches in that region on an earlier visit and after the Jerusalem council Paul learned that the churches in Galatia had reverted back to observance of the Law. As you may recall, the epistle to the churches of Galatia (Galatians) was written by Paul in a blistering tone to command the churches to restore the doctrines of Grace from which they had departed in favor of the Law. Here in the book of Galatians we see the harshest rebuke in all the New Testament epistles. While many think Paul wrote harshly to the church of Corinth, those epistles pale in comparison to the harshness evoked by Paul to the Galatians.

## Galatians 1:6-9

*"I am flabbergasted (thaumadzoh) that you are so quickly removing (active tense meaning its still going on) ... from the one having called you by the unearned gift (grace) of Christ to another gospel.*

Now the Greek word "thaumadzoh" (#2296) is a word that means literally to be astonished beyond measure... something that causes your chin to hit the floor... or your mouth to hang open or to be (in our slang term) flabbergasted ... (with the idea of almost speechless)... it carries the idea of shock. Note also that the verb "removing" (metatitheimi= #3346) is an active tense form meaning it was happening as Paul was writing... it was a happening thing at that moment. It means: "to transpose 2 things one of which is put in place of the other. The Greeks used it for one who was a 'turncoat' or traitor. The word is used of one altering his opinion or of becoming of another mind. The word usage also conveyed the idea of desertion or revolt, traitor or turncoat and usually in regards to a religious view or a philosophical change of mind. Now, as I said the verb tense here is active and not a perfect tense. If Paul had used the perfect tense that would have meant that the Galatians had actually and finally turned against grace and had come to a settled attitude on the issue of grace. Because of this difference in verbs, its clear that Paul was not sure how the matter would conclude, therefore Paul writes the warning letter.

Now the next word "from" is the Greek preposition "apo" (#575) which Thayer's lexicon denotes as follows:

#3. Of any kind of separation of one thing from another by which the union or fellow

ship of the two is destroyed.

V = In composition apo indicates separation, liberation, cessation, departure permanently.

Now, the combination of *metatitheimi* and *apo* indicates more precisely just how opposite the two doctrines really are. The final word to consider in this verse is "another" "*heteros*" (#2088). It means another of a different kind. There is another Greek word "*allos*" which means "another of the same kind". So you will note that Paul is clearly delineating that the Galatians were moving away from one kind of thinking to another kind and the two were complete opposites to each other and opposed to one another. *Heteros* also denotes quality...*allos* denotes quantity. *Heteros* also conveys the idea of bad or evil and therefore it is the opposite of good and therefore false. So that, using the term up against the word "gospel" which is the Greek word "*eu-angellion*" (*eu*= good and *angellion*= message or messenger—we get the word angel from it)... this means that what the Galatians were moving towards was an evil message. "*heteros euangellion*"= False message (as the term *heteros* negates the *eu* or good of *euangellion* )

### **So what do we have in Galatians 1:6?**

We have a situation where the Galatians are moving to give up the gospel, to turn their backs on salvation by grace and to accept salvation by faith plus works. Now on to verse 7.

#### **Verse 7:**

*"Which is NOT ANOTHER, only there are some troubling you and wishing to pervert the gospel of Christ".*

3 words to consider in this verse.

Another = *allos* (#243) which means "another of the same kind"

So notice the previous word is a negative word... so that it is NOT another kind of good message... it is an evil message that the Galatians were moving towards.

Troubling= *tarasso*=#5015= to mentally agitate, disturb mentally with excitement, perplexity and fear. [Note this word is in present tense...still going on at the time Paul is writing...no doubt these false teachers were still in the area and causing troubles in the congregations]

Pervert=*metastrepsai*= #3344= to reverse, to turn around, pervert, corrupt to transform something into the exact opposite that is diametrically opposed to its initial form. A complete reversal like a polarity shift. Good becomes evil and evil becomes good.

So what we have is building upon the foundation of verse 6 in that we get further confirmation of the extent of the problem of mixing works of Law with grace. Its not another gospel of the same kind but rather an evil and bad message that corrupts the good message of Christ and perverts the entire notion of grace. Note also that this message attacks the mind and disturbs the mind...BUT HOW??? By excitement, perplexity and fear. In other words...pulpit pounding and scare tactics. This sounds very much like most of the preachers of our time. Back then those that "preached" as we see the term used today... well today's preachers if transported back to the era of the early church would have been thrown out and branded for what they are false prophets and teachers. None back 2,000 years ago spoke in a homiletical manner. They didn't present the character traits of what we today call

preaching. Instead they "taught". They utilized simple reason of logic by presenting facts in an "unemotional" manner and appealed to the mind, not the heart nor emotions. What a far cry from today. Those who did present a "sermon" and delivered it in a preaching style would have been permanently expelled for those were the signs of falsity and perversion from truth.

Let's put the two verses back together now with this new translation data.

*"I'm flabbergasted that you are quickly transformed in your thinking (like that of a traitor) permanently departing and separating away from the unearned gift of Christ and turning to another message (an evil message)... which is not another kind of good message. Only there are still present those who are mentally disturbing you (stirring up excitement and fear) and are desiring to reverse the good message of Christ."*

### **Verse 8**

*"BUT, though we, or an angel out of heaven, preach any other gospel to you than that which we have preached to you...LET HIM BE DAMNED!!!*

### **Verse 9**

*"As we have previously said also now again I say, if anyone preaches (to) you a good message beside what you received...LET HIM BE DAMNED!!!*

Now with the last 2 verses there are only a couple of words we should need to examine in some detail...

