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A table of contents for the *Calvary Baptist Theological Journal* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_cbtj.php

Salvation in the Tribulation in Light of God's "Working unto Delusion"

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Interest in eschatological events increases with rapid changes in the world situation. In times when society is plagued by uncertainty, immorality, social injustices and the threat of war men turn with great interest to inquire about future events. The sad truth is that in times like these men have not always turned to God's revealed truth concerning future happenings, but they have turned to occult leaders and devices for answers. Recognizing this interest in the future, the witnessing Christian, once gaining a good grasp of eschatological truth, should use this interest as a point of contact for conversational witnessing.

When witnessing to those interested in future events, the Christian has a responsibility to warn of the imminency of Christ's return and the danger of putting off the decision to receive Christ as Savior. Some Christians supposedly on the basis of II Thessalonians 2:1-12 have said that hope will be gone forever for those who hear the truth of the Gospel and refuse to receive Christ as Savior before Christ's coming for His church. One of these Christians is W Herschel Ford who writes, "Men who will not believe in the truth which is in Christ Jesus will then believe the lies of Antichrist and there will be no chance for salvation after Jesus comes."¹ The question arises as to the validity of such a statement in light of other Biblical truths. To arrive at a conviction of acceptance, rejection or modification of this teaching, one will want to consider the time, nature, cause, and extent of the "working unto delusion" as mentioned in II Thess 2:11.

The Time of "a Working unto Delusion"

To understand when God will send "a working unto delusion," it is necessary to know the time relation of it to the mystery of iniquity (II Thess 2:7), and to the revelation of the Lawless One (II Thess 2:3, 8).

In Relation to the Mystery of Iniquity

The mystery of iniquity like any Biblical mystery is revealed truth about a subject which was unknown in completeness before God revealed it. This mystery concerns the origin and operation of iniquity in God's universe. Its antithesis is the mystery of godliness. In contrast to the mystery of godliness (I Tim 3:16) centered in the Person of Christ, the preaching of the Gospel, and the glory of the ascended Lord, the mystery of iniquity is centered in Satan, the preaching of untruth and the future self-ascribed glory of Antichrist.

Existence before "a working unto delusion." An examination of the origin and operation of iniquity should reveal the existence of the mystery of iniquity before "a working unto delusion."

Origin of the iniquity of the mystery of iniquity. Iniquity began with the fall of Satan from his high angelic position before God (Isa 14:12-14; Ezek 28:14-15). As a volitional creature, Satan chose to sin against God by intellectually desiring to be as God. Sin spread to the earth by the temptation from Satan and consequently the fall of man (Gen 3:6-7, 13). Adam as the head of the race passed by propagation his sinful nature to his descendants so that all born by natural propagation are born sinners (Rom 5:12; 3:23). As a sinner man by nature sins. Thus, iniquity had its origin with the fall of Satan who introduced it to man who sinned and still sins.

Operation of the mystery of iniquity. From the first sin in the Garden to the first murderous son, this mystery of iniquity progressed. Its effects reached such proportions that God destroyed the earth with water to retard its progress (Gen 6-9). Yet again iniquity's progression among men had to be slowed by the confusion of different languages given to men at Babel (Gen 11:5-9). So it progressed through the dispensations unto the present church age. The mystery of iniquity continued simultaneously with the ministry of the Restrainer and with the message of redemption as proclaimed by the Church before the rapture.

(1) Before the removal of the Restrainer. The Restrainer of iniquity has been identified as the Roman Empire, Satan, the Jewish state, law of government, the Church, or the Holy Spirit. On this problem D Edmond Hiebert has written.

Our identification of the Restrainer must ultimately be determined by the question, What person is able to hold back the efforts of Satan? To effectively counteract and restrain the personal activities of Satan demands a person, and one that is more than human. Only a supernatural person can truly frustrate the supernatural workings of Satan. This would at once rule out human agencies as well as all evil supernatural agents.²

This supernatural person is the Holy Spirit of God. The objection of strength to the interpretation is the removal of the Spirit leaves no saving and enabling power during the Tribulation at which time many will be saved and empowered to witness and work for God. Answering this objection are these words of Gerald Stanton.

The work of empowering and convicting during the Tribulation is still that of the Holy Spirit. Because He is God, the Spirit is omnipresent, and in that sense He is present among men and operative in every age. When, He, as restrainer, is removed, there will be a reversal of Pentecost, which will mean that the Spirit will minister from heaven as during the OT economy. He will be present, but not resident, operating, but no longer indwelling. He will save souls, but no longer baptize them into the body of Christ, for the church will be complete and in heaven.³

The restraining ministry of the Holy Spirit has an object—to restrain the mystery of iniquity (II Thess 2:7). The mystery of iniquity “already” works. “Already,” an adverb of time, stresses the present activity as opposed to something taking place in the future. The verb, *energeitai*, being present tense and middle voice, speaks of continuous action in its own interest. Thus, as the mystery of iniquity works the Holy Spirit restrains it until a definite historic, undetermined time as seen from the aorist subjunctive, *genetai*. After the removal of the restraining ministry of the Holy Spirit, the mystery of iniquity continues unrestrained as implied by the context.

(2) Before the rapture of the church. Having written the Thessalonians in his first epistle about the Rapture, Paul, in the interest of this truth remaining and being precious to them, mentions it again (I Thess 4:13-18; II Thess 2:1). Two aspects of this one event are mentioned—the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the gathering together to him. “The article appears before *parousia* and is not repeated before *episunagoge*, indicating that these are complementary elements in one event.”⁴ Writing in the interest of the maintenance of the correct understanding of this precious truth of the Rapture, the Apostle warns them of the error that the Day of the Lord is present.

The correct rendering in II Thess 2:2 is "Day of the Lord" rather than "Day of Christ" because of manuscript evidence and contextual demands.⁵ The context demands "Day of the Lord" because "nothing is predicted as having to take place before the Day of Christ shall come, but the coming of the Day of the Lord is marked by signs in the heavens and notable events on the earth."⁶ Since the Rapture is imminent for the believer and precedes the Day of the Lord which will contain events leading to God's working unto delusion, it follows that the rapture of the Church precedes this working unto delusion.

