

#46 FORUM POST ON 2THESSALONIANS CHAPTER 2

Dear C_____.

You said:

2 Thessalonians 2:1-15 is Paul prophesying how bad it will be in the latter days that a falling away from the faith will occur before our gathering unto Christ Jesus in the first three verses. In verse 7, Paul is testifying that the iniquity that will cause the falling away from the faith in droves in the latter days, was already happening in his day in 2 Corinthians 2:7 This iniquity is akin to new age methodology where if a believer opens themselves up to receiving spirits, the Lord will remove the restraining part of the Holy Spirit in them and let it happen.

In 2 Thessalonians 2:9-12 Paul testifies how God will permit the strong delusion to occur that believe the lie that I see as receiving the Holy Spirit by a sign for salvation or apart from salvation; when no sign would be given that to an adulterous generations except He was three days in the earth Matthew 12:39-40. The reason I see this as the lie is because Paul went on to explain the tradition taught of us which testify to when we had received the sanctification of the Spirit & the belief of the truth at the calling of the gospel. 2 Thessalonians 2:13-15

At the end of 2Thes chapter 1, Paul addresses the Day of the Lord which begins after the resurrection from the grave when Christ is gloried in his saints.

2Thes 1:6 Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; 7 And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, 8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: 9 Who shall be punished with age-during destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; 10 When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.

At that time, Christ's Lake of Fire judgment will commence on the remaining portion of mankind who have not been saved yet.

Then at the start of chapter 2, Paul addresses a concern the Thessalonians have about the timing of the Day of the Lord.

2Thes 2:1 Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him (matches what Christ said in Mat 24:31), 2 that you be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that Day of Christ (usually called the Day of the Lord) is at hand. 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; 4 who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. 5 Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?

Their concern must have been reported to Paul by a messenger/letter and he now wants to set their minds at ease.

Paul tells them that the Day of the Lord is not “at hand” and that it will not come until after the apostasy occurs within the church. Even at this time, Paul was already aware that only after his departing would the grievous wolves enter the church (Acts 20:29).

The reason the Thessalonians were concerned about the timing of the Day of the Lord is because they had not yet received the Latter Rain and been gathered to Christ. And because they were still waiting on the Lord to come, they were afraid that the Day of the Lord would come first, leaving them unconverted. Apparently, someone had told them that the Day of the Lord was “at hand”.

Now, let’s look at the wording Paul used in talking about the salvation event in verse 1 and compare it with the wording Christ used in Mat 24:29-31:

2Thes 2:1 Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him.

Mat 24:29 Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: 30 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. 31 And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

We can then know with absolute certainty what event Paul and Christ are referring to when we look at what Peter said in Acts 2:14-21.

When the Apostles received the Latter Rain (Baptism of the Spirit) on the Day of Pentecost, Peter quoted from Joel 2:28-32 about his experience:

Acts 2:14 But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: 15 For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day. 16 But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; 17 And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: 18 And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy: 19 And I will show wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke: 20 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and notable day of the Lord come: 21 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

With Peter's statement above, we can know that Joel 2:28-32 is speaking of the second coming of Christ when He gives mankind the Baptism of the Spirit and salvation. James and several Old Testament scriptures call this event the Latter Rain.

Also, with Peter's statement, we can know with certainty that Christ in Mat: 24:29-31 is speaking of the same event. Both Peter and Christ say that this salvation event will include the sun and moon being darkened.

Also, Peter says that this salvation event will happen to "all flesh" (all mankind).

Because what Peter experienced on the Day of Pentecost is actually the Second Coming of Christ when He gathers His Elect (Latter Rain), it cannot be a one-time event which only comes at the end of this age.

If this is a one-time event, then no one but the 120 Jewish believers in the upper room will be saved out of the whole of mankind. But of course, we know that contention is not true. That leaves us with the conclusion that the Second Coming of Christ is a re-occurring event just as Rev 1:4 & 8 clearly states (is, was and will be coming).

Also, this truth proves that Matthew chapter 24 is a teaching on the pathway to salvation the Elect will travel. The Elect, who are saved throughout this age, make up the early group (First Fruits) of mankind who will experience what Peter and Joel described above.

