

# 7 Pre trib (rapture) problems

## Part 4

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Thessalonians chapter 2

#### Intro

Comparison of Pre-Trib and Pre-Wrath teaching.

Not necessarily about proving one view right and the other wrong, but being good Bereans.

#### Recap

Pre-Wrath position based upon the 'triple lock'.

- That Joel 2:31, Matthew 24:30-31, and Rev 6:12-14 describe the same cosmic event.
- Thereby, chronologically linking these passages together (and placing their contextual information into a specific chronological sequence).

So far, we have...

- Unlocked the idea the cosmic sign of Joel directly precedes the start of the Day of The Lord.
  - Unlocked the idea that the rapture is 'back-to-back' with the Day of The Lord.
  - Unlocked the idea that the 'birth pangs, great tribulation, and the Day of The Lord are all mutually exclusive periods.
- Unlocked the idea that Mt 24:30-31, is referring to the rapture of the Church saints.
  - Unlocked the idea that the 'great tribulation' is less than 1260 days long.

#### Premise of this video segment

According to a plain reading of 2<sup>nd</sup> Thessalonians chapter 2, there are two things that must precede 'the day of The Lord' and 'our gathering together to Christ', which means the rapture.

1. The falling away –
  - a. which Prewrathers identify with Mt 24:23-28, after the midpoint of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week (although some see it starting prior to, or with the start of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week).
2. The man of Sin (lawlessness) is revealed –
  - a. which Prewrathers identify as when Antichrist breaks his covenant with Israel, at the midpoint of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week.

Paul uses the specific Greek work "*proton or protos*" v3, which is often translated "first," and is used here to describe when these two events would take place in relationship to the Day of the Lord.

#### Prewrath Conclusion

- The rapture cannot occur until *after* the midpoint of the 70th week.
- The Day of the Lord occurs *immediately after* the rapture
- The Day of The Lord must start sometime *after* the midpoint and can't last the entire duration of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week.

This confounds two Pretrib positions.

- 1) That there are no events that must occur before the rapture.
- 2) That the entire 70<sup>th</sup> week of Daniel is The Day of The Lord.

## Our response

### The passages context

2nd Thessalonians was written by the apostle Paul, in part to refute a false teaching circulating at the time, that **the Thessalonians** had missed the rapture, or that the rapture had failed to take place, and they **were now in the Day of the Lord**.

The primary issue is whether Paul is saying...

1. The two signs precede the rapture AND the Day of The Lord (so you haven't missed the rapture).
2. The two signs precede the Day of The Lord (so you haven't missed the rapture).

In the passage...

- Paul clearly sees the rapture precedes the Day of The Lord.
- The Prewrath and Pretrib views both agree the rapture precedes the Day of The Lord.
  - Prewrathers assume that both events are 'back-to-back', the rapture initiating the Day of The Lord (after the midpoint of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week).
  - Pretribbers argue that they are not intrinsically, or sequentially, linked (see part 2).
    - So, for Pretribbers, signs that precede The Day of The Lord, do not necessarily precede the rapture.
    - For Pretribbers 'the Day of The Lord' lasts the entirety of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week.

So, how do we decide between reading 1, or reading 2?

There are two means

- A) Examine the signs.
- B) Examine the literary construction of the passage.

- A) Examine the signs.

#### Sign 1) The Falling away

- This falling away 'begins' sometime in the future event for Paul (*Parousia, future tense*).
- This is 'The Apostacy' (definite article).
  - By implication...
    - Distinct from previous apostacies.
    - Worldwide.
    - Universal, or absolute, in nature (will not co-exist with that which is not apostate).
      - (Which is why it is hostile to tribulation saints and repentant Israel)
        - (Although granted God has prepared a place in the wilderness for repentant Israel)
- Coming is sudden, not a process.
- Will consist of rebellion against God
- Could be initiated by the removal of The Holy Spirits restraint (2<sup>nd</sup> Thess 2:6-7)
- The Greek requires The Apostacy to precede the revelation of the man of sin.

- Consequently, the description of his revelation may refer to a time within the Day of The Lord.

Sign 2) The revelation of the man of sin

- The Prewrath position is that the man of sin is revealed as such when he opposes and exalts himself above God and sits as God in the temple, which they identify as the midpoint of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week.
- And, this happens before the rapture and Day of The Lord,
- However, in the text, the man of sin exalts and opposes God by himself
- But then, the text tells us that he is 'revealed' or 'unveiled' by another, not himself.
  - At 'the time' appointed v6 by the one who unveils, not the Antichrist who exalts himself v4.
- **When are we told in Scripture that the Antichrist will be identifiable as the Antichrist?**
  - **Daniel 9:27 'he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week'**
- **The Antichrist is revealed/unveiled when he makes a covenant with Israel for a 7-year period.**

The above means that

- The 2 signs of 2<sup>nd</sup> Thess chapter 2, which definitely precede the Day of The Lord, occur at the beginning of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week (regardless of whether they precede the rapture).
- The Day of The Lord can include the entirety of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week.
- Regardless of whether the signs precede the rapture, the rapture and the Day of The Lord do not begin, or occur, after the midpoint of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week.

However, can we conclusively prove the signs do not precede the rapture?

B) Examine the literary construction of the passage.

'Now we **earnestly ask/request** you brethren, **on behalf of/in defence of** the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and [our] gathering together unto Him'

'we ask you not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as if the day of Christ [The Lord] had come [is present].'

First, it is important to recognise that the term 'day of Christ' (in the KJV, Majority text); even if it is the original wording; cannot refer to 'the coming of The Lord and our gathering to Him', the subject of v1, because in the Greek, the 'day of Christ' is present.

In other words, the Thessalonians consider themselves erroneously to be 'in' the day of Christ/The Lord, a time of persecution, and to have missed the rapture, or it not have taken place.

So, for them, the day of Christ/The Lord was to follow the rapture. Something that Paul does not disagree with.

This is why the reading 'the Day of The Lord' is preferred in v2 for 'Day of Christ'.

In short, Paul is saying,

‘in defence of my teaching regarding the coming of Christ for us and the rapture, and, the misconception that you are in the Day of The Lord, then the Day of The Lord cannot come until 2 signs precede it’

In other words, you can only link the 2 signs with Paul’s reference to the Day of The Lord, not his overall ‘defence’ of his teaching concerning the rapture.

As Paul is referring to teaching in this subject that he has already given the Thessalonians. We can therefore refer to the 1<sup>st</sup> letter Paul sent, and the teaching within concerning the rapture and Day of The Lord.

Key verses:

1<sup>st</sup> Thess. 4:16, Paul gives no mention of preceding signs to the rapture taking place.

1<sup>st</sup> Thess. 5:1-9, Paul does not mention explicit signs, but clearly expects the Thessalonians to remember what he had taught them regarding the coming of the Day of The Lord, and that if they watch, (by implication for signs), then they would see when the day was coming.

#### **A very poor argument regarding 2<sup>nd</sup> Thess chapter 2.**

- The word translated as *falling away* or *apostasy* in 2<sup>nd</sup> Thess 2:3, actually refers to *the rapture*; if we translate the Greek word ‘apostazia’ as to depart (as its meaning is understood elsewhere in the New Testament).
  - However, this would mean Paul would be saying that the rapture can’t come before the rapture.

#### **Conclusion**

- **The Rapture can occur prior to the start of Daniels 70<sup>th</sup> week.**
- **The Day of The Lord is not limited to the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of Daniels 70<sup>th</sup> week, or a period within that half.**