#1. "preach" = euangelidzoh= #2097= to proclaim glad tidings, specifically to instruct (men) concerning the things that pertain to Christian salvation. We get the word "evangelize" from this word. The word is a derivative of :

Eu = good

Angelion = message, messenger or angel.

So the verb form is good message... that is the content of the active verb... but the verb action itself is one of speaking in an instructive manner and carries no connotation as we know today in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century as "preaching" in a homiletical style of our day. This word is only one of many regarding speech and speaking. Scripture never refers to great oratorical skills or to speaking to emotions. In fact those are the hallmarks of false teachers.

#2. Damned or cursed = anathema = #331= cursed, doomed to destruction,damned. Its Hebrew equivalence ---as a thing devoted to God without hope of being redeemed, therefore a person or thing doomed to destruction.

So, what do we have Paul trying to communicate to us? We should note how quickly falling away could develop. Paul was flabbergasted or astonished at how fast the Galatians were moving away from sound doctrine to false teachings. Note how this was accomplished? It was accomplished by a mental attitude attack via manipulation of emotions. This is a hallmark tactic of all false teachers. True ministers of the gospel never attempt to persuade by

an emotional appeal to overthrow the thinking process. The purpose of false teachers is to create a mental "polar shift" in thinking so that good becomes evil and evil becomes good. Note that there is only 1 gospel or good message (news). There are no variations of the Gospel that are okay. There is just **one Gospel**. And if anyone, even an angel out of heaven should come and announce, proclaim or instruct a different message than the one Paul announced ... let him be accursed, cursed or damned. Why? It is in part because he has become a traitor or turncoat from the Divine perspective. So then this issue of Grace becomes a central factor in the falling away. Rejection of Grace is a key warning sign.

So far in this article we've focused upon Paul's warnings to the churches in Galatia in an effort to stop false doctrines of salvation that were being spread by false teachers who claimed salvation was by faith plus works. They wanted to add something to what Christ had already perfectly accomplished. We've looked at Galatians 1: 6-9. We've looked at some of the key words in those passages in their original Greek format to discover some things about false teachers and how they operate.

False teachers mentally upset their victims with:

1. doubt
2. fear
3. manipulating emotions of the victim

They really want to get their victims all worked up emotionally in order to reverse their minds on doctrine. In this case of the Galatians, the doctrine being challenged was Salvation (Soteriology).

These false teachers were in the process of saying that the true and correct Doctrine of Salvation as taught by Paul and the Apostles was bad. They claimed it was in error. They claimed that faith plus works was good and correct. So what we have here is a formula that Satan uses in getting people to fall away from correct teaching.

Introduce doubt via emotions creating the emotion of fear and doubt in order to introduce doctrine that is the exact reverse of what was already believed....

So that false teachers twist the truth as follows:

Good becomes bad... and bad becomes good. A complete reversal!

In Galatians 1:6-9 Paul is amazed at how quickly this process was developing and at how fast the Galatians were willing to consider such doctrinal changes. Such is the nature of "apostasy". But what is meant by that term? Let's examine the meaning of the word in its Greek context.

### **Apostasia – Apostasion -- Aphistehmi = Strong's code #'s 646, 647, 868**

*To put away, to draw off or away, to withdraw, to induce to revolt, to depart, to go away from (in a physical sense or mental sense) to make a (mental) defection.*

In doctrine: to fall away from, to apostatise, to withdraw from, to have no relationship with or to abstain from. Also used in the concept of marital divorce.

Some sample usage is as follows:

In a Physical sense: Acts 22:29 a physical departure. Luke 2:37 a woman does not physically depart from temple

in a physical sense of an affliction not departing: 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 12:8

In Divorce: Matt 5:31; 19: 7 and Mark 10:4

Doctrinal:

In a bad sense -- falling away from the gospel... Acts 5:37, 38.

In a good sense – fall away from false teaching ... Acts 21:21 -- Paul is accused of drawing away from Moses' Law doctrines.

Command to withdraw from false doctrine is found in 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 6:5

Command to withdraw from sin -- is found in 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 2:19

Warning to examine so as not to fall into false doctrine is in Heb. 3:12

Doctrinal Departures Predicted:

1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 4:1

2<sup>nd</sup> Thessalonians 2:3

Okay, so now we have an idea of what apostasia means... a falling away from doctrine. It is a mental decision. Paul tells us that the falling away (in the case of the Galatians) was a 180-degree opposite of what was true. This seems to be so true in all respects to removal from doctrinal principles. It's never off by a little bit. It seems to always be diametrically the opposite of Divine truth.

### **Galatians 3:1-2**

Now, Paul in his letter to the Galatians asks them: "who has bewitched you?"

The word for bewitched in the Greek is the word "ebaskanen" or Baskainoh is the root word... It is Strong's code # 940... The word means:

*To slander, to bewitch by spells, to delude, to speak ill of one, to slander, or to bring evil on one by fake praise or an evil eye...to charm or bewitch... those who lead away others into error by wicked arts. Now the Bauer-Arndt-Gingrich & Danker Lexicon also notes that the word is connected to the idea of ENVY.*

So that the Galatians were mentally attacked. Paul asks if it was by occultic means? By his earlier statement of surprise at the ease of their consideration of the false doctrine...Paul is asking if maybe it was due to some occultic means. Now does Paul really suspect occultic activity? Perhaps... but in keeping with the context it may be a more sarcastic tone than anything else. Paul certainly is raking them over the coals...underscoring the quickness of this threat, as if he'd expected such a threat to normally take a while to develop. Needless to say, that communications was much slower then...so that the time interval between its occurrence and Paul getting this message back into the hands of the Galatians may have been months and perhaps close to a year. We just don't know the time frame. But this exchange didn't likely take place over a couple of week's time. So what seems quick to him may not

seem so quick to us today with our instant communication abilities.

