
THE WORDS GOD CHOSE TO USE

APOSTASIA

FALLING AWAY ~ By Pastor Tom Hill



2 Thessalonians 2:3, "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."

The words FALLING AWAY are from the word APOSTASIA. It has come to light that there are those who believe that APOSTASIA refers to the rapture of the saints. This is not a new position by any means. Many articles define the word APOSTASIA as being a "departure". My purpose is to define the word, and then show how it is used in the rest of the Scriptures.

The word APOSTASIA can mean "departure." But I caution my brethren to remember that words are defined, not by a pretext of what one wishes a word to mean, but rather by the context in which the word is found. That is how we discern the meanings of particular words when they can be defined more than one way. For example, the word AND is used extensively, and have a variety of meanings. The context helps show how the writer intended us to understand "AND". Sometimes the Greek word is DE, which means MOREOVER or BUT. Other times the word for "AND" is KAI, which can mean AND, THEN, FURTHER, ALSO, BUT, and the like.

Context matters, beloved.

Some writers say the word APOSTASIA is related to the word AOSPAO. AOSPAO is made up of the word APO – "away from,

to separate,” and the word SPAO, meaning “to draw” such as a sword or dagger, or to draw away to be alone. A careful study of AOSPAO reveals that it does not come from the same family of words, other than sharing the same prefix preposition (APO).

The word APOSTASIA is used only twice in the New Testament.

The other usage besides II Thess. 2:3 is found in [Acts 21:21](#) "And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs."

The word FORSAKE is the same word, APOSTASIA. The root word of APOSTASIA is APOSTASIS. The way that it appears in 2 Thessalonians 2:3, is that it has a definite article – the word THE (Gk. HE) which might give it the thought of THE REBELLION.

Does the definition of DEPARTURE fit the verse? Indeed, it gives the same sense to what Paul is saying. This is the departure from what? Falling away from what? The word means “a literal defiance of an established system or authority, it is a rebellion, an abandonment, a breach of faith.”

The Septuagint uses the word in Joshua 22:22, 2 Chronicles 29:19. In the LXX (Septuagint), it is only used of a "rebellion" or means "too forsake, or remove far away".

The related Greek word is APHISTEMI such is found in Acts 15:38 and is used of John Mark's departure (Acts 13:13).

Another use of the word APHISTEMI is found in 1 Timothy 4:1 in speaking of the departure from the faith. A related word in the

Greek vocabulary is the word DICHOSTASIA. The difference between APOSTASIA and APHISTEMI is that APOSTASIA refers to the STATE of apostasy and APHISTEMI refers to the act itself. There is an added nuance to APOSTASIA that means the "deliberate abandonment of a former position or authority".

When we come to II Thess. 2:3, when Paul uses the word APOSTASIA, he is giving the Thessalonians a way to know that the day of the Lord had not come and would not come until there was a falling away from the truth and the man of sin be revealed.

Many of us believe that the falling away, the departure, the abandonment of the truth is going on in our churches today. One need only to open his eyes to see how little the Word of God means and how small a place it has in the churches.

How many churches are really concerned about the faith in this day? Budgets and numbers have a much higher priority in a lot of places, and truth gets set aside in order to get more people into the congregation and get the offerings up so that the budgets can be met.

Others have fallen for Calvinism. Still others are welcoming the world and the flesh without reservation.

If a person reads church history he will find that there has never been such a departure from the truth as there is today. The APOSTASIA, the departure, comes in many forms and through many vehicles, from youth programs, to music, that many churches have chosen to use to draw the crowds.

Contrary to those who say there is a revival in the land, the fact is that there is apostasy from truth. But the Lord said it would be

this way. The falling away in the Lord's churches is no doubt part of the "perilous times" of which Paul wrote (2 Timothy 3:1).

May we who love the truth, preach the truth and live the truth, never remove nor allow another to remove the ancient landmark of truth that the Lord established in His churches.



NOTE: a bibliography of sources:

- Theological Dictionary of the New Testament
- Thayer Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament.
- A Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian Literature (BDAG).
- Lexham Theological Wordbook, Dictionary of Bible Languages with Semantic Domains Greek New Testament.
- Intermediate Greek-English Lexicon.



Is It The Apostasy, Or Is It The Rapture?

By Hughie Seaborn

The following are the Scriptures, with explanatory notes interspersed, relevant to the question, "Is the Greek word "***apostasia***" translated as "***falling away***" in **2 Thessalonians 2:3** speaking of an end time apostasy in the churches, or is it speaking of the rapture of the saints to Heaven to be with the Lord?"