If the rapture of the Church precedes this working unto delusion in the Day of the Lord, the mystery of iniquity also does, for it has been working before the rapture of the Church in the Church age. Evidence of the working of the mystery of iniquity has been reported in the Scriptures by Peter, Paul, John, Jude and others.⁷ The doctrinal deviations were to come in the "last days" according to these men. "Last days" as applied to the Church refers to the time from the incarnation of Christ until the rapture. Men so influenced by the mystery of iniquity cannot endure sound doctrine. They deny the Lord that bought them, the power of godliness, the judgment of God as demonstrated by the flood and other crucial truths.

Peter speaks of the past and yet future working of the mystery of iniquity. "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you" (II Pet 2:1). Jude writing probably a decade later than Peter concerning false teachers states that they had already (*pareisedusan*) crept in among believers (Jude 4). Using the term "antichrist" to describe the spirit produced by the mystery of iniquity, John declares that his readers are already living in the last time which is characterized by antichrists (I John 2:18, 22; 4:3; II John 7). These false teachers had already gone out into the world (I John 4:1). John uses *exeluthasin* a perfect tense which indicates that the false prophets have gone out into the world in the past and the result of this was still being felt. John uses "antichrist" to refer to an attitude characterizing false teachers who are the forerunners of one who will be the culmination of that spirit. The book of Revelation written by John describes the culmination of this spirit in the Antichrist, the beast, the Lawless One. Thus, the New Testament writers clearly declare the mystery of iniquity to have been working in the Church age before the rapture of the Church and, therefore, before God's working unto delusion.

Still another proof of the working of the mystery of iniquity in the Church age is the fact already seen—the simultaneous

working of the mystery of the iniquity and the restraining ministry of the Holy Spirit. This restraining ministry of the Spirit takes place during the Church age and will be removed with the rapture of the Church. W E Blackstone summarizes:

The Holy Spirit, who, while he is gathering the Bride, reproveth the world of sin, righteousness and judgment, will, when he is taken out of the way, catch up the Bride to meet the Lord in the air, leaving the apostate church, adulterous Israel and the ungodly world, to believe a lie, and then shall the lawless one be revealed.⁸

Since the restraining ministry of the Holy Spirit takes place in the Church age and it has the mystery of iniquity to restrain, it logically follows that the mystery of iniquity operated in the Church age. If the mystery of iniquity operated in the Church age it certainly was working before this working unto delusion which occurs after the rapture of the Church.

Existence with "a working unto delusion." The mystery of iniquity does not cease to work with the removal of the Restrainer, but is finally free to freely work. Leon Morris observes: "His point is that although the lawless principle is at work already it cannot reach its climax at present because of the restrainer. That climax will be reached only when the restrainer is 'taken out of the way.'"⁹ Not only does the word "already" indicate a working, though restrained, which will climax after the removal of the Restrainer, but the characteristics of the mystery of iniquity described in the days of the New Testament writers find complete manifestation in the person and program of the Antichrist. As the false prophets gave heed to the seducing of spirits and the doctrine of demons, so the Antichrist's coming is after the working of Satan (I Tim 4:1; II Thess 2:9).

It has been so stated that the mystery of iniquity exists with a working unto delusion because these two have different sources. The mystery of iniquity has for its source Satan, whereas a working unto delusion is sent by God (II Thess 2:11). Finding its climax in the person and program of the Lawless One, the mystery of iniquity, which is literally "the mystery of lawlessness," works to persuade men of the truth of untruth. By contrast this working unto delusion sent by God brings men to a state where they will welcome untruth as truth. "The delusion which Satan had deliberately fostered is now divinely confirmed in them since they voluntarily accepted it and desired it."¹⁰ Thus, the mystery of iniquity exists at the same time as God's working unto delusion.

In Relation to the Revelation of the Lawless One

The time relation of "a working unto delusion" with the revelation of the Lawless One may be comprehended by noting their relation to the Day of the Lord as well as to each other.

Christians are not now in the Day of the Lord.

Day of the Lord. The Day of the Lord has eschatological significance. "It is . . . that extended period of time beginning with God's dealing with Israel after the rapture at the beginning of the tribulation period and extending through the second advent and the millennial age unto the creation of the new heavens and new earth after the millennium."¹¹

This designation appears in II Thess 2:2, 3 which read, ". . . as that the day of the Lord is at hand. 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." Several problems as to time sequence arise in the interpretation of this passage. Is the term Day of the Lord used of the whole period or to some aspect of it? Does the falling away and the revelation of the man of sin precede the Day of the Lord or are they a part of it? Are the falling away and the revelation of the man of sin two separate events or one? These questions must be answered to see the time of the revelation of the Lawless One and how "a working unto delusion" relates to it.

The keys to the solution of these problems are the phrase *hos hoti enesteken he hemera tou kuriou* and the word *proton*. Frame clarifies the meaning of the phrase: "Enesteken means not 'is coming' (*erchetai* I Thess 5:2), not 'is at hand' (*engiken* Rom 13:12), not 'is near' (*engus estin* Phil 4:5), but "has come," "is at hand," "is present."¹² Paul is warning of the false idea that Christians are already in the Day of the Lord. They are told that that Day is not present unless historically the apostasy has come and the man of sin has been revealed. The use of the aorist tense with these two entities reveals them as happening in the Day of the Lord. So from this understanding of the phrase mentioned the Day of the Lord is used of the first events—the Tribulation events rather than the Millennial aspect.

Also proof of the understanding of the Day of the Lord as referring to the Tribulation events rather than Millennial events is the use of *proton*. This word being located after *he apostasia* correctly indicates that the apostasy will come first before the revelation of the man of lawlessness. This word has been interpreted to mean that the apostasy and the revelation of the man of lawlessness come before the Day of the Lord or that these two events are first on the program of the Day of the Lord. Lenski writes, "The first thing on the program is the arrival of the

apostasy and the revelation of the man of lawlessness."¹³ The definiteness of each event as seen by the article and the difference in meaning of the verbs indicate these are two separate events. The apostasy precedes. If *proton* went with both, why was it not located before both verbs and subjects? Hiebert asserts, "The two verbs, emphatic by position, serve to distinguish the events."¹⁴ Kenneth Teague clearly shows these as two events.