So what can we draw from Paul's comments about apostasia and the Galatians?

#1. It had not happened yet. The Galatians had not yet fallen away, but they were giving mental consideration to it.

#2. Apostasy comes by a mental attack. It causes doubts about correct doctrine which in turn, creates emotional turmoil and fear.

#3. Apostasy inserts a mental attitude that is diametrically opposite of true doctrine. It will turn good into bad and bad into good...though it may not seem that way on the surface.

#4. Apostasy can happen quickly...but not always...it can be a slow insidious development.

#5. The defense to avoiding such problems is to KNOW the Word and its doctrines. Know it and understand it. Knowledge...as Peter points out in his second epistle (2<sup>nd</sup> Peter) chapter 1... Knowledge of the Word is the means by which God extends His grace...so that we may not be disturbed by false teachers. Peter in his second epistle is focusing on false teachers ...and in doing so he provides the antidote to false teaching... before he even begins to describe these false teachers and the falling away that will ensue in the Last Days.

So far we have examined a classic example of apostasy. We have defined the meaning of the term apostasy from its Greek root word. We noted many of the characteristic traits involved in a falling away from correct doctrine. We now want to examine the prophecies relating to a great future situation where there will be an immense Apostasy or "falling away". In order to understand what is coming we need to examine 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter and also 2<sup>nd</sup> Thessalonians, which explain more of this future element yet to occur. God provided us these insights through 2 different Apostles, Peter and Paul.

### **Peter's Warning:**

Peter warns us in his second epistle (2<sup>nd</sup> Peter) that in the last days false teachers would come with false doctrines to ensnare people away from the gospel of Christ. Peter starts the epistle with words of encouragement and some preliminary foundations that believers need to have in order to avoid falling into the sway of the false teachers who are to come. Peter tells us in chapter 1 what is really important in the Christian life.

In Verse 1 note the word faith in English is the Greek word "pistin". (See Strong's code #4103 & #3982). Pistin = reliance by inward certainty. This comes as a conclusion arrived at by the argument of logical thought processing. Faith comes by logical thought processing...it is a mental process that reaches a conclusion. This is important, though it may seem minor, because *faith is not a blind leap in the dark* as the word means in the Greek. Faith is a reliance that occurs after a conclusion is formed, based on rational mental processes that assesses a logical airtight conclusion.

So that... we can say that *pistin* is a result of ... **mental** not emotional exercise. We can say this because the original language is quite clear on this matter.

**Emotion plays no role whatsoever in *pistin*!**

However, this is not to say that emotions can't spring forth *as a result* but that emotions is not to be the criteria for

reliance, as indeed emotions by their very nature are unreliable. In fact, emotions by their instability are in many if not most cases detrimental. Particularly when they block out objectivity.

Also note: The direct object of *pistin* is... .. the Righteousness of God, which is the measure for which grace is provided. This leads us to verse 2.

Note in verse 2 he asks that "grace" and "peace" be *multiplied* to you ...How does this occur?? Look further in the verse ... It is multiplied to you ...

***"in the knowledge... of God and of Jesus our Lord".***

Note the word *grace*. In Greek it is the word "xaris" (charis with the ch sounding like a "k"). In the Greek, it means undeserved favor or unearned merit. Now, verse 2 is connecting with verse 1 and expanding the relationship with *xaris* and *pistin* and God's Righteousness...and now in verse 2 connecting with the Greek word *playthunthaia*... which is rendered... "may it be multiplied". Then we get an "en"= because of... and then the word "knowledge". Now what does the word "knowledge" mean in the Greek text? This word in Greek is the word...

**Epignosay** = "to become FULLY acquainted and understood by means of a full, precise, scientific study as in the study of a science in and of itself. (Strong's code No.'s #1921, 1922, 1909, 1097).

So that ... reliance in God's Righteousness has one result for a believer in addition to salvation... it is "*xaris*" = unearned or unmerited favor or gift...

**Which is multiplied by Epignosay**

So that ***epignosay is the multiplier of Grace !!! Epignosay multiplies grace!!!*** So that ... if you want to lay hold of unearned and undeserved gifts from God (or i.e. 'blessing' from God) ... the formula is simple: ***Epignosay!*** That means to lay hold of blessing and have divine blessing multiplied in your life then epignosay...or ...study the Word...in a scholarly manner...like a scientist or doctor would study in their chosen field in acquiring precision-like knowledge. **Epignosay—a thorough scientific study of God's Word!**

Precision, intense, scientific-like study of God's word results in blessings with a multiplier effect!!!! Now also note that along with *xaris* is the word "peace" again is a by-product of *epignosay*.

Verse 3 tells us... All things He has given through Divine Power. All things of Godliness... through epignosay. (knowledge in your version). So that Godliness comes through epignosay... and **all things through Divine Power coming through epignosay**.

[Your English versions fail to carry through the full underlying force of the thought as revealed in the Greek text itself. The translations have sacrificed the force of this underlying idea for the expediency of making the text more casually readable in English]

Now Peter here, through the Holy Spirit, picks up on this theme of need for precision study-knowledge and carries

it further in verse 5.

*"and for this very reason"* (to be partakers of divine nature)

*"BUT... **spoudayn*** (Strong's # 4692) = **STUDY, earnest study.**

In the Greek, note the word order here in verse 5. Its order here is out of sync. from normal Greek sentence structure. When this occurs, the author is trying to alert the reader to an underscoring of the words that are out of place...giving them extreme emphasis...like we would do by underlining, or emboldening or adding exclamation marks. They had no such tools...so they would adjust word order to add stress to a point. Its as though the author is trying to say, "this is critical for you to realize"... so... .. The Holy Spirit, through Peter is saying...