1Cor 10:11 Now all these things happened to them as types, and have been written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages are come.

Since the "ends of the ages" come early to the Elect when Christ "comes again" and pours out the Latter Rain, it tells us what will happen at the actual "ends of the ages". At that time, the same salvation event will occur to the rest of mankind and they will complete the full harvest of mankind. Then it will be testified to the true that Christ is truly the Savior of the world (1Tim 2:4-6).

In your post to me, you also mentioned the latter days (last days). That spiritual term is speaking of this entire age along with the next age. The Latter Days is referring to the time when Christ brings in the harvest of mankind.

Also, the conversion event described in the verses which I have quoted above, are written in the spiritual language of Christ. As I have frequently stated, the "light" (truth) which the sun and the moon radiate, represents the truth of this carnal world. It is a false truth. When a believer is converted and their spiritual blindness is healed, they will then no longer receive their "truth" from this world (light from the sun and moon). They will then receive it directly from Christ. When they receive Christ's truth, the brightness of Christ (God's Word) will destroy the "Man of Sin" (2Thes 2:8) whom they had become.

Now, let's look again at what Paul teaches in 2Thes chapter 2:

2Thes 2:1 Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, 2 that you be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled,

neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that Day of Christ (**usually called the Day of the Lord**) is at hand. **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;** **4 who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.** **5 Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?**

Paul states that when the apostasy occurs, the Man of Sin will sit in God's temple. In this case, God's Temple is a believer who has the Early Rain of the Spirit. The Man of Sin will then proclaim his superiority over God. He does this with his belief in the Doctrine of Free Will. That doctrine teaches that mankind's "will" can overcome God's "will".

To put it another way, the Man of Sin has a "works" based belief system. When it is coupled with his belief in "free will", the Man of Sin proclaims that he has power to thwart God's "will" from being accomplished. And what is God's "will"? It is to save all mankind.

Now for one last item about why Paul encourages the Thessalonians to remain faithful and true to what He taught them. You might be asking why don't they have to follow the pathway to salvation that Paul's conversion laid out? Shouldn't Paul have told them about this pathway and that they will not be able to receive the Latter Rain and be converted until after they have fallen away and become a Man of Sin?

The answer is no. At the time Paul established the Thessalonian church and wrote his letters to them, the Gentiles were not under this portion of the pathway to salvation. They did not have to fall away and become a Man of Sin in order for Christ to come to them.

Here is when the pathway to salvation first included all the steps of Paul's conversion experience:

1Tim 1:16 Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should **HEREAFTER believe on him to life everlasting.**

So the real question is "when did Paul write this letter to Timothy" because it established the full pathway to salvation which everyone must follow to be saved in this age.

Paul's letter to Timothy was written near the end of Paul's ministry. The approximate date range for the letter is 62 – 64 A.D.

When Paul wrote his letters to the Thessalonians, the full pathway had not yet be instituted. Paul's letters to the Thessalonians are estimated to have been written about 12 years earlier in 51 – 52 A.D.

At the time Paul wrote his letters to the Thessalonians, Paul knew there was a short window available for Christ to come with the Latter Rain and convert certain Thessalonian believers. In fact, Paul knew that their conversion was certain:

2Thes 2:13 But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you (from the foundation of the world) to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: 14 Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The “sanctification of the Spirit” happens after a believer receives the Latter Rain of the Spirit.

Because of Paul’s knowledge of the Thessalonian’s chosen status, Paul repeatedly encouraged the Thessalonians to remain faithful. He even warned them about the apostasy that would be coming several years later. If the Thessalonians had already been converted, there would not have been any reason to encourage and warn them about the upcoming apostasy.

As for the reason why there was a delay in instituting Paul’s conversion pattern, I suspect it was to help ensure the establishment of the Gentile churches.

As for your other comments which you made in the post, I have responded to most of them before. Until you can reject your present understanding of end-time prophecy, I am probably wasting my time presenting any further scriptural evidence that contradicts your beliefs.

On that subject though, can you supply me the scriptural support you use for your 7-year tribulation period which you believe is coming?

Do you have a double witness of scripture for your beliefs or are you just repeating what you have been taught by false teachers?

Joe