2 Thessalonians 2:3 – 4 “Apostasy”  
4-6-22

I. Two Signs Must Precede Christ’s Appearing - 2 Thess 2:3
   1. The Falling Away
   2. The Revelation Of The Man Of Sin

II. What Does “The Falling Away” Mean? The Thessalonians Knew
   1. Paul Refers To It Without Providing Any Explanatory Comments
   2. “The Apostasy” (Definite Article) - Indicates A Specific Event They Are Aware Of
   3. Paul Explicitly States In 2 Thess 2:5 That He Has Discussed This With Them

III. Essential For Determining A New Testament Word’s Meaning
   1. Definitions Of Standard Lexicons And Dictionaries
   2. But Dictionaries Are Secondary – They Derive Definitions From Actual Usage
   3. Instances In The Greek New Testament
   4. Instances In The Greek Old Testament
   5. Information About The Hebrew Word It Translates
   6. Instances In Secular Koine Greek D
   7. Instances In Classical Greek (Homeric Or Attic Dialects)
   8. Cognates (Verbs, Nouns, Adjectives, Adverbs Derived From The Word)

IV. The Meaning Of Aphistemi
   1. Dictionary Definitions (See Attachment)
   2. 3 Possible Types Of Withdrawal Or Removal
      - A Political Rebellion
      - A Religious Rebellion
      - A Physical Removal Or Withdrawal
   3. Scriptural Usages - 153 Occurrences In The Greek Bible (See Attachment)
   4. What The Data Tells Us
      - The Primary Usages Are Related To Political Or Spiritual Rebellion
      - Of These, Spiritual Rebellion Is The Primary Use In Scripture
      - Significant Numbers Of Instances With Other Meanings Are Related
      - 30% Of Instances Involving Physical Separation Involve Personal Conflict
      - Most Instances Of Metaphorical Separation Involve Ideological Conflict
      - In Most Instances Of The Lord’s Withdrawal, It Is Due To Spiritual Conflict

V. The Meaning Of Apostasia
   1. Dictionary Definitions (See Attachment)
   2. Scriptural Usages – 8 Occurrences In The Greek Bible (See Attachment)
   3. What The Data Tells Us
      - Generally Refers To Political Rebellion Or Revolt In Secular Greek Usage
      - Always Refers To Spiritual Rebellion In The Bible

2 Thessalonians 2:3 – 4 “Apostasy”  
4-6-22

I. Two Signs Must Precede Christ’s Appearing - 2 Thess 2:3
   1. The Falling Away
   2. The Revelation Of The Man Of Sin

II. What Does “The Falling Away” Mean? The Thessalonians Knew
   1. Paul Refers To It Without Providing Any Explanatory Comments
   2. “The Apostasy” (Definite Article) - Indicates A Specific Event They Are Aware Of
   3. Paul Explicitly States In 2 Thess 2:5 That He Has Discussed This With Them

III. Essential For Determining A New Testament Word’s Meaning
   1. Definitions Of Standard Lexicons And Dictionaries
   2. But Dictionaries Are Secondary – They Derive Definitions From Actual Usage
   3. Instances In The Greek New Testament
   4. Instances In The Greek Old Testament
   5. Information About The Hebrew Word It Translates
   6. Instances In Secular Koine Greek D
   7. Instances In Classical Greek (Homeric Or Attic Dialects)
   8. Cognates (Verbs, Nouns, Adjectives, Adverbs Derived From The Word)

IV. The Meaning Of Aphistemi
   1. Dictionary Definitions (See Attachment)
   2. 3 Possible Types Of Withdrawal Or Removal
      - A Political Rebellion
      - A Religious Rebellion
      - A Physical Removal Or Withdrawal
   3. Scriptural Usages - 153 Occurrences In The Greek Bible (See Attachment)
   4. What The Data Tells Us
      - The Primary Usages Are Related To Political Or Spiritual Rebellion
      - Of These, Spiritual Rebellion Is The Primary Use In Scripture
      - Significant Numbers Of Instances With Other Meanings Are Related
      - 30% Of Instances Involving Physical Separation Involve Personal Conflict
      - Most Instances Of Metaphorical Separation Involve Ideological Conflict
      - In Most Instances Of The Lord’s Withdrawal, It Is Due To Spiritual Conflict