*"This is critical for you to realize... " Why? For this reason: "it adds to your **pistin**" (it adds to your reliance or faith)... so... what adds to your faith?? STUDY and the knowledge and understanding derived from it... study and the resultant knowledge adds to your faith/reliance.*

**Spoudayn adds to faith.** This "earnest study" adds to your faith and it also adds what else??? Courageous excellence to your reliance and to your courageous excellence it adds ... even more precision knowledge—epignosay.

### **Verse 6.**

And to knowledge (epignosay) is added self-control (over your unstable emotions). And to self control (this spouday—earnest study) adds endurance and in endurance – Godliness (Godlikeness) or being like God.

### **Verse 7**

And to being like God... brotherly friendship...and in this... spiritual love.

### **Verse 8**

And if these things are in you and abounding (growing), then you are not empty or unfruitful in your full precise knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

## Verse 9

But he who lacks these is *blind* and *shortsighted*... forgetting about the cleansing of sins.

**This indicates that those who don't "epignosay and spoudayn":**

**Lose perspective on grace, faith, salvation and eventually fall away from the truth !!!**

**So... the antidote to falling away is precision knowledge of God's Word gained by intense, earnest study of The Word of God. The written Word of God!!!**

This epignosay and spoudayn are critical to maintaining correct perspective, balance and growth in the Christian Life. Works, such as witnessing, speaking in tongues, etc. have no major role to play even at the time of Peter's writing of this book. If... IF these other things were that important...they'd have been included. [In regards to the notion of tongues...note, if tongues were important and for all-time in the church... the very first man to speak in tongues ... Peter would surely have included this aspect in his epistle. The very absence of such should speak volumes about the importance of tongues even back then.]

**So, what then is the importance of Epignosay?**

It is the method by which God pours out undeserved blessing (that means you don't get it by giving money to a TV evangelist or to a church).

The results of Epignosay are a chain reaction of events. Notice the progression in the very first chapter and these first 9 verses as we show these in the list below:

- It adds to reliance (faith)
- It adds to courage which adds more knowledge
- Which in turn creates self-control and stability over emotions, so we don't

get bent out of shape in a crisis or be swayed by false teachers and false

emotional religious experiences.

- It creates endurance to get us through crises which in turn shows and exhibits
- Godlikeness and in this we can exhibit
- Brotherly friendship and spiritual love in our lives.

Now to those who say that "in-depth" teaching is boring and dull and lifeless, please note that in Mark 8:17 Jesus notes the disciples were "dull" of hearing, or "bored" by His teaching...and He gave them a sharp rebuke. This is but yet another of the many examples of how God's channel of blessing comes by the exercise of our minds first...before anything else of lasting quality can be produced.

Now verse 9 continues on to tell us that... failure to study and obtain this epignosay-knowledge produces... *empty results*... Which are ... no stability, no excellence, no ability to stay level-headed in a crisis, no endurance for the long haul in the Christian life, and therefore no real Godlikeness of nature, and therefore no real brotherly friendship or spiritual love. No growth, no maturity.

## Verse 10

"Therefore"... this word introduces a conclusion... "be earnestly spoudayn or be earnestly studious"

Now this is a statement in the Greek that is in the *imperative mood*. This means in the Greek that it is a command. Imperative mood is a command mood. Its usage in Greek was found most often in a military command sense. It's like a command an army officer gives to a soldier. There is no option or choice here... simply obey or disobey. Its not related to salvation...but rather to maintaining a Godliness in our walk.

So, here in verse 10... we are ordered or commanded to be earnestly studying God's written word. We have no option other than to obey or disobey. And we get the reason for the command...

"to stabilize firmly in your mind"

Notice the reason here is to stabilize and do it ... FIRMLY...

And WHERE does it occur????

***"In your mind"***

Not your heart, not your emotions... **BUT IN your MIND!**

This is indicative that the mind is the center for the Christian Life, not the heart and not the emotions.

## ***The Christian Life is NOT what you feel ... It IS what you KNOW***

So... what does stability do for you? It stabilizes firmly in ***your mind*** your calling and selection... for in the study/knowledge and the resulting outgrowths... ***BY NO MEANS will you EVER FAIL !!!*** It is conditional upon Study/knowledge or conditional upon spoudayn-epignosay. This makes thorough study and doctrinal knowledge of God's word the essential element in the Christian Life. Without it, there is NO substantive growth.

## Verse 11

Note here in this verse the emphasis is not of entering heaven itself, but rather is on the quality once entered as a result of the quality of study knowledge, for it brings an ability to appreciate and to be more fully utilized by the Lord. If you've developed more, He can then utilize more.

## Verse 12

"Therefore"... (because this is so critically important...)... "I will always intend to remind you concerning these things" ("these things" are study = spoudasyn and epignosay = precise study knowledge)... "even though you are

doing this now"...

Peter assumes that his audience is now, already doing these things...but he's gonna keep on reminding them anyway because it is so terribly important...its crucial, its critical to the Christian Life. Why is it so crucial and critical? He'll further develop this in the rest of his letter.

### **Verse 13**

"And I deem it right so long as I am alive to wake you up completely..."

The word completely in Greek is = diegeirein = to cause to collect one's faculties completely and to focus them. Implied here is so you don't get drowsy or nod off to sleep and get dull of hearing... So Peter here is perhaps recalling Mark 8:17-21 where the Apostles were chastised by the Lord for dull ears and too perhaps Peter recalls his own sleepiness in the Garden of Gethsemane when he and the disciples fell asleep while Christ prayed before his arrest and trial.