. . . we must distinguish between the "apostasy" and the "man of sin" in that the former is the corruption of the Church, while the latter is the culmination of the evil in the world. It is neither necessary nor wise to say that the apostasy produces the "man of sin," for he arises from among the nations (Rev 13:1); but that the apostasy paves the way for the "man of sin" is clearly taught by our context (II Thess 2:1-11).¹⁵

Thus, the Day of the Lord includes the apostasy which will come first and the revelation of the man of lawlessness. Since "a working unto delusion" appears in the context describing the person and activities of this man it is concluded that it occurs also at this same period of time (II Thess 2:8-11).

Relation to each other. The revelation of the man of lawlessness appears in the Tribulation part of the Day of the Lord. The activities of the Antichrist so work "all deceivableness of unrighteousness" in those who have not received "the love of the truth, that they might be saved" that God sends a working unto delusion. The activities of Antichrist appear to be previous and preparatory for the sending of a working of delusion. Considering II Thess 2:11, Frame writes,

The *kai* may be consecutive, "and so," or it may designate the correspondence of guilt and punishment. The *pempei* refers not to the time previous to the revelation of the *Anomos* (*energeitai* v7) but, as *estin* (v 9) intimates, to the time when the apostasy comes and the *Anomos* is revealed.¹⁶

So, "a working unto delusion" occurs during the time of the program of Antichrist when men so respond to the culmination of lawlessness.

The Nature of "a Working unto Delusion"

Will there be no chance for salvation after the rapture of the Church for men who would not receive the truth in Christ in the Church age? The answer to this question may be found partially by studying the nature of "a working unto delusion." The nature of this may be grasped by studying the words *energeian planes*, and the context of these words.

The Words *energeian* and *planes*

The richness in meaning of *energeian planes* demands a three fold consideration of these words. Each word will be considered for meaning before the construction is examined.

Energeian. This word *energeian* has its root in *energeo*, which means to be at work or in action, to operate.¹⁷ Thus the noun *energeian*, means working, active energy, operation. In the passage under consideration, II Thess 2:11, the noun is in the accusative case as object of the verb *pempei* which means "he sends." "The word working, used only by Paul in the New Testament, denotes the inward operation of some supernatural power."¹⁸ Six times it is used distinctly in connection with God (Eph 1:19; 3:7; 4:16; Phil 3:21; Col 1:29; 2:12) and once in connection with Satan (II Thess 2:9). The eighth appearance of the word is in II Thess 2:11 where God is the sender of a working unto delusion. From a study of the word in the first six passages distinctly related to God's program it is obvious that this working is internal as opposed to external and is directed toward beneficial goals such as the faith of those who believe, the resurrection of Christ and also believers, the ministry of Paul and the energizing of the Church. Confirming the fact that *energeian* denotes the inward operation of some supernatural power, Roy Clark discusses the etymology of the word.

It is composed of the noun *ergon* which comes from the verb *ergazomai*, to work. The interesting thing to note is that the preposition *en* is prefixed to the noun *ergon*. Hence the compound form means "to work in" or "an inner working."¹⁹

Concerning the inward nature of this working, Hiebert comments:

It should be noted that God does not send upon them "error" as such but rather an inward working of the inevitable consequences of error. They will fall under the influence of a power working within them which leads them farther and farther away from the truth.²⁰

Hence, the word *energeian* is a supernatural inward working either by God or Satan as the context indicates.

Planes. The root of the word *planes* is *planao* to wander, to lead astray. This noun appears ten times in the New Testament.²¹ Seven times it is translated error, once deceive, once deceit, and once delusion. The lexical definitions reveal that this word also may refer to that which is inward or subjective. Abbott Smith's lexicon states, "A going astray, an error (in the New Testament always in respect to morals or religion)"²² Thayer confirms this:

A wandering, a straying about, whereby one led astray from the right way roams hither and thither. In the New Testament metaphorically used of mental straying, i.e., error, wrong opinion about something relative to morals or religion.²³

On the use in II Thess 2:11 Alford asserts that *planes* is a "passive state resulting, instead of the active cause."²⁴ From these definitions, it seems evident that *planes* can be a mental state of being astray from the truth.

Energeian planes. Upon consideration of the genitive relationship indicated by *planes*, a person must decide what type of genitive use appears in the construction *energeian planes* as found in II Thess 2:11. Lenski gives his opinion.

The A V translates "error's working" as "strong delusion," as if *energeian* were adjectival; but the governing noun is never adjectival, only the genitive may be, thus here the meaning is not energetic error ("strong delusion") but "erroneous energy." This will, however, not do, for the sense is evidently the energy or working that belongs to error (possessive genitive).²⁵

Objection to this being a possessive genitive, "erroneous energy" is made on the basis of the context. God is the sender who sends the "working" but not the "error." Hiebert agrees, "It should be noted that God does not send upon them 'error' as such but rather an inward working of the inevitable consequences of error."²⁶ The mystery of iniquity has erroneous energy but it is not of this *energeian*—a divine working. The genitive here "is a genitive of the object, and denotes the goal of the active inward energy, namely; 'delusion,' the state of being deceived. . . ."²⁷ Leon Morris agreeing that the genitive is the objective genitive writes, "God will send a power which will operate to bring about in them a delusion."²⁸ Hence, *energeian planes* is a working within men issuing into a state of mind characterized by a straying from the truth.

The Context of *energeian planes* and Rev 13:14-18; 14:9-11

II Thess 2:1-11, the context of *energeian planes*, seems to indicate that this working unto delusion is a working unto a permanent, irredeemable state. Satan's working objectively through the Antichrist and his program and subjectively in those who are in a perishing state sets the condition which causes God to send the working unto delusion. The decision not to receive the truth is finalized or a historic decision for those perishing as they hear the truth. The aorist tense of *edexanto* in verse ten reveals this. Because of this God shall send, in that time of Antichrist's program and man's rejection of truth, a working unto a state of

Despite God's revelation, men will voluntarily believe the lie.

delusion which causes men voluntarily to believe a lie. The finality of this belief may be seen by the use of the tense of the verb.