V. The Meaning Of Apostasia
   1. Dictionary Definitions (See Attachment)
   2. Scriptural Usages – 8 Occurrences In The Greek Bible (See Attachment)
   3. What The Data Tells Us
      - Generally Refers To Political Rebellion Or Revolt In Secular Greek Usage
      - Always Refers To Spiritual Rebellion In The Bible
VI. Can Apostasia Mean “Rapture”?
1. Factors Supporting This View:
   - Aphistemi Can Mean “Physical Separation”
   - Aphistemi Has Neutral And Positive Uses, As Well As Negative
2. Factors Indicating Otherwise
   - The Primary Biblical Usage Is For “Rebellion”
   - Apostasia In Scripture Always Indicates “Rebellion”
   - The Immediate Context Of False Teaching Supports This
   - Clear Allusions To Rebellion In Daniel - Daniel 11:31, 36; 12:10-11

VII. How Bible Versions Translate Apostasia
1. Falling Away – KJV, NKJV, AMP
2. Rebellion – ESV, NIV, RSV, NRSV, NET
3. Apostasy – NAS, CSB, NAB

VIII. A Political Rebellion, A Spiritual Rebellion, Or Both?
1. Factors Pointing Towards A Spiritual Rebellion:
   - Apostasia Implies The Breaking Of A Previously Established Relationship
   - Paul’s References To The Temple And Worship
2. Mitigating Factors:
   - Apostasia Indicates Rejection, Not Neglect Or “Lukewarmness” – 1 Tim 4:1, 2 Tim 4:3
   - Paul States That We Are Now In The End Times
   - There Have Always Been People Backsliding
   - How Could These Be Signs To The Thessalonians?
3. A Combination Of Political And Religious Rebellion
   - Separation Of Church And State A Relatively Unknown Concept In History
   - All Sin Is Rebellion

IX. The Slow March Toward The Final Rebellion
2. The Rebellion In The Garden – Gen 3:1-6
3. The Rebellion At The Border Of Canaan – Num 14:1-4
   - Judges, 1 & 2 Samuel, 1 & 2 Kings, 1 & 2 Chronicles
   - Each Of These Involved A Fusion Of Civil And Religious Leadership
   - Each Successive Leader Was Worse Than The Last
   - The Culmination - 2 Chron 36:14-16
5. The Rebellion In The Time Of Antiochus Epiphanes – 1 Matt 2:15-21
7. The Rebellion At The End Of History – Daniel, Revelation

X. Next Week – Mark 13 And Its Relationship To 2 Thessalonians 2
Aphistemi – Dictionary Definitions
1. TDNT (Theological Dictionary Of The New Testament)
   • “To Remove, Either Spatially, Or From The Context Of A State Or Relationship, Or From Fellowship With A Person” (TDNT, Vol 1, Pp 512-513)
2. BAGD (Bauer, Arndt, Gingrich, Danker), 2nd Ed. – P. 126-127
   • To Cause To Revolt, Mislead
   • To Go Away, Withdraw
   • To Desert
   • To Become Apostate, To Revolt
   • To Keep Away, Abstain
   • To Repel
   • To Renounce A Claim
   • To Go Away
   • To Make Stand Off, Cause To Withdraw, Remove
   • To Stand Off, Stand Aloof, Go Away, Depart From
   • To Desert, Withdraw From
   • To Fall Away, Become Faithless
   • To Put Away, Lead Away
   • To Stand Off, Depart From, Withdraw From
   • Fall Away, Apostasize

Apostasia, Apostasis – Dictionary Definitions
1. BAGD 2nd Ed. – P 98
   • Rebellion, Abandonment
2. Moulton & Milligan – P 68-69
   • An Act Of Revolt
3. Thayer’s – P 67
   • A Falling Away, Defection Apostasy
4. Abbott-Smith – P 54
   • Defection, Apostasy, Revolt

Aphistemi – Dictionary Definitions
1. TDNT (Theological Dictionary Of The New Testament)
   • “To Remove, Either Spatially, Or From The Context Of A State Or Relationship, Or From Fellowship With A Person” (TDNT, Vol 1, Pp 512-513)
2. BAGD (Bauer, Arndt, Gingrich, Danker), 2nd Ed. – P. 126-127
   • To Cause To Revolt, Mislead
   • To Go Away, Withdraw
   • To Desert
   • To Become Apostate, To Revolt
   • To Keep Away, Abstain
   • To Repel
   • To Renounce A Claim
   • To Go Away
   • To Make Stand Off, Cause To Withdraw, Remove
   • To Stand Off, Stand Aloof, Go Away, Depart From
   • To Desert, Withdraw From
   • To Fall Away, Become Faithless
   • To Put Away, Lead Away
   • To Stand Off, Depart From, Withdraw From
   • Fall Away, Apostasize