### **Verse 14**

Now we get to the reason why he deems it right...

"Because knowing that I soon will die as the Lord Jesus made clear to me"

### **Verse 15**

"And too, that I will be earnestly studying also that you then will remember these exhortations to study."

**Now let me ask a crucial question here. How come? Why? Why earnestly?** Verse 16 gives us the answer.

### **Verse 16**

"We (disciples) did NOT make up clever stories or fiction or doctrines about the power and coming of the Lord Jesus Christ ( i.e. at the Transfiguration of Christ)

Now verses 17 and 18 summarizes what he saw...then he continues in verse 19.

### **Verse 19**

Peter continues ... as great as it was to have witnessed the transfiguration... he wants us to know that we have something MORE STABLE, MORE FIRM than even that fantastic experience...namely... the prophetic written word...

"to which you do well to ... prosechontes = apply oneself, pay attention to...like you would to a shining light in a murky dark place until daylight, as the daystar rises in your hearts".

### **Verse 20**

"Knowing that no scripture derived from a human being"

### **Verse 21**

"For not by man's ... mind/will was scripture a product... BUT rather by the Holy Spirit who bore men along as God spoke.

This is a reminder to us as to the source of this whole exhortation of chapter 1 regarding the command to study. This command ... in fact all of this epistle comes from the Holy Spirit... and therefore demands our precise understanding of it in a manner of earnest, eager, intense study.

The reason for all of these commands to believers everywhere to "eagerly, earnestly, intensely study the written Word is to get the believer grounded in a firm mental understanding of truth. Why? Because, someday, the truth will be challenged. At some point there will be a massive, delusional challenge that will result in "apostasia"... or the falling away. The reader may ask: "What is the significance of apostasia?" The answer comes in our follow-up in "The Apostasia-- II Thessalonians chapter 2...where we find that there will be an apostasia just as the Antichrist is revealed. Stay tuned.

# **The Apostasia**

## **Examining**

## **II Thessalonians Chapter 2**

### **Introduction to Part 2**

In **Part 1** we investigated all the aspects of the word apostasy as it relates to the church. Now we will explore the word's usage in the critical passage of Prophecy found in II Thessalonians Chapter 2.

In doing the initial research and preparation for this article, the researcher had always maintained the opinion that II Thessalonians chapter 2 reference to the word apostasy was a reference to a "falling away from truth" by the Church. It was thought that this falling away would occur prior to the rapture and prior to the rise of the Antichrist. In fact it was thought that this degradation of the church would be the trigger mechanism that allowed the Antichrist to come to power. In all honesty, this whole issue had never been exhaustively researched by this author until the research began earlier this year and also in preparation for this article.

What we found in the research from this passage is not what we expected. Instead we found something slightly different. That means that we do alter our views in light of the textual evidence of scripture. But we do not alter our views on a whim. It requires diligent and exhaustive study and research and an overwhelming load of evidence for us to alter a position.

Keep in mind that this passage regarding the word "apostasy"-- itself is used by many as a proof-text that the rapture is Post-trib, while others use it for a Mid-trib or Pre-wrath rapture position. Pre-trib never really used it much as a proof because it was not a proof. We will find however is that there is NO PROOF for any Rapture theory from this passage segment that deals with "apostasy." We will find that the word itself has been misunderstood and in fact mistranslated. To demonstrate this by proof let us begin to look at II Thessalonians chapter 2 by first considering the background for the entire Epistle itself. By taking a macro-view of the Epistle as a whole and the general background behind the epistle we move our minds more to the actual context and setting which enables us to better understand what the text is telling us.

## **Overview of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Epistle to the Thessalonians**

This second letter to the church at Thessalonika was written a few months after the first letter to that church. Both letters are thought by most conservative scholars to have been written in about 50 to 51 AD Why? Because during Paul's travels as recorded by Luke in the book of Acts, Luke refers to Gallio, proconsul of Achaia in connection with Paul's stay at Corinth. (Acts 18:12). This historical activity is supported by the archaeological discovery at Delphi of an inscription, which dates Gallio's proconsulship within the reign of the Emperor Claudius. The inscription seems to indicate that Gallio assumed office in the summer of 51 AD Luke seems to be indicating that Paul had stayed in Corinth about 18 months before Gallio came to power (Acts 18:11) the apostel probably arrived at Corinth early in A.D. 50. Not long thereafter, Silas and Timothy met with Paul and reported what was going on at Thessalonika and thus prompting the first letter to the Thessalonians and a few months later a second letter. (Acts 18:5; I Thess 3:1-6) This probably transpired in the middle or summer of 50 AD. Apparently the first letter didn't solve the problem for the Thessalonians and after a few months, reports resumed of further fears brought on by more false rumors and thus probably late 50 AD or early 51 AD the second letter to the Thessalonians was written.

What was the problem at Thessalonika? Rumors. There were rumors and false reports that the persecution being experienced was all a part of the Day of the Lord. Somehow, these believers had feared that they had missed the rapture. They also feared that those who died in martyrdom would be left out of the glory of the kingdom to come. The operative word in the Greek that really shows us the mental anguish they were suffering is the Greek word: II Thess 1:7 "troubled"

Thlibomenois = troubled in KJV... but lexical definitions are more revealing. "to press hard upon, distress, affliction, a compressed way. Today we might say extremely depressed, or perhaps nearly hysterical?"

Not that the antidote is found in the word "rest."

"Anesin" = to be relaxed, or rest. Literally "a" = no and "nesin" = nous = mind. So that "have no mind" or pay not attention. "Pay no attention like we are not paying attention to it either." This is the thrust of Paul's advice to those caught in the throes of intense physical/mental/emotional persecution.