The tense of the verb *believe* is an effective aorist and points to the time when they actually came to believe and trust in a "lie" literally, "the lie," the opposite of the truth (v 10). The lie is that pictured in verse 4 above, "the lie" *par excellence*, the last and crowning deception practiced by Satan in passing off the Lawless One as God.²⁹

Those who believe the lie are irredeemable as seen by the ultimate purpose of sending the working unto delusion that they believe the lie. The ultimate purpose is "that they might be damned." That they are irredeemable who experience this state of delusion and believe the lie is verified by Rev 13:14-18 and 14:9-11. Rev 13:14-18 indicates that those who believe the lie will receive an identifying mark for economic purposes. God seeing this mark of identifying with the Antichrist promises judgment. Rev 14:9, 10 is clear:

And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, if any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb.

The certainty and permanency of the effects of a working of delusion is seen in the fact that God is the sender. Thus, the recipients of *energeian planes* believe the lie, take the mark of the beast which calls forth God's eternal judgment. Being a state of mind characterized by error the words *energeian planes* as appearing in context are shown to result in a reception of the lie (the Antichrist is God and his will is right for men) which calls forth eternal damnation.

The Cause of "a Working unto Delusion"

In a study of physical death it has been set forth that there is an ultimate cause, a procuring cause, and an instrumental cause.³⁰ An illustration of this is the physical death of King Saul recorded in I Chron 10:4-5, 13-14. The instrumental cause is first mentioned. "So Saul took a sword, and fell upon it" (I Chron 10:4b). The sword was the instrumental cause of death. The procuring cause was Saul's transgression. "So Saul died for his transgression which he committed against the Lord, even against the word of the Lord, which he kept not, and also for asking counsel of one that had a

familiar spirit to enquire of it" (I Chron 10:13). God is the ultimate cause of physical death with Saul, for "God slew him" (I Chron 10:14). As this analysis of the cause—ultimate, procuring, and instrumental—is applicable to physical death so is it applied to "a working unto delusion."

The Ultimate Cause

From the study of the words *energeian planes* and their context it was decided that this working unto delusion was a state of mind characterized by error. It is not speaking of the person of Antichrist.³¹ God is viewed as moving Antichrist into place to cause men to believe "the lie." Among those taking the judicial blindness view as stated previously, there are two schools of thought—permissive blindness and causative blindness. Those holding to the view of permissive blindness look at God's action as permissive and passive.³² Advocates of the causative blindness believe that God causes the working which results in a state of delusion.³³ Proof for God being the ultimate cause of spiritual blindness, a working unto delusion, may be noted by consideration of *pempei*, of the use of *eis to*, of the context, of related Scriptures, and by reason.

Pempei. The subject of the verb *pempei* is God in II Thess 2:11. "God" is in an emphatic position. The word *pempei* is present tense of the verb. This has raised the question as to the time of this sending, since this verb has been taken as a simple present denoting present action and as a prophetic present denoting future continuous action. Those seeing this as a simple present point to the working of the mystery of iniquity. Those taking *pempei* as a prophetic present take this to be future in the period of Tribulation. That this should be taken as a prophetic present should be recognized since it has already been proved that a working unto delusion takes place after the removal of the Restraint and after the Antichrist with his program appears.

The word *pempo* may be used in the sending of persons or things. When used in connection with God sending, *pempo* may imply accompaniment by God in the sending. "This suggests a strong action and participation in the sending and not mere permission."³⁴ Assenting to this truth are the words of Hiebert.

Modern thinking would prefer to reduce the action of God to the operation of an impersonal law of nature, but Paul clearly sees the activity of God in the operation of the law which he has established.³⁵

Use of *eis to*. In II Thess 2:11 is the Greek construction *eis to*

plus an infinitive which denotes purpose. Blass and Debrunner assert, "*Eis to* is used to denote purpose or result, apparently not differing from *to* and the infinitive."³⁶ Since the construction in context denotes purpose, God the subject of the verb *pempei* must be causative in sending this working unto delusion.

Context of II Thess 2:11. God is the ultimate cause of a working unto delusion. The context supports this. God is the sender, not Antichrist or Satan. As Antichrist is energized by Satan, so God sends the "energy" or "working unto delusion" (II Thess 2:11). The purpose of believing the lie—"that they all might be damned who believe not the truth"—reveals the consummation of moral judgment from God, not Satan.

Related Scriptures. That God is the ultimate cause of a working unto delusion as found in II Thess 2:11 may be seen from similar action by God mentioned in other Scriptures.

Exodus 4:21b. "but I will harden his heart, that he shall not let the people go." God hardens only after Pharaoh hardened his heart.

I Kings 22:22. "And the Lord said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And he said, Thou shalt persuade him, and prevail also: go forth, and do so." God sends a lying spirit into the mouths of the false prophets.

Romans 1:24, 26, 28. "Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves . . . For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature . . . And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient." God is the agent "who gives" here as he is the agent "who sends" in II Thess 2:11.

Revelation 6:1-2. "And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see. And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer." Christ releases the Antichrist to work his program.

These passages as well as others confirm the fact that God is the ultimate cause in the blindness of sinful men as II Thess 2:11 asserts.

Reason. That God is the ultimate cause of judicial blindness is reasonable since He is the creator of natural law. Roy Clark sets forth this argument.

Yet we may not disregard the supernatural even for a moment in considering natural law. For we believe that God even uses natural law to fulfill His own divine purpose. What seems to be simply nature running its course because the sinner by sinning sinks deeper in sin, is in reality an ordinance of God.³⁷

As Creator of natural law God works by and in them to accomplish His program against sin. God is the ultimate cause of energy, especially this working unto delusion.

The Procuring Cause

The procuring cause is that which obtains or earns this working unto delusion. Sin is that cause. "The retributive justice of God is not arbitrary; sin and its punishment are related as cause and effect. Every violation of God's laws brings inevitably its own peculiar consequences."³⁸ That sin is the procuring cause of this working unto delusion may be seen by the context and related Scriptures.