Apostasia, Apostasis – Dictionary Definitions
1. BAGD 2nd Ed. – P 98
   • Rebellion, Abandonment
2. Moulton & Milligan – P 68-69
   • An Act Of Revolt
3. Thayer’s – P 67
   • A Falling Away, Defection Apostasy
4. Abbott-Smith – P 54
   • Defection, Apostasy, Revolt
Aphistemi – Usage In The Greek Bible (153 Occurrences)

1. Simple Physical Separation
   - Old Testament
     - General (12): Gen 12:8; 19:9; 30:36; Lev 13:58; Num 8:25; 12:10; Josh 3:16; 8:16; 1 Sam 14:9; 1 Kings 11:29; 20:24; Job 31:22;
     - As A Result Of Conflict (9): Gen 31:49; Num 16:27; 1 Sam 18:13; 19:10; 2 Sam 2:22; 23; 28; Is 52:11; Lam 4:15
   - New Testament
     - As A Result Of Conflict (3) - Luke 13:27; Acts 15:38; 19:9;

2. Political Revolt (7)
   - Gen 14:4; 2 Chron 13:6; 21:8, 10; Jer 52:3; Ezek 17:15; Acts 5:37

3. Spiritual Revolt

4. The Lord Separating Or Withdrawing From His People (20)

5. Withdrawal From Or Rejection Of An Idea Or Practice
   - From Injustice (1) - Ex 23:7
   - From Idolatry (1) - 2 Kings 10:29, 31; 13:2, 6, 11; 14:24; 15:9, 18, 24, 28; 17:22;
   - From Godliness (1) - Prov 22:6
   - The Physical Removal Of Objects
   - Of Idolatrous Objects (5) - 2 Kings 18:22; 23:19; 14:3; 14:5; 28:24

6. Separation Or Withdrawal From Or By People (7)
   - Job 7:16; 14:6; 19:13; 30:10; Ps 6:8; Acts 5:38; 1 Tim 6:5;

7. The Withdrawal Or Separation Of Objects Or Qualities From Each Other (22)
   - Old Testament: Gen 31:40; Judge 156:17, 19; 2 Sam 7:15, 12:10; 1 Chron 17:13; Esth 6:1; Job 6:13; Ps 39:10, 81:6; 119:29; Prov 23:18; Ecc 11:10; Is 59:9, 11, Jer 5:25; 16:5; Dan 2:5, 8; 6:18; Hos 5:3
   - New Testament: 2 Cor 12:8

Apostasia – Usages In The Greek Bible

2. In Second Temple Literature – 1 Macc 2:15;

Aphistemi – Usage In The Greek Bible (153 Occurrences)

1. Simple Physical Separation
   - Old Testament
     - General (12): Gen 12:8; 19:9; 30:36; Lev 13:58; Num 8:25; 12:10; Josh 3:16; 8:16; 1 Sam 14:9; 1 Kings 11:29; 20:24; Job 31:22;
     - As A Result Of Conflict (9): Gen 31:49; Num 16:27; 1 Sam 18:13; 19:10; 2 Sam 2:22; 23; 28; Is 52:11; Lam 4:15
   - New Testament
     - As A Result Of Conflict (3) - Luke 13:27; Acts 15:38; 19:9;

2. Political Revolt (7)
   - Gen 14:4; 2 Chron 13:6; 21:8, 10; Jer 52:3; Ezek 17:15; Acts 5:37

3. Spiritual Revolt

4. The Lord Separating Or Withdrawing From His People (20)

5. Withdrawal From Or Rejection Of An Idea Or Practice
   - From Injustice (1) - Ex 23:7
   - From Idolatry (1) - 2 Kings 10:29, 31; 13:2, 6, 11; 14:24; 15:9, 18, 24, 28; 17:22;
   - From Godliness (1) - Prov 22:6
   - The Physical Removal Of Objects
   - Of Idolatrous Objects (5) - 2 Kings 18:22; 23:19; 14:3; 14:5; 28:24

6. Separation Or Withdrawal From Or By People (7)
   - Job 7:16; 14:6; 19:13; 30:10; Ps 6:8; Acts 5:38; 1 Tim 6:5;

7. The Withdrawal Or Separation Of Objects Or Qualities From Each Other (22)
   - Old Testament: Gen 31:40; Judge 156:17, 19; 2 Sam 7:15, 12:10; 1 Chron 17:13; Esth 6:1; Job 6:13; Ps 39:10, 81:6; 119:29; Prov 23:18; Ecc 11:10; Is 59:9, 11, Jer 5:25; 16:5; Dan 2:5, 8; 6:18; Hos 5:3
   - New Testament: 2 Cor 12:8

Apostasia – Usages In The Greek Bible

2. In Second Temple Literature – 1 Macc 2:15;