Paul then proceeds with great care and love to explain to them why this was erroneous. See I Thess 4:9 thru 5:11. Here we see indeed that the rapture was taught. The passage is not a reference to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming, for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming will NOT come as a thief in the night because we know that the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming is timed to 2,520 days broken down into 2 segments of 1260 days of the tribulation period. "Day of the Lord" is a term for the "tribulation" period of 2,520 days. It is the tribulation, which comes like a thief in the night. Thus, the term "thief in the night" is referencing the sudden onset of the tribulation period itself. The passage then relates in 5:9 a reference to the fact that the Church is not called to undergo that great day of the Lord's wrath.

"Day of the Lord" = Wrath

So Paul in the first letter is indicating 2 things:

1. The Church will NOT go through the tribulation period (see -- I Thess 5:9 "For God as not destined us for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ)
2. The early church anticipated a Pre-trib rapture due to Paul's teaching on this. Yet, even so, many still got confused and lived in fear over the notion that there was no rapture and that all would go through the Day of the Lord. Paul uses 2 letters to squelch this false notion. Unfortunately, even today, the same fears and misunderstandings persist. I suspect much of it is due to a misunderstanding of soteriology as well as an inability to properly handle the original Greek texts of the New Testament as originally written.

## **Paul's Instructions on the Doctrine of THE DAY OF THE LORD**

- A. Paul says the "Day of the Lord" (i.e. Tribulation period) is still future. II Thess. 2:1-2
- B. The "Day of the Lord" is preceded by 2 definite signs

In the second letter, Paul again tries to reassure these fearful believers in Chapter 2. Here Paul says that "Hey wait a minute, don't you remember what I taught you? I taught you that there are 2 things that must precede the Day of the Lord (Tribulation) and they have not yet happened."

1. The Apostasia must come first. [Apostasy = outbreak of rebellion/revolt]
2. The Antichrist then must be "apocalypted" to the world.

We'll provide further research on those above terms later in this article.

Note that Paul says that the outbreak of rebellion (apostasia or apostasy) has NOT YET transpired and neither has the unveiling of the Antichrist. There is one theory that had held some sway in the last two centuries. It is called "preterism." Preterism suggests that all of the Biblical Prophecies leading to the Second Coming of Christ have already occurred! They cite Nero as being the Antichrist, and the destruction of Jerusalem among other events as fulfillment of all of the first 18 chapters of Revelation. If this were so, and Nero was the Antichrist, when was it that Christ came in person visibly to the whole world and destroyed Nero? This must happen or else Nero is still alive? Preterism was a view devised by a Catholic Jesuit priest in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century. He didn't have any explanations for how all of the events of Rev. 1 thru 18 unfolded other than symbolically.

## **Exegesis of II Thess 2: 1-3**

Verse 1: "Now we (beseech or request) you brethren, (by or concerning) the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto him.

Verse 2: "That you be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as if from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.

Verse 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."

**Look at verse 2...** for these key words... "soon"... "shaken in mind"... "be troubled"...

Note that there were rumors at Thessalonika that Paul had elsewhere been doing one of three activities regarding the doctrine of the Day of the Lord.

**Rumor 1** said Paul had been given a special revelation of the Spirit that the Day of the Lord was now in progress.

**Rumor 2** said that Paul had been teaching verbally that the Day of the Lord was now in progress

**Rumor 3** said that Paul had written a letter saying that the Day of Lord was now in progress.

So, here in verse 2 Paul is stating that this was not so. He expresses some measure of dismay and concern for his flock in Thessalonika.

"soon" = tacheoh = quickly or hastily or easily

"shaken in mind" = thaleuthaynai = to thrown off course, off of sound thinking & reasoning. ... "from your mind" not "in your mind." The word "apo" = from or away from in general usage.

"be troubled" = throeisthai = its in present tense... "kept in a state of perpetual agitation or panic." So that this was not a

momentary crisis of thinking for the Thessalonians. It was ongoing panic. These poor folks were panicking.

"is at hand" = enestayken = present tense = "is now here" Similar usage but slightly different in Romans 8:38; I Cor. 3:22; Heb 9:9 -- "is at hand someday but now now"

Summary: Paul is saying -- I don't want you to be easily thrown off course and kept in a state of perpetual agitation and panic at the false notion that the Day of the Lord is now in progress.

### Look at verse 3

"that day shall not come" -- this phrase is not found in ANY original Greek text.

"let no one deceive you in any way"... "except" in KJV = the Greek word "oti" -- and it is the word "because"... it is a linking word expressing reason for a prior statement.

"unless" or "until" = ean in the Greek...when combined with "oti" means "because, until"

### "apostasia"

Here is the critical word of our study. This is the main focus for our being in this chapter. To understand the meaning of this word and its usage in connection with the other ideas linked with it in this verse. In order to do this we will utilize the Strong's coded reference numbers so those laypersons not familiar with Koine-Greek or "common" Greek of the 1<sup>st</sup> Century AD might still be able to follow along in Strong's dictionaries in the back of Strong's Exhaustive Concordance. It will show all the Greek words and which are listed by number in numerical order and with generic and basic English definitions. This then enables the novice student to still be able to partially track and verify the material for his/herself and also begin a 'learning' process of how to get a deeper understanding of the Bible.

Apostasia is transliterated to English as "apostasy." It is linked to Strong's Reference Code # 647 and #868 -- root word ahistemi. It is a compound word. This means it is 2 words joined into becoming a single word.

Apo = from, away from... as in distance of time or place.

Stasis = a setting, a standing, an effective position. A group or movement. An outbreak or An outburst...a rebellion or revolt.

