2 Thessalonians Commentary

The second epistle to the Thessalonians is much like the first. It has many of the same greetings, encouragements, warnings, and giving of thanks that are found in the first letter. Much like Thessalonians several of the verses in this epistle have been pushed into a future context. I intend to show that the definitions of the words in these verses do not demand a future context. The kjv is the translation used unless otherwise noted.

Chapter 1

V 1-4 - In verses 1-4 Paul is praising them for their faith which continues to grow and their love for each other. Paul boasts to all the churches about how cheerful and faithful they remain as they suffer persecution and affliction for this faith.

V5 - In verse 5 Paul speaks about the "kingdom" that the Thessalonians were counted worthy to belong to because of the things that they suffer. This is the same "kingdom" which he also spoke of in his first letter. They were suffering for their belief in the truth of Jesus. This truth is the new covenant, which was the kingdom which was being preached and the same kingdom which we live in today.

Verse 7 - And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels.

This verse is the first example of this future context. There are two words in this verse which we will look at. The first Greek word is "en" which is translated "when", (G1722) in the Strong's, is typically translated "in". I prefer the translation "in" over "when " in verse seven. The second word is "revelation or manifestation"(G602). This word is translated "shall be revealed". The placement of "shall" in front of this word only happens twice in 18 uses.

1Peter 4:13 is the other time the word "shall" has been placed in front of the word revelation/ manifestation. The asv does a much better job with this verse. The translation of the phrase in verse seven in the kjv
is "when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed". This translation in the asv is "at the revelation of the Lord Jesus". The asv translation paints a better picture of what this verse says and means. The Greek word apokalupsis (G602) gets its origin from the Greek word apokalupto (G601). It means to "take off the cover" or "to disclose". Jesus' manifestation in the flesh was from heaven and his ministry on earth was the "taking off of the cover or the disclosing of who he was and the purpose of his manifestation.

As I stated in my commentary on 1 Thessalonians, I believe that when Paul speaks of the manifestation of Christ from heaven with His mighty angels, he is looking back at the resurrection events. To insist that AD 70 or some still future date is the only time Jesus was "revealed from heaven" is to deny that his "manifestation in the flesh" was from heaven.

Again, I believe verse seven to be speaking of Jesus' ministry on earth and the union between Jesus and those who rose out of their graves immediately after Jesus (Matthew 27: 52,53).

Christians, as well as the rest of mankind, should take a long close look at all of the events in 1st century. It is this power displayed thru Jesus' ministry in signs and miracles that makes the events of AD 70 spoken of in Matthew 24 relevant. Christ's manifestation in the flesh and his ministry on earth was full of power and his presence continued on after his death on the cross. This presence was felt thru His disciples whom were given all authority to continue on "in this presence and power", and also through His own manifestations to Paul and others after his death and resurrection. A good example of this was Paul's encounter with Christ on the road to Damascus. He was turned 180 degrees and his life was never the same after this event.

I used 2Peter 1:15,16 in my commentary on 1 Thessalonians as an example of this looking back at the "power and coming" of the Lord. Peter is looking back at the "power and presence" of the Lord's ministry on earth.

As I stated in that commentary, I believe Paul is looking back at Jesus' ministry and the resurrection events. If Paul could not
convince his listeners that Jesus was indeed the Messiah then there would be no reason to try and explain to them that there will be some future event that is of great importance. For the Jewish people "the awaiting of the coming Messiah", the manifestation of Jesus in the flesh, was what they were waiting for. Paul and the other disciples message is of this truth. This truth looked much different than what the Jewish people were expecting.

When Jesus stated that "the faith of a mustard seed can move a mountain", this is in part what he was speaking of. To sway the Jewish people from Judaism to Christianity was going to be a very difficult task. In order to do this the foundation had to be established that Jesus was indeed the Messiah and not just another crazy drunkard as some believed him to be.

Verse 10 - When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day. Again this verse would be looking back at the resurrection events and the union between Christ and his saints (those who were his at his coming.) The teaching of a still future "coming" of Christ causes this understanding to be lost.

