

THE PRESENTATION OF THE PROBLEM (2 THESSALONIANS 2:1–5)

2 THESSALONIANS 2:1 – BLUE

- Paul opens with an appeal tied to two phrases:
 - “the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ”
 - “our gathering together unto him”
- PAROUSIA (παρουσία, “coming”):
 - Not a technical term for a single eschatological event.
 - Can refer to the catching away (1 Thessalonians 4:15) or to the Second Coming in judgment (e.g., Matthew 24:27).
- EPISUNAGOGE (ἐπισυναγωγή, “gathering together”):
 - Found only here and in Hebrews 10:25.
 - Means assembling; context must determine which assembling.
- Question raised:
 - One event described two ways, or two separate events?
 - Two-event view lacks logic or grammatical support.
- If one event, which?
 - Context could point to the rapture (1 Thessalonians 4 background).
 - Context could point to Israel’s regathering (Isaiah 11:12; Ezekiel 37:21; Matthew 24:31).
- Conclusion at this stage:
 - Verse 1 does not settle the identification.
 - Both readings remain open pending later clarification.

2 THESSALONIANS 2:2 – BLUE

- Paul’s purpose: that they “be not soon shaken in mind.”
- Therefore, the coming/gathering in v.1 must be something that steadies rather than alarms.

LOGICAL ANALYSIS

- If the gathering had already occurred and they expected to be included, fear would be reasonable.
- If the day of Christ followed the gathering, believing the day was at hand would suggest they missed the gathering.
- If the gathering were future and glorious (e.g., the rapture), it would not produce panic.
- If the gathering were future and ominous, and they expected rescue, fear would arise.

PAUL’S EXPLICIT PREMISE

- His goal is to remove fear.
- An ominous near-future gathering is ruled out.
- A distant ominous event does not match their immediate distress.
- Their fear must involve something they believed could affect them now.

WHAT EXPLAINS THEIR DISTRESS?

- Most coherent explanation:
 - They feared they had missed the rapture, or that the rapture would not occur.
 - This led them to think “the day of Christ” was at hand.
 - That conclusion naturally provokes alarm.

FINAL LOGICAL FORCE

- Paul corrects a faulty eschatological deduction.
- Their fear only makes sense if:
 - They tied their gathering to deliverance.
 - They thought that deliverance had failed.
 - They concluded the catastrophic era was beginning.

THE ORIGIN OF THEIR CONCERN

- Their agitation came “by spirit, by word, or by letter as from us.”
- Suggests a forged message claiming Paul had erred.
- Paul later identifies his own handwriting as the authenticating mark (3:17).

2 THESSALONIANS 2:3 – BLUE

- Paul warns explicitly against deception.
- “That day” refers to the day of Christ in v.2.
- “Day of Christ” vs “day of the Lord”:
 - Arguments for distinction are unconvincing.
 - Likely the same eschatological period.
 - Non-KJV differences stem from manuscript variations without doctrinal impact.

TWO PREREQUISITES FOR THE DAY OF CHRIST

1. THE FALLING AWAY (apostasia)

- Only other NT use: Acts 21:21 (forsaking Moses).
- Three major interpretations:
 - **General apostasy**: standard reading; abstract noun describing an event.
 - **Abandonment of goodness**: tied to Romans 11:22; Gentile societies forsaking moral restraint.
 - **Literal departure (rapture)**: interpreting APOSTASIA as physical departure; defended at length by Andy Woods.

2. REVEALING OF THE MAN OF SIN / SON OF PERDITION

- Almost certainly the figure commonly called the Antichrist.
- Identification tied to the abomination of desolation (v.4).
- “Man of sin”: unique term.
- “Son of perdition”: occurs elsewhere only in John 17:12 (Judas).