Strong's Concordance Definition: *to remove, to instigate to revolt, rebel. For ahistemi.*

H.K. Moulton's Analytical Greek-English Lexicon -- *to draw off or away, withdraw, or to induce to revolt. Apostasy.*

Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon -- *excite to revolt, draw away from. A defection, apostasy*

Bauer, Arndt, Gingrich & Danker's Greek-English Lexicon *rebellion, of the rebellion caused by the Antichrist in the last days. See Moulton and Milligan's Vocab of Greek T.*

Moulton & Milligan's Vocab of the Greek Testament *Rebellion= Used of Egyptian rebels who burned title deeds. And many other numerous citations and instances are mentioned. Essentially the word was widely used for any kind of rebellion physically, mentally, emotionally or spiritually.*

Note also that the Wycliffe Bible Commentary also concurs that "rebellion" is the idea in this verse. "Apparently (the rebellion or revolt) will be of sufficient scope and intensity to mark itself off from the spirit of general opposition to God which characterizes the world's usual attitude. The capstone will be the revelation of the man of lawlessness." This is said in regards to the Term "mystery of lawlessness" found later in verse 7.

So what do we have here? We have a term that means a rebellion or revolt is underway. Now the question is as follows:

Who is doing the rebelling? Believers? Or Non-believers? Some would say 'believers.'

However, the grammar of the Greek text will not allow for this. The apostasia or rebellion is the world itself departing from its normal hostility and opposition to God and will join the Satanic Rebellion itself. In other words, it appears that there will be a calling upon or a petition to Satan by the world for assistance. Now, how or why would that be?

I submit 2 events and an underlying deception that has been in the "grooming" stage for sometime now in our society.

The 2 events:

1. The rapture of the Church precedes this rebellion. The "spin" doctors will claim that "evil aliens" have attacked earth and taken hostages.
2. The sudden destruction of "mystery Babylon" a.k.a. the United States of America. As the USA is suddenly destroyed the world suddenly calls out to a new friendly "alien" group that is at war with those 'evil aliens' that kidnapped millions of humans and destroyed America. This would be something akin to asking the Star Trek "FEDERATION" of planets to come and rescue Earth from the evil ones.

Note here...how our culture seems to have been slowly being prepared for such a "spin."

Think about how many, many movies have been made about "invaders from space" who kidnap and kill humans. Then we got a mix of bad aliens and good aliens in the movies.

This is, I believe a cultural setup for such a spin. Now, do I think Satan and his forces are actual aliens, or that Christ and his angels are "aliens?" The answer is yes and no.

Yes in the technical sense that angels are not humans. Christ is however both God and Human. But the angelic realm is not human...so technically the term 'alien' can mean non-human and non-earth originated. However, if you ask in the notion that "alien" references them living on other planets...the answer is 'probably not.' But, just the same, the effects of the spin remain equally effective and will be very convincing. SUCH A LIE... will be the easy way to deceive humanity into declaring war against God. They'll be saying the truth...in a way. Yes "aliens" of a sort did do these things. But the conclusion is that those who did this are evil and bad. In reality, they are the good guys who in one action have spared some humans from harm while administering justice to others.

Now let's look at the other key words.

"Man of sin" or "lawlessness"

The original Greek text here is somewhat mixed. Some of the earliest Greek manuscripts that we have use the Greek word anomias. Other younger manuscripts use the Greek word amartias. (hamartias). Generally the word "anomias" means = lawlessness. The word "amartias" means = sin. However, both words are used more or less synonymously. They mean virtually the same thing but one gives slightly better understanding. Now, most of the newer English translations follow the older manuscripts and use "lawlessness." KJV however, did not have access to these older manuscripts because it has only been in the last 100 years that some of these older manuscripts have been discovered (mostly by archaeologists). So which word should we consider? I suggest that

"lawlessness" should be the primary consideration because while they both mean essentially the same thing, "anomia"= lawlessness gives us a little more insight into the sinful aspect. Here's why...we'll look at the word in detail.

### **Anomia**

It is in the genitive case, and is feminine and singular. Generally it means "lawlessness."

**Strong's Code #s 458, 459, 460. Strong's Dictionary says:** "not amenable to law." Without law. Lawless.

**Thayer's Lexicon:** without the law or destitute of law, or without any suggestions of sin. A violator of law. Lawless. Wicked. He in whom sin has as it were fixed its abode.

**Moulton's Lexicon:** Lawless, without law, violating law, lawlessness, iniquity, sin.

**Mounce Lexicon:** Lawlessness, violation of law, iniquity, sin.

**Bauer, Arnd, Gingrich & Danker's Lexicon:** Lawlessness. As a frame of mind -- Lawless men. Those who DESPISE THE LAW. See Ps. 93:20 & Matt 24:12

**Moulton & Milligan's Vocab of Gr T.** -- lawlessly...

To summarize then... anomia means not just simply sinful or lawless...but also one who despises law. Treats with disregard.

Now, what law is this Satanic being despising? Is it the Mosaic Law? While many scholars would say that it is the Mosaic Law that is being despised, I suggest that it is the universal Laws of God. This would include those that apply to the Satanic realm, which includes the law or edict by God to the angels not to cohabit with woman as happened in Genesis 6. I also suspect that the Divine Law also pertains to the general law that demonic angels were to no longer physically interacting with humans. This would be linked to the Genesis 6 accounts also. So that, the Antichrist then, by taking to the stage on Planet Earth, then violates that edict. More than likely it also will promoting a return to the times before Noah of Genesis 6 when the beni ha helohim saw that women were fair and took them as wives. In other words... I think we'd expect to see some sort of hybridization program again as happened in Genesis 6. Some think that the UFO abduction phenomenon is showing signs and symptoms of a return to the conditions of Genesis 6. {some abductees report sexual reproduction tests and experimentation leading to test-tube reproduction of hybrid beings. Whether this is true or not, is hard to say...but we simply note the reports and consider the possibilities in light of the previous scriptural events recorded.) Also note the admonition by Jesus concerning the Last days... "As in was in the days of Noah" may be much more literal than anyone has every realized to date...and that he was referring to not only normal life of eating, drinking and marriage... i.e. 'life goes on' but also of the 'nephilim' and beni-ha-helohim aspect.