Context of II Thess 2:11. The progressive advance of sin in II Thess 2:1-12 reveals sin to be the procuring cause of the delusion. Even in the Church age with the restraining ministry of the Holy Spirit, the mystery of lawlessness worked (II Thess 2:7). After the rapture of the Church, the mystery of lawlessness bears fruit in an apostasy from the truth and in Antichrist (II Thess 2:3). The mystery of lawlessness culminates in the Lawless One and his lawless program which works for and in men. That those who are recipients of this working unto delusion are so because of sin is verified by II Thess 2:10, 12, "And with all deceiveableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved . . . That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." James Frame insists that sin leads to a state of mind characterized by sin.

Wishing to insist that the basis of judgment . . . is believing the falsehood, Paul repeats the thought in a parallelism which designates "the doomed" negatively as "all who have not believed the truth" of Christ, and positively, "who have consented to the unrighteousness" of the *Anomos* (cf *adikias* v 10). The antithesis of "truth" and "unrighteousness" (cf Rom 2:8; I Cor 13:6) intimates that "truth" is regarded more on the moral than on the purely intellectual side, the truth of God, Christ, or the gospel as preached by Paul; and the parallelism of *pisteuein* and *eudokein* hints that in believing the will is an important factor.³⁹

The fact that sin procures a state of mind characterized by sin is confirmed by the aorist tenses of *edexanto*—not received the love

of the truth, of *hoi me pisteusantes*—ones not having believed the truth, and of *eudokesantes*—ones having pleasure in unrighteousness. This sin precedes God's sending this working unto delusion. "Thus yielding to sin receives at last its punishment in the slavery of sin."⁴⁰

Related Scriptures. A number of Scripture passages declare sin to be the procurer of a mind controlled by sin. Proverbs 5:22 reads, "His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins." Acts 7:41-42 declares, "And they made a calf in those days, and offered sacrifice unto the idol, and rejoiced in the works of their own hands. Then God turned, and gave them up to worship the host of heavens." These like other Scriptures set forth the truth, but the clearest parallel to this progression from sin to a delusion in sin as II Thess 2:11 sets forth is Romans 1:24, 26, 28. Having analyzed the parallels, one writer sets them forth.

First, the term *the lie* . . . also appears in Rom 1:25. Second, the same Greek word *pseudei* of our verse is found in Rom 1:27 in the phrase "recompense of error." In addition to this, the thought of each passage is parallel. In the first chapter of Romans God judicially punishes the sin of paganism by giving them up to their vile affections. In the second chapter of II Thessalonians, God judicially punishes rejection of the truth, by causing the effectual working of error through blindness to the truth."⁴¹

As morality is given up for immorality in Romans, so truth is given up for untruth in II Thessalonians 2. As God gave them up to a reprobate mind, one tested and found worthless, so here God sent them an energy whose object was delusion, a state of mind characterized by wandering from the truth. Hence, other scriptures confirm that fact that sin is the procuring cause of a state of mind characterized by sin of the same nature.

The Instrumental Cause

Upon the stage of human history will come One who from all description appears to be the instrumental cause of God's working unto delusion. Self-delusion of the Antichrist will from human perspective cause men to point to him as this cause. Yet, Satan is the instrumental cause who uses for his instrument a power-hungry man who willingly gives himself to the control of Satan. If behind the aggressive forces of evil has been an aggressive agent, Satan, so also behind the Antichrist is the energizer, Satan. As Satan wanted to be worshipped as God (Isa 14:14), the Antichrist

By worshipping the Antichrist, humanity worships itself.

will provide the person for vicarious enjoyment of this position. Antichrist will have his own theological system.

1. There is no personal God without and above the Universe.
2. Man is himself his own good—the god of this world.
3. I am the representative of humanity, by worshipping me humanity worships itself.⁴²

After calculated and continual opposition to God and all which is His, Antichrist will endeavor to prove his claims to deity. Upon demonstrating his powers, he will demand worship by using compelling measures (II Thess 2:9, 10; Rev 13-14). Antichrist and his program are the apex of Satan's power upon the earth.⁴³ Hence Satan is the instrumental cause of this working unto delusion using Antichrist as his instrument to accomplish his goals. The context of II Thess 2:11 and related Scriptures prove this.

Context of II Thess 2:11. There are four indications in II Thess 2:1-12 that Satan is the instrumental cause of God's working unto delusion while using Antichrist.

Source of lawlessness. The mystery of lawlessness working (*energeitai*) during the Church age and before culminates in the Lawless One who has a working (*energeian*) in the Tribulation period (II Thess 2:3, 8). Even as the activity of the mystery of lawlessness and the Lawless One is the same—a working of evil, so the source of both is the same—Satan. This fact is evident since lawlessness is sin (I Jn 3:4) and Satan is the originator of sin (Isa 14:12-14; Ezek 28:14-16). Hence Satan, the source of the mystery of lawlessness and the Lawless One, is the real instrumental cause of God's working unto delusion.

Source of the lie. The lie is that Antichrist is God (II Thess 2:11). Satan is the first source of all lies. "Peter said to Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?" (Acts 5:3). Christ said, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar and the father of it" (Jn 8:44). The very context asserts Satan to be the source of lies, *pseudos* (II Thess 2:9). As the father of lies, Satan is the instrumental cause of God's working unto delusion.

Passive verbs of apokalupto. That Satan is viewed as the one who reveals the Antichrist is noted from the passive verbs of *apokalupto* (II Thess 2:3, 8). D Edmond Hiebert declares, "The passive form of the verb 'shall be revealed' points to the agency of Satan behind his unveiling."⁴⁴ Immediately hearing this assertion, a person would

question it, for Rev 6:1-2 pictures Christ as the one who removes the first seal and releases the Antichrist to go forth to conquer. The solution to this problem may be the recognition of the fact that Satan can do nothing unless he is permitted. The context of II Thess 2:8 does seem to support the fact that Satan reveals him since Christ is the Lord who shall consume the Antichrist with the spirit of His mouth and destroy him with the brightness of His coming. Satan is the instrumental cause of this working unto delusion for he reveals the Antichrist.

