

## APOSTASIA OR DEPARTURE? (II Thessalonians 2:1-8)

The true meaning of the Greek word *apostasia* in II Thessalonians 2:3 cannot be overlooked or ignored any longer by the Christendom faith; we have a spiritual obligation to search the Scriptures as we study it in its context. One must understand that the translators of Scriptures were not the writers neither the ones who received the revelation through the words given them. In other words, they were only translators. The translator cannot accurately interpret the true sentiments of an expression found in a language which is original only to that culture. Language is very much entangled in the culture of the people. An example of it is the idiom style found in every language, which is an accepted phrase construction, or expression contrary to the usual patterns of the language, or having a meaning different from the literal (Webster Dictionary).

The Word of God has come to us with interpretation and choices of certain words that are not always clear to our understanding, and sometimes not agreeing with the context as in II Thessalonians chapter two: But relative to the **coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to meet Him**, we beg you, brethren, not to allow our minds to be quickly unsettled or disturbed or kept excited or alarmed, whether it be by some revelation of Spirit or by word or by letter from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has arrived and is here. Let no one deceive or beguile you in any way, **for that day will not come except the apostasy comes first and the man of lawlessness is revealed, who is the son of doom. . . Do you not recollect that when I was still with you, I told you these things?** And now you know what is restraining him; it is so that he may be manifested in his own time. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work in the world, [but it is ] **restrained only until he who restrains is taken out of the way**, and then the lawless one will be revealed and the Lord Jesus will slay him with the breath of His mouth and bring him to an end by His appearing at His coming (vs. 1-3, 5-8).

This chapter would be very assuring in the hope of our salvation from the tribulation if the word, *apostasy* was translated in agreement with the context of the chapter. The Greek word *apostasy* is a compound word, “apo” –**from** and “istemi”- **stand**. So we see here that the fundamental meaning is “away from or departure”. Let’s put these verses in perspective in the order of events which Paul mentioned using the word *departure* in verse three and we will see that the subsequent verses, 6-8 will agree, establishing the same order of events. “The departure Paul previously referred to was ‘our being gathered to Him’ (v.1) and our being ‘caught up’ with the Lord and the raptured dead in the clouds “( I Thessalonians 4:17) an insight from Scripture clearly opening our eyes of understanding by Dr. Gordon R. Lewis. Allan MacRae, president of Faith Theological Seminary in a letter to Schuyler English has said the following concerning this matter:

I wonder if you have noticed the striking parallel between this verse and verses **7-8**, a little further down. According to your suggestion **verse 3 mentions the departure of the church as coming first, and then tells of the revealing of the man of sin. In verses 7 and 8 we find the**

**identical sequence. Verse 7 tells of the removal of the Church; verse 8 says: "And then shall that Wicked be revealed."** Thus close examination of the passage shows an inner unity and coherence, if we take the word *apostasia* in its general sense of "departure," while a superficial examination would easily lead to an erroneous interpretation as "falling away" because of the proximity of the mention of the man of sin.<sup>[11]</sup> [http://www.bibleone.net/print\\_tbs118.html](http://www.bibleone.net/print_tbs118.html).

So we have here in verse three the departure of the church before the Lawlessness one is revealed; and in verses seven and eight Paul repeats the sequence, the removal of the church and the revealing of the wicked one. When the word apostasy is used in the meaning of "falling away" it breaks the connection in its meaning. In the History of the translation of the word *apostasia* we learn from Dr. Thomas Ice the following: The first seven English translations of *apostasia* all rendered the noun as either "departure" or "departing." They are as follows: Wycliffe Bible (1384); Tyndale Bible (1526); Coverdale Bible (1535); Cranmer Bible (1539); Breeches Bible (1576); Beza Bible (1583); Geneva Bible (1608).<sup>[5]</sup> This supports the notion that the word truly means "departure." In fact, Jerome's Latin translation known as the Vulgate from around the time of a.d. 400 renders *apostasia* with the "word *discessio*, meaning 'departure.'"<sup>[6]</sup> Why was the King James Version the first to depart from the established translation of "departure"?

Here is the summary of the ways *apostasia* means rapture in II Thessalonians 2:3 from Online Bible Study:

1. The parallel between verse 3 and 7-8, showing the antichrist is revealed after the rapture.
2. Words With Similar Definitions: *methormizô*, remove from one anchorage to another
3. Words With Similar Definitions: *metex-anistamai*, Pass., move from one place to another
4. *Apostasia* is translated as "Dissecto" in Latin, which has a meaning of a "spacial departure".
5. *Apostasia* is translated as "departure" in many Bibles.
6. Liddell and Scott Dictionary authors note *Apostasia* is translated as "spacial departure" in one case in the 6th century.
7. *metatithemi*, used for Enoch's rapture, and *apostasia* both mean "to fall away"
8. *metatithemi*, used for Enoch's rapture, and *apostasia* both mean "to depart"
9. *metatithemi*, used for Enoch's rapture, and *apostasia* both signify "change" as the rapture is a change.
10. *metathesis*, used for Enoch's rapture, and *apostasia* both (in the word it's derived from, *aphistemi*) can both mean "to remove".
11. *laqach*, used for Enoch's rapture, and *harpazo* (rapture in 1 Thess 4:17), can both mean "to take"
12. *laqach*, used for Enoch's rapture, and *harpazo*, can both mean "to seize"
13. *laqach*, used for Enoch's rapture, and *harpazo*, can both mean "to snatch away"
14. *laqach*, used for Enoch's rapture, also carries the meaning "to marry, take a wife" which is a strong rapture parallel