So that, we first of all have the rebellion...or the joining with Satan in a treaty perhaps? Perhaps even, the Antichrist is simply

an ambassador who is asked to take over a supervisory role in defending Planet Earth from evil "space invaders" which in reality is actually the righteous divine forces of the Lord Jesus Christ. What a twist of truth just like in the Garden of Eden.

Secondly we have the "Apokalupsis" or the Apocalypse if you will. This is the same word used as the title for what we call John's book of "Revelation."

## **Apokaluptoh**

Strong's code # 601. It also is a compound word:

Apo = from or away from

Kalupsis = to cover up, cover, hide

The version of the word found here in II Thessalonians 2:3 is in the Aorist tense and subjunctive mood. Passive voice and third person, singular. Meaning that this is a singular event! The Greek Grammarian -- J Gresham Machen in his textbook for basic Greek Grammar indicates that the aorist subjunctive: "refers to the action without saying anything about its continuance or repetition. I.e. = "in order that ordinarily it is quite impossible to bring out the difference in the English translation between the present tense and the aorist subjunctive...it will usually have to be translated directly alike." Meaning that we can't distinguish the full verb tense ideas of this word that is found in the Greek. At least we can not do it in a grammatically correct sentence. Instead we need a lot of explanation for an otherwise simple little word in regards to its reference in time of action.

Lexical definitions of the word...

**Moulton's** = "uncover, reveal, manifest, appear."

**Thayer's** = *"to uncover, lay open what has been veiled or covered up.* To make known what before was unknown becomes evident of persons previously concealed making their appearance in public.

**Mounce's** = "to uncover, reveal.

**B-A-G-D**: = reveal, disclose, bring to light...to be revealed... from the compound of Apo = away from Kaluptoh = cover, hide, conceal, cover someone, cover(up), remove from sight.

Now, quite literally ... the word as does the grammar in this chapter indicates or hints that this personage known as the "Antichrist" or "man of lawlessness" (and elsewhere known or referred to as "the beast" and or "little horn") may in fact have

been alive in the first century AD when this was written. It is entirely conceivable that Satan's agent on earth is non-human...or may appear human but be something of a hybrid being and this is how he has supernatural power.

The key thing to note about this word for Apokaluptoh is that it strongly suggests the notion of 'covering up.' Hmmm. For those of you out there reading this who are abhorred by the notion of conspiracies and cover-ups. Please note this passage is indeed telling us (as do many other passages in scripture) that there is a "cover-up" of massive proportions going on here on Planet Earth. Satan is covering up the fact that he exists and that his forces are actively at work within the human race and human governments with the expressed goal and purpose being to take over humanity and rule over humanity. In order to do that he must cover up his operations and must conspire with human beings in positions of power in order for him to complete his infiltration and set the agenda for his coming to power on Earth, by invitation.

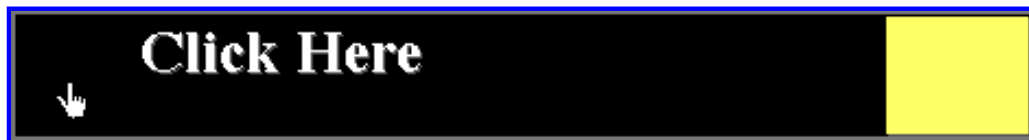
## Conclusions:

The Day of the Lord, also known as the great Tribulation period will be preceded by two events:

- The revolt by Humanity against God and joining forces with Satan
- The uncovering of a cover up...or the Antichrist reveals himself to the World.

Prior to these events, the church will have been "snatched away" because as I Thess 5:9 says: "For God hath not appointed us to wrath but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ."

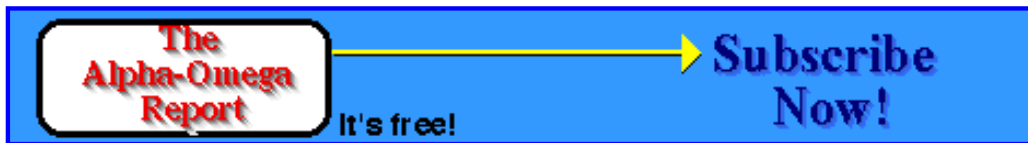
We conclude then that in all of this activity, the rapture will precede the 2 events listed above. We also conclude as well that most likely after the rapture will come the first of 2 judgments against "Mystery Babylon"/America by angelic forces that will supernaturally destroy America. (See the book "America, The Babylon" at [www.tlc.net/rac/](http://www.tlc.net/rac/) for more on this aspect.) After America is destroyed the spin-doctors will convince the world that an alien invasion from outer space has begun and will present benevolent "aliens" that have arrived to assist Earth in its own defense. These "benevolent aliens" will in fact be the Satanic forces. The human race will swallow this lie and will wish to join an alliance with the Satanic forces, which will be led by the Antichrist. Sounds like science fiction doesn't it? I wonder why? Could it be that Satan's forces have already been at work in our culture preparing and laying the groundwork for "the big lie?"



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