Declarative statement. No better evidence of Satan's origination and energizing of Antichrist is a direct statement. "Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders" (II Thess 2:9). Satan as the instrumental cause of God's working unto delusion energizes the Antichrist to perform all kinds of evil and falsehood to work in men who are rejecting the truth of the Gospel.

Related Scriptures. An abundance of passages from Scripture set forth Antichrist's activities and characteristics which parallel those of Satan, but the passages closely connecting Antichrist with Satan are Isaiah 14 and Revelation 12, 13, 19, 20. Isaiah 14 after describing the fall of Satan, describes the fall of Antichrist. "Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms; That made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; that opened not the house of his prisoners?" (Isa 14:15-17).

Antichrist's origination by Satan is very clear in Revelation. Satan described as the great dragon (Rev 12:9) gives Antichrist his power, seat, and authority. Rev 13:2-4 sets this forth, "And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority. And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast. And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him?"

In addition to Antichrist's origination from Satan is the close identification of Antichrist with Satan's doom. Antichrist was cast into the lake of fire even when Satan was bound for a thousand

The lie which men will believe is that Antichrist is God.

years in the bottomless pit (Rev 19:20; 20:1-3). Satan's final doom is with his creations—the Antichrist, and the false prophet. Rev 20:10 reads: "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever." Thus, other Scriptures by close identification of Satan and Antichrist show Satan to be the instrumental cause of this working unto delusion by using Antichrist to deceive men.

The Extent of "a Working unto Delusion"

God's working unto delusion takes place in the period of the Tribulation after the rapture of the Church and the removal of the Restrainer, the Holy Spirit. This working unto delusion results in a state of mind characterized by a straying from the truth. Its ultimate cause is God in that God is over all natural laws and can cause the judgment of the violation of laws to come to pass. Sin is the procuring cause whose instrument is Satan who uses Antichrist to accomplish his purposes. Knowledge of the time, nature, and cause of God's working unto delusion having been gained, leaves the extent of this working unto delusion to be considered.

In Relation to "All" in II Thess 2:9, 10, 12

"All" is an inclusive term found in II Thess 2:9, 10, 12. It appears as descriptive of Antichrist's works and of those who will be damned. A consideration of each appearance of the word may shed light on the extent of "a working unto delusion."

"All power and signs and lying wonders." The phrase "all power and signs and lying wonders" sets forth the objective working of Antichrist as empowered by Satan. "All" might be better understood as "every kind of." This adjective applies to every external manifestation. The three words—power, signs, wonders—describe the same act from different viewpoints. "Power" declares its source to be supernatural; 'sign' expresses its purpose and appeals to the understanding; 'wonder' describes its effect upon the observer and appeals to the imagination."⁴⁵ All power, signs and wonders will be false in their character, but are real in nature as to existence. These external manifestations by Antichrist will be of every kind to deceive men. So when God sends this working unto delusion every kind of external manifestation has been used to deceive men. The passage does not indicate that all who view these manifestations are convinced by them.

"All deceivableness of unrighteousness." "All deceivableness of unrighteousness" sets forth the extent of Antichrist's deception subjectively in those who willingly accept his deceptions. These are every kind of deception coming from unrighteousness, a genitive of origin. The context limits the subjective working of Antichrist's deception to those who are perishing because they have received the love of the truth. These are the ones who receive this working unto delusion, believe the lie, and have pleasure in unrighteousness. These will be damned.

"All might be damned." The phrase "all might be damned" is so restricted by the context as to indicate that "all" refers to those who believed not the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness. The reverse is true that those who did believe the truth and hated unrighteousness will not be damned. By the qualification of the context it is clear that "all" to be damned only includes those who had all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them, received God's working unto delusion, believed the lie, believed not the truth and had pleasure in unrighteousness.

In Light of Those Redeemed in the Tribulation Period

The extent of God's working unto delusion is not inclusive of all who live during the Tribulation period. This fact is again verified by Scripture describing the response to the Gospel among the Jews and among the Gentiles.

The one hundred and forty-four thousand Jews. In response to the ministry of the two witnesses sent by God during the first three and a half years of the Tribulation period comes the conversion of 144,000 Jews who are sealed (Rev 11:4-6; 7:1-8; 14:1-5). "It is implied that these who are thus sealed have been saved in the time of trouble pictured in the book of Revelation and by this means are being set apart as a special divine remnant to be a testimony to God's grace and mercy during this time of judgment."⁴⁶ Protected by God these redeemed Jews preach the Gospel throughout the earth.

Gentiles saved during the Tribulation period. As a result of the ministry of the 144,000 Jewish evangelists and the ministry of the two witnesses, a great host of Gentiles are saved out of the Tribulation. These Gentiles are pictured as martyred for the Gospel in the last three and a half years, the Great Tribulation (Rev 7:9-17; 14:6, 7). "The fact that they 'have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb' certifies their salvation."⁴⁷ In addition to this group is another group of believing Gentiles who are saved in the Tribulation who live through it. Matthew 25:31-46 describes the judgment of Gentile nations. Those befriending the believing Jews reveal their redeemed

nature. They are called the sheep nations. They are called righteous ones whose destiny is eternal life. These are not whole nations as are known today but believing national bodies of people as opposed to unbelieving national bodies of people from the same area. Hence, a multitude of Gentiles are saved during the Tribulation. Some perish because of their faith, while others survive the great persecution.

Purged Remnant of Israel. The Apostle Paul predicted that the nation Israel would turn to Jesus Christ as the Messiah. "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. . . . And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob" (Rom 11:5, 26).

Zechariah prophesied that only a third of Israel will escape the fires of the Tribulation period and turn to Jesus as Messiah. Zechariah 13:9 reads: "And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God." Herman Hoyt writes:

At Christ's coming, when the siege of the nations reaches its height against Jerusalem (Zech 14:1-4), "the spirit of grace and supplication" (Zech 12:10) will be poured out upon the remnant and a great company will be saved at once (Isa 66:8).⁴⁸

Thus, a multitude of believing Jews join with the 144,000 Jewish witnesses and the converted Gentile multitudes to make up the entire number of those saved in the Tribulation period.