15. Apostasia and harpazo both carry connotations of violence. Apostasia a violent revolt & rebellion, and harpazo "to seize by force" John 6:15
16. Harpazo, like metathesis and ahistemi--root of apostasia, mean "to remove"
17. Harpazo is used in a peculiar way to signify "falling away from the faith" in Matthew 13:19, which is the main definition of apostasia.
18. The play on words of "stand in, present" enistemi and "stand off, absent" ahistemi, shows that apostasia, which comes from ahistemi, signifies the rapture, when people will be "absent".
19. ginomai, the word for "taken" (out of the way) in verse 7, the parallel of apostasia in verse 3, means "be married to" and the rapture is the marriage.
20. ginomai, the word for "taken" (out of the way) in verse 7, the parallel of apostasia in verse 3, means "to arise" and the rapture is when we rise up.
21. ginomai, the word for "taken" (out of the way) in verse 7, the parallel of apostasia in verse 3, signifies "of miracles" and the rapture will be a miracle.
22. Apostasia, as rapture, is fully consistent with apostasia as religious rebellion, and it is not an either/or definition or option, the word means both.
23. Those who say the pre trib rapture is false doctrine (an apostasy) unwittingly confirm that apostasia signifies rapture

<http://www.linkjesus.com/apostasia.htm>. I recommend you go to this website and learn more in depth about the right translation of the word apostasia in Thessalonians 2:3.

According to Dr. Thomas Ice, the definite article "the" shows a definite event distinct from the Man of Sin. The Greek word for "falling away," alone does not mean religious apostasy or defection, neither does the word mean "to fall", as the Greeks have another word for that. [pipto, I fall; TDI]. The best translation of the word is "to depart"

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The Thessalonians were going through a time of severe persecution and were told that was the Day of the Lord, for which Paul refutes, reminding them of the things he had told them as in chapter four of his first letter to them, verses fifteenth through seventeenth: **For this we declare to you by the Lord's [own] word, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord shall in no way precede [into His presence] or have any advantage at all over those who have previously fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a loud cry of summons, with the shout of an archangel, and with the blast of the trumpet of God. And those who have departed this life in Christ will rise first. Then we, the living ones who remain, shall simultaneously be caught up along with [the resurrected dead] in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so always we shall be with the Lord!** And in chapter five of first Thessalonians, Paul refers to the Day of the Lord as a day of darkness, and separates them from the incurrance of God's wrath upon them by saying, For you are all sons of light and sons of the day; we do not belong either to the night or to darkness... But we belong to the day; therefore, let us be sober and put on the breastplate of faith and love and for a helmet the hope of salvation, for God has not appointed us to [incur His] wrath, but to obtain His salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ (vs. 5,8-9). These were the things Paul was reminding them of as he stated in verse one of second Thessalonians chapter two and three, But relative to **the**

**coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to[meet] Him**, we beg you, brethren, not to allow your minds to be quickly unsettled or disturbed or kept excited or alarmed.. Do you not recollect that when I was still with you, I told you these things? (vs. 5).

There is a difference between the terms, The Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Day of the Lord. The Coming of our Lord, is for the gathering of the Church to meet Him, as in the fetching of the Bride found in I Thessalonians 4:16-17; and the Day of the Lord is the day of His vengeance, His wrath as we read in Joel 2:2, A day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and of thick mists and darkness; a day of destruction, Isaiah 13:6; a great and terrible day (Joel 2:31); the Day of the Lord is darkness and not light; it is as if a man fled from a lion and a bear met him, or went into the house and leaned with his hand against the wall and a serpent bit him (Amos 5:18-19). So the Christians in Thessalonica understood the meaning of this day and through some letter they received, they feared to be in the tribulation. Paul then assured them: The Day of the Lord will not come until the **departure** comes first and after that the son of perdition will be revealed; and again he assured them again with the words, And now you know what is restraining him; the work of lawlessness is already at work in the world, but it is restrained **only until he who restrains is taken out of the way** and then the lawless one will be revealed (vs.6-8).

This is the most comforting passage assuring the Bride of Christ that she will be taken before the revealing of the antichrist and the time of tribulation. The lawless one will be revealed only on the right time and no one knows when because this event is connected with the taking of the Bride of Christ, a day no one knows when, either the hour of her departure. Only when she is taken away will he be given power to govern the world, for he has no power over the Bride of Christ, whose body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. God's removal of His Bride will confirm His words, Nothing can take them (His sheep) out of My hands. God will protect her from the lawless one by taking her away to Himself. So, as Paul said, Comfort and encourage your hearts and strengthen them in every good work and word (II Thessalonians 2:17); and let no one deceive you with the idea that you are going through the tribulation, just as he assured the Thessalonians, he is assuring us of that too!