NOTE: Strong's Greek Dictionary explains the word "***apostasia***" as "a defection from truth, apostasy, falling away, to forsake." The King James Bible translates "***apostasia***" as "***a falling away.***"

Verse 1, of **2 Thessalonians 2:1-12**, “**1** Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our **Lord Jesus Christ** [the Greek word for Christ is *Christós, khris-tos'* which refers to **Christ**], and by our **gathering together** unto him [the Greek word for **gathering together** is *episynagōgḗ, ep-ee-soon-ag-o-gay'* which means a **meeting, an assembling together**. It refers to our gathering together with Christ, on that day when the dead in Christ shall rise first, and we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. The context is speaking about the Rapture].

Verse 2 reads, “**2** That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the **day of Christ** is at hand [**The day of Christ** is not referring to the day of the Lord, when Christ returns to the Earth at His second coming, following the Tribulation. **The day of Christ** is specifically speaking about **the day when Christ Raptures His church**].

Verse 3, “**3** Let no man deceive you by any means: for **that day** [referring to the **day of Christ** – the day when the Rapture takes place] shall not come, except there come a **falling away** first [The Greek word that has been translated as falling away, is *apostasía, ap-os-tas-ee'-ah* which means an **apostasy**], and that man of sin [that is, the **Anti-Christ**] be revealed, the son of perdition.”

Verse 4-7, “**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, shewing himself that he is God. **5** Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? [Paul was possibly referring to the things mentioned in **1 Thessalonians 4** here] **6** And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. **7** For the mystery of iniquity doth already

work: only he who now letteth will let, until **he be taken out of the way** [this, we believe, is the Holy Spirit's presence being removed from the Earth with the church, at the Rapture].

Verse 8, “**8** And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with **the brightness of his coming** [this is referring to **the Lord's Second-Coming** when He returns to Jerusalem with the Church, after the seven year Tribulation period].

Verse 9, “**9** Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, **10** And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. **11** And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: **12** That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”

If, as some are promoting, the word *apostasía* does not mean a **falling away**, i.e. an **apostasy**, but that it really means being **caught up**, as in **the Rapture**, then **2 Thessalonians 2:1-3** is forced to say something totally unbiblical and spiritually impossible.

Reading **2 Thessalonians 2:1-3** with the interpretation according to the promoters of “*apostasía = rapture*” included.

“**1** Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him [**at the Rapture**], **2** That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ [**the Rapture**] is at hand. **3** Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day [**the day of Christ, the Rapture**] shall

not come, except there come a falling away [**the Rapture**] first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition.”

According to the “*apostasía = rapture*” promoters, the Rapture won’t take place until the Rapture comes first. The Rapture must come before the Rapture can take place, according to their teaching.



Some Further Questions:

If, as Strong’s Greek Dictionary teaches, the Greek word *apostasía* means “a defection from truth, an apostasy, a falling away, to forsake,” why then would Paul use the word *apostasía* in **2 Thessalonians 2:3**, to describe the Rapture, when he previously use the Greek word *harpázō* in **1 Thessalonians 4:17** to describe the same event, **the Rapture**, where he says that we will be **caught up** together in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air?

1 Thessalonians 4:15-17 reads, “**15** For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord [**at the Rapture**] shall not prevent [which means **precede**, or **go before**] them which are asleep [those who are **dead** in the grave]. **16** For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: **17** Then we which are alive and remain shall be **caught up** [the Greek word translated here as **caught up**, is *harpázō*, *har-pad'-zo*, which means to seize, to catch away or catch up, to pluck, to pull, to take by force] together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”

This Greek word *harpázō*, used in **1 Thessalonians 4:17** to describe the Christians being **caught up** in the Rapture, is used seventeen times in Scripture, and describes exactly what Strong's Greek Dictionary says it does. Something has been seized, caught away, plucked up, pulled or taken by force.

For example, **John 6:15** reads, "**15** When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and **take him by force**, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone." The term "**take Him by force**" is translated from the Greek word *harpázō*.

Again, **Acts 8:39**, speaking about what happened to Philip after he baptized the Ethiopian Eunuch. "**39** And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord **caught away** [*harpázō*] Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing." The Greek word translated as "**caught away**" is *harpázō*.

The Lord caught Philip away [*harpázō*], in the same way that the Lord will catch away [*harpázō*] the saints at the Rapture, to meet Him in the air.

Again, why would Paul use the Greek word *apostasía* in **2 Thessalonians 2:3**, which translates to **apostasy**, and which means, "a defection from truth, an apostasy, a falling away, and to forsake," when everywhere else he used the word *harpázō*?