In Light of Those Who Heard the Gospel in the Church Age

If any more light is to be shed on the extent of this working unto delusion in relation to men who heard the Gospel in the Church age, it will be found in consideration of the apostasy of II Thess 2:3, the aorist tenses of II Thess 2:10-12, the action of God in II Thess 2:11 and the account of Antichrist's mark. When considering these, it should be kept in mind that men may have

*A multitude of Jews and Gentiles will
be saved during the Tribulation.*

lived in the Church age who are in the Tribulation for the Tribulation is only seven years long.

Apostasy of II Thess 2:3. The apostasy is a falling away from professed belief. After the Church of Christ is raptured, the remaining, professing Church becomes apostate to its professed allegiance to Christ and supports the Antichrist's lie (Rev 17:1-7). Certainly among the professing Church are many who have heard the Gospel. Those remaining alive in unbelief after the rapture

could be a part of those falling away. As men today, who in the past were in unbelief, receive Christ as Savior, so men may repudiate the apostasy and receive Christ. Upon considering this apostasy, a person cannot be dogmatic either way as to the salvation of men in the Tribulation who have heard the Gospel in the Church age. It is obviously true that many who have professed Christianity will fall away in the Tribulation period.

Aorists of II Thess 2:10-12. Recipients of God's working unto delusion "received not the love of the truth" and "believe not the truth." These verbs are aorist in tense. Lenski notes, "The aorist presents their fate as having occurred in the past; this is often done in prophecy when the prophet contemplates the fulfillment as being already accomplished."⁴⁹ Just when this decision to believe not the truth was made is impossible to say. It certainly was made prior to the sending of a working unto delusion, but it may have been made in the Church age or in response to Antichrist's manifestation of power, signs, and wonders. Thus, it cannot be dogmatically stated that men who heard the Gospel will not have opportunity to respond to truth in the Tribulation period or that men will have opportunity to do so.

Action of God. God sends this working unto delusion to men who have refused to believe the truth when Antichrist has performed his convincing activities for perishing men. The fact that God is in control and only sends the "working" when He sees it as the proper time indicates that Satan and Antichrist, though powerful, cannot finalize anything until God permits. Luneman setting forth a similar truth writes, "But this energetic working of Antichrist by no means describes his power as irresistible; only the *apollumenois* succumb under it."⁵⁰ The present participle is a prophetic present denoting certainty of perishing for those rejecting then, but does not indicate all unbelievers of the Church age will reject in the Tribulation. The facts that God controls all things and Antichrist's power is not irresistible permit the thought that men who have heard the Gospel in the Church age may respond to it in the Tribulation.

Account of Antichrist's Mark. Reception of the mark of Antichrist certainly indicates that the recipients of it also received this working unto delusion, believed the lie and are going to be damned. God's wrath will be poured out on those who receive the mark of the beast (Rev 13:16-17; 14:9-11). Since Antichrist does not come to full power and economic control which pressure men to decide for or against him until the middle of the Tribulation, there are three and one-half years in the Tribulation for men to respond to the Gospel before they are forced to decide. Of course, they may have already completely refused the truth in the Church age. Hermn Hoyt writes concerning Satan.

After being cast into the earth in the middle of the tribulation period (Rev 12:7-9), he turns in wrath upon the people of the earth (Rev 12:12), but especially against Israel (Rev 12:13). He promotes the religious unification of mankind (Rev 13:12). He performs miraculous demonstrations to attract the allegiance of men (Rev 13:13-15), and he commands loyalty to the Antichrist by means of commercial sanctions (Rev 13:16-17).⁵¹

That time comes when the lines are drawn between belief and unbelief is evident from Rev 13:8 and 17:8. "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. . . . The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is." But even then this is viewed from God's vantage point for it is true that Gentiles and Jews will be saved in the last half of the Tribulation period. Hence, there comes a time when men must decide for unbelief and Antichrist or refuse and be saved some time during the Tribulation period. Whether those responding to Christ by faith had heard the Gospel in the Church age is impossible to say because of the silence of Scripture on this subject.

Conclusion

Will men who have heard the Gospel in the Church age have opportunity to be saved after the rapture of the church? This is an intriguing question which finds an answer from a study of the time, nature, cause and extent of God's working unto delusion (II Thess 2:11).

The time of God's working unto delusion begins to occur during the Tribulation in the Day of the Lord after the revelation of the Lawless One, the Antichrist. The mystery of lawlessness which has been working through the centuries now finds culmination in Antichrist and his program since the restraining ministry of the Holy Spirit and the Church have been removed from the earth. Since God's working unto delusion is sent to men during the last three and a half years of the Tribulation, there is time for men to respond to the preaching of the Gospel in the Tribulation.

The working unto delusion sent by God is of such a nature that recipients will possess a state of mind characterized by being astray from the truth. The person is in an irredeemable state. The

permanency of their condition is confirmed by the facts: (1) God sent the working unto delusion to them; (2) Their decision not to believe the truth has historically been made; and (3) Their acceptance of the lie of the Antichrist calls for their damnation. Since there is not a possibility of reception of the Gospel once God has sent His working unto delusion unto a man, anyone receiving Christ as Savior must do so before this is sent.

The ultimate cause of this working unto delusion in II Thess 2:11 is God. God sends it to confirm unbelievers in unbelief that they might believe the lie of Antichrist and be damned. Sin is the procuring cause of this working unto delusion. Sin causes unbelief which leads to a state of mind which persistently rejects Christ as Savior. As the source of lawlessness, as the source of the lie, as the revealer and energizer of Antichrist, Satan is recognized as the instrumental cause of "a working unto delusion." Since God is the ultimate cause, no recipient will be able or want to reject it. Sin as the procuring cause can be removed by regeneration, but will not be in the recipients. Satan as the instrumental cause is not all-powerful and can be resisted, but he will not be by those loving untruth. Hence, if men who heard the Gospel in the Church age are to be saved in the Tribulation, they must resist Satan and his Antichrist and experience regeneration before God sends a working unto delusion.