Chapter 2

Verse 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. Paul reminds them not to be shaken in any way because the "day of Christ is at hand". We need to understand the "day of the Lord" as a process, not a one time event, with the events of 70 A.D. being the final act of this process. The phrase "is at hand" is the Greek word "enestemî" (G1764) which is defined as "to place on hand". This definition does not allow for a still future "day of the Lord". You can't place something on the hand and then say at some point in the future I will place something on the hand. That statement makes absolutely no sense at all. Either it is or it is not. In this instance it was "at hand" right there and then in 1st century.

Verse 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 word "man" in the phrase "let
no man deceive you" at the beginning of verse 3 is the Greek word "tis" (G5100) which is defined as "some or any man". This word is plural, yet the translators change it into the singular at the end of the verse.

Verse 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, showing himself that he is God. The singular form is continued here when speaking of the "man of perdition" when the subject of this verse is still "some or any person" in verse 3. I would translate verse four as "who opposes and exalteth themselves above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that they as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing themselves that they are God.

I feel the need to state here that I believe the "anti-Christ" to be anything or anybody that opposed Christ. 1st century had no shortage of these things. Judaism itself was in direct opposition to Jesus and the truth of his teaching. The Pharisees, the Sadducees, the temple high priests, even Rome if Jesus would have come right out and said he was greater than Caesar. Again, the subject of this verse is established in verse 3 as "some or any person" not one singular person.

Verse 8 - this verse is full of the word "shall" which again gives the impression that the things spoken of will take place in the future. However, if we look at the events surrounding Jesus ministry we see that Jesus did in fact consume and destroy "the wickedness", defined as without law, with the spirit of his mouth. Jesus proved that he had authority over all things before his death on the cross. What more must he do to prove to mankind that this is true and there is nothing left for him to do?

The last sign to show to the Jewish people in 1st century was the sign of Jonah. Three days in the earth and then the resurrection. The last thing conquered, "death". This sign was for the Jew not you and I. We have the privilege today of looking back at these events. The question is are we willing to embrace them for the truth of what they are. If we do not embrace them I feel that we rob Jesus of the glory contained within his ministry. How many more times does Christ Jesus have to cast a demon out of a person, or heal the sick, or put
Satan in his place, for us to believe that he has authority over all things and is the ruler of all things.

Verse 9 - Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders. This verse has to be speaking of Jesus' ministry as it proclaims that "Jesus' coming or presence is against the working of Satan in all power and signs and lying or false wonders". The Greek word "pseudos" which is defined as a falsehood or lie" tells us that the power and signs here belonged to Satan and Jesus' ministry was in direct opposition to Satan.

Verse 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. This verse speaks of "them that perish". Again, the subject of this group of scriptures has not changed since verse 3 "some or any person" yet the translators switch back and forth between the singular "man of perdition" to the plural "them that perish". There wasn't one man running around trying to deceive all of Israel. This was God the Father giving Satan authority to rule the air for a time. Jesus' ministry is a picture of God's word taking that authority back from Satan. Those who were given over to this lie by Satan was the lineage of Esau. This is not a new concept. It is spoken of in chapter nine verses 18-22 in the book of Romans. God hardened the hearts of a portion of the lump of clay, a vessel of dishonor, fitted for destruction. Who are we to question The Father.

Verse 11 - And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:

Verse 12 - that they all "are damned" who believe not the truth, contra wise have pleasure in unrighteousness.

Verse 13-17 - here Paul gives thanks to them for there belief in the truth and there sanctification of the Spirit. He encourages them to stand fast and hold the traditions being taught. He tells them to comfort there hearts and that they are confirmed in every good word and work.
Chapter 3

verse 1 - Paul asks for prayer, specifically that the word stays its course and is glorified in others as it has been glorified in them.

verse 2 - And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith. I believe verse two to be speaking of the same men spoken of in chapter two verses three, four and eleven.

verse 3 - But the Lord is faithful, who shall establish you, and keep you from evil. The word shall has been placed in front of the word establish here. The definition does not demand this. I would remove it from the translation.

verses 4-15 - The remainder of the scriptures in this chapter continue to encourage one to remain steadfast in their daily lives with regards to living out an example of Christian living.

verses 16-18 - A final salutation to the Thessalonians. Again, as I stated in my commentary in 1 Thess., the future context should be removed from the scriptures if the definition does not demand it. When the future context is removed the most beautiful picture of the fulfillment of God's word is revealed!