

Introduction to NT Books

Dr. Thomas M. Strouse

XII. The Book of II Thessalonians

A. The Authorship of II Thessalonians

1. The same patristics who attested to Pauline authorship for the First attest for the Second.

2. Liberals question whether Paul would have written two epistles in such a short time with different content and tone, in spite of Paul's affirmation (1:1; 3:17).

B. The Date of II Thessalonians—he apparently wrote within several months (c. AD 51) of the First Epistle (3:11 with I Thes. 4:10-12 ff.).

C. The Origin and Destination of II Thessalonians—Paul apparently wrote from Corinth to the same church that he had started over a three week period.

D. The Purpose of II Thessalonians

1. He thanked them for their faithfulness (1:1-4).

2. He assured them that the forged letter was theologically incorrect about Christians in the Day of the Lord (2:2).

3. He promised to sign his signature on all letters (3:16-18).

E. The Characteristics of II Thessalonians

1. He continued to discuss the return of Christ (1:7-10; 2:1, 8; 3:5).

2. The apostle encouraged the Thessalonians that their enemies and persecutors could very well be cast into the judgment of the Tribulation (1:6 ff.).

3. He staunchly warned about a forged letter that taught a Post-Trib rapture position (2:2).¹

4. He referred to the Day of Christ² (I Cor. 1:8; 5:5; Phil. 1:6, 10; 3:16, II Thes. 2:2) indicating that it would begin simultaneously with the Day of the Lord.

5. Paul taught that the Day of the Lord would be characterized by two supernatural phenomena: the revelation of the final Antichrist (I Jn. 2:18) and the realization of the final Apostasy (II Tim. 3:13).

a. The Antichrist will oppose and exalt himself with regard to God (2:4).

¹Paul's writings were wrested (twisted) and forged by enemies of truth, as the first century conspiracy against truth was in full swing (II Pet. 3:15-16).

²The CT changed this to "the day of the Lord" (Χριστοῦ changed to κυρίου).

b. He is identified as “*the man of sin*” and “*the son of perdition*” (2:3).

c. He will not be revealed until the one Who lets, or the “Restrainer,” is removed (6-8).

1) The Restrainer must be more powerful than Satan’s Antichrist.

2) The Restrainer must be a member of the Godhead.

3) The Restrainer must be the Holy Spirit because His special indwelling ministry will cease at the Rapture when all those “*in Christ*” are removed (I Thes. 4:15-17).

d. Satan will offer mankind “*a lie*” (τῷ ψεύδει), which is the same lie he offered Adam and Eve in the Garden: deathlessness and deification of man (Gen. 3:4-5). He will claim to be the perfect reincarnated man—666 (Rev. 13:18).

e. Many during the Tribulation will receive not and believe not the truth and be damned (2:10-12).

6. Some church members apparently gave up employment to wait on Rapture, and in the meanwhile became busybodies (3:6-11).

7. These folks were to be shunned and made ashamed (3:12-15).