God's working unto delusion will extend to all who favorably respond to Antichrist's use of every kind of power, sign and wonder and to all in whom every kind of deceivableness of unrighteousness is permitted to work. Its extent will be great, but not inclusive because multitudes of Jews and Gentiles will be saved during the Tribulation. The Scripture is silent as to whether those saved in the Tribulation heard the Gospel in the Church age or not. Since the Tribulation is only seven years long, it is possible that some saved in the Tribulation heard the Gospel in the Church age. Of the recipients of God's working unto delusion it may be said that some are part of the apostasy after the rapture of the true Church. As to when the recipients decided to reject Christ, it cannot be determined by the aorist tenses. God's action in sending this demonstrates the certainty of judgment and the finality of decision. Recipients of the mark of the Antichrist reveal their reception of the lie and God's working unto delusion.

Hence, a study of salvation in the Tribulation in light of God's working unto delusion produces the conclusion that men will have opportunity to be saved in the Tribulation and many will be saved. The Scripture is silent as to whether they had heard the Gospel in the Church age or not. So the safest statement which can be made is that men who have heard the Gospel in the Church age have no assurance that they personally will have opportunity to receive Christ as Savior in the Tribulation.

Notes

- ¹ W Herschel Ford, *Seven Simple Sermons on the Second Coming* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publ House, 1945) p 39
- ² D Edmond Hiebert, *The Thessalonian Epistles* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1971) p 313
- ³ Gerald B Stanton, *Kept From the Hour* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publ House, 1956) p 105
- ⁴ C F Hogg and W E Vine, *The Epistles to the Thessalonians* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publ, 1914) p 242
- ⁵ "TR WH Bov Nes BF² AV RSV NEB TT Zur Luth Jer Seg", Kurt Aland et al eds *The Greek New Testament* (New York: American Bible Soc, 1966) p 715
- ⁶ Stanton, p 71
- ⁷ I Tim 4:1-3; II Tim 3:1-5; 4:3-4; II Pet 2:1-22; Jude
- ⁸ W E Blackstone, *Jesus Is Coming* (New York: Fleming H Revell Co, 1908) p 111.
- ⁹ Leon Morris, *The First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publ Co, 1959) p 228
- ¹⁰ Hiebert, p 319
- ¹¹ J Dwight Pentecost, *Things to Come* (Grand Rapids: Dunham Publ Co, 1958) p 231
- ¹² James Everett Frame, "A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles of St Paul to the Thessalonians" *The International Critical Commentary*, Vol 40 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1912) p 248
- ¹³ R C H Lenski, *The Interpretation of St Paul's Epistle to the Colossians, to the Thessalonians, to Timothy, to Titus, and to Philemon* (Columbus, Ohio: Wartburg Press, 1946) p 407
- ¹⁴ Hiebert, p 305
- ¹⁵ Kenneth Teague, "The Falling Away: A Critical Investigation of II Thessalonians 2:3" (Unpublished Bachelor of Theology monograph, Grace Theol Sem, 1951) p 52
- ¹⁶ Frame, p 271
- ¹⁷ G Abbott-Smith, *Manual Greek Lexicon of the New Testament* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1937) p 153
- ¹⁸ Hiebert, p 316
- ¹⁹ Roy James Clark, "A Critical Investigation of II Thessalonians 2:11" (Unpublished Bachelor of Divinity monograph, Grace Theol Sem, 1954) p 42
- ²⁰ Hiebert, p 319
- ²¹ Matt 27:64; Rom 1:27; Eph 4:14; II Thess 2:11; Jas 5:20; II Peter 2:18; 3:17; I John 4:6; and Jude 11
- ²² Abbott-Smith, p 363
- ²³ Joseph Thayer, *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (New York: American Book Co, n d) p 515
- ²⁴ Henry Alford, *The Greek Testament Vol III* (London: Longmans, Green, 1894) p 292
- ²⁵ Lenski, p 431
- ²⁶ Hiebert, p 319
- ²⁷ Frame, p 272
- ²⁸ Morris, p 234
- ²⁹ Hiebert, p 319
- ³⁰ Alva McClain, "Biblical Eschatology" Revised by John C Whitcomb (unpublished mimeographed class notes, Grace Theol Sem, 1971) p 9
- ³¹ Men who hold that "a working unto delusion" is Antichrist are Bengel, Olshausen, Tertullian, Alford, Jamieson, Faussett and Brown, Lenski, Adeney, Weiss, Findley, and Lillie. Citing Roy James Clark, p 19
- ³² Those believing in permissive blindness are: Barnes, Jenks, Whitby, Catholic Commentary on the New Testament, Moffat, Henry, Benson, Pool, Clarke. Ibid, p 21
- ³³ The proponents of causative blindness are Exell, Gill, Hutchison, Denney, Frame, Gray and Adams, Lange, Ellicott, Calvin, Luneman, Gloag and Stevens. Ibid, p 23. In addition to these are John Lineberry, C F Hogg and W E Vine, Leon Morris, and D Edmond Hiebert
- ³⁴ Ibid, p 29
- ³⁵ Hiebert, p 319
- ³⁶ F Blass and A Debrunner, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: Univ of Chicago Press, 1961) p 207
- ³⁷ Clark, p 50
- ³⁸ Hogg and Vine, p 267
- ³⁹ Frame, p 272

⁴⁰ John Hutchison, *Lectures Chiefly Expository on St Paul's First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1884) p 299

⁴¹ Clark, p 45

⁴² Samuel J Andrews, *Christianity and Anti-Christianity in their Final Conflict* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1898) p 43 quoting F. Godet, "Revelation" Johnson's Cyclopaedia, 1895

⁴³ William G Bellshaw, "The New Testament Doctrine of Satan" *Grace Journal* (Fall, 1968) p 32

⁴⁴ Hiebert, p 314

⁴⁵ Hogg and Vine, p 265

⁴⁶ John F Walvoord, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1966) p 140

⁴⁷ Pentecost, p 269

⁴⁸ Herman Hoyt, "The Period of Tribulation Which Is Coming" in "Biblical Eschatology" authored by Alva McClain (mimeographed class notes, Grace Theol Sem 1971) p 11

⁴⁹ Lenski, p 248

⁵⁰ Gottlieb Luneman, "Critical and Exegetical Hand-Book to the Epistles to the Thessalonians" *Meyer's Commentary on the New Testament* (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1889) p 604

⁵¹ Hoyt, p 22