

Sunday, June 28, 2015—I Corinthians 1:8: The Day of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Part 2

Introduction/Review

- Last week we continued our study of I Corinthians chapter 1 by looking at Paul's usage of the expression "the day of our Lord Jesus Christ" in verse 8. We tackled this project by considering the various days mentioned by Paul in his Epistles.
- I Corinthians 1:7-8—refers to the Lord Jesus Christ coming for the body of Christ. The Corinthians are waiting for the "coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" and are confirmed unto the end that he may be "blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ." Notice the similarity between I Corinthians 1:7-8 and 1 Thessalonians 5:23.
 - I Thessalonians 5:23—Paul prays that the Thessalonians are preserved "blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." I Corinthians 1:7-8 and 1 Thessalonians 5:23 are obviously talking about the same thing.
- We further say that Paul uses four shorter forms of the expression "the day of our Lord Jesus Christ" to refer to the same thing:
 - "the day of the Lord Jesus"—II Cor. 1:14
 - "the day of Christ"—Phil. 1:10; 2:16
 - "the day of Jesus Christ"—Phil. 1:6—"the day of Jesus Christ" in 1:6 seems to be the same thing as "the day of Christ" in 1:10. It seems contrary to the sense of the passage to make these two phrases to refer to separate events.
 - "the day of redemption"—Eph. 4:30
- I Thessalonians 5:2—Paul also used the expression "the day of the Lord" (DOTL). This verse proves that Paul knew the difference between the prophesied DOTL foretold in Israel's prophetic scriptures and the day of Christ (DOC) which is unique terminology to the writings of the Apostle Paul.
 - The expression DOTL occurs at least 20 times in scripture. In addition to the phrase the DOTL, the expressions "that day," "the day," and "the great day" occur more than seventy-five times in the Old Testament.
- To get a favor for what the DOTL was about we looked at the four occurrences of the expression found in the book of Isaiah (Isa. 2:11-21; 13:6-11; 24:21-23; 34:1-8). The nature and character of the DOTL can be summed up by the following statements:
 - The DOTL is a day of destruction and vengeance from the almighty upon all his enemies. The proud, lofty, haughty, and arrogant are brought low. This is the day when the Lord shakes terribly the earth.

- The DOTL is described as being a great, terrible, and dreadful day of darkness, cloudiness, gloominess, fierce wrath, and anger when the sword of the Lord is brought upon the heathen.
 - The DOTL is a day of battle in which the Lord commands his armies not just on earth but also in heaven. In fact, the sword of the Lord is depicted as being bathed in heaven first and then coming down upon the kings of the earth.
 - The DOTL's arrival to earth is preceded by cosmic disturbances such as the sun being turned to darkness and moon to blood. In addition, Elijah the prophet is said to be sent before the coming of the DOTL.
 - The DOTL is when Christ will again stand upon the Mount of Olives. It is the day when the Lord is king over all the earth. In the DOTL, Israel will possess her possessions and the Lord will enter his rest by dwelling in Zion.
 - The DOTL is said to come as a thief in the night.
 - The DOTL most importantly is characterized by the presence of the Lord Himself. It is the day where the Lord alone is exalted. Thus, the DOTL cannot be present unless the Lord Himself is present.
- The DOTL is not a day in the twenty-four hour sense. It begins in heaven half way through the 70th week of Daniel and comes to earth at the Second Coming, but it also includes the Millennium (Zech. 14:9) and the new heaven and the new earth (II Pet. 3:10).
 - The DOTL lasts for a long time, i.e. over a thousand years, and it includes a number of different significant events.
 - What unifies the multiple different events that take place during the DOTL is the presence of the Lord (Zephaniah 1:7). It is the great unveiling when man no longer walks by faith but by sight as God unmistakably manifests his presence to the universe.
 - For God's adversaries, this is bad news – e.g., the destruction of the unbelieving at the Second Coming.
 - For God's saints, it is great news – the millennial kingdom and the establishment of the new heaven and the new earth.

Summary of the Day of Christ

- Is the day of Christ something to be feared by the body of Christ or something that is to be looked forward to with great anticipation?
- Just like the DOTL is a prophetic term, the day of Christ (DOC) is a Pauline term. Paul is the only Biblical writer to use this expression. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that it has a special meaning for the body of Christ.
- The DOC deals with the exaltation of Christ and his body in the heavenly places. The DOC consists of multiple events that are part of the presence of the Lord to the body of Christ just as

the DOTL is the presence of the Lord for Israel. Therefore, the DOC includes the following events:

- Catching up of the body of Christ (Phil. 1:6, 10; 2:16)
 - Day of redemption (Eph. 4:30, 1 Cor. 15:51-53)
 - Judgment seat of Christ (1 Cor. 1:8, 2 Cor. 5:10)
 - Body of Christ receives the reward of the inheritance in heavenly places (1Cor. 3:13-14, Col. 3:24, Eph. 1:3, 2:6, Col. 1:20)
 - Judgment upon those who persecuted the body of Christ while it was on earth (1 Thess. 1:6-10, 2 Thess. 2:2).
- The DOC is the day when Christ alone is exalted in the heavenly places through the body of Christ.

The Day of Christ in II Thessalonians 2:2

- Last week, we saw that only Paul uses the phrase “day of Christ” and similar phrases, and that, with one exception, these phrases always can be understood to refer to the Catching (I Thes. 4:17).
- The one exception is II Thessalonians 2:2, which instructs saints not to be troubled by the suggestion that the DOC is at hand. This verse poses a difficulty. The saint is to look forward to the blessed hope of Christ’s appearing (II Thes. 2:13), and the Catching is expressly said to be a source of comfort (I Thes. 4:17-18). Thus, why would a saint be troubled by the idea that the DOC is at hand?
- On the surface, this appears to create a problem since we have already included the Catching/Rapture in the DOC. Is Paul saying that the falling away and revelation of the man of sin/son of perdition must precede the Rapture? No. “Our gathering together unto him,” is clearly synonymous with the Catching and constitutes one of the reasons why the Thessalonians don’t need to be troubled. In other words, Paul is guaranteeing the Thessalonians that they will be gathered together unto Christ, i.e., caught up, before the DOC comes to earth. The coming of the Lord in verse one is when he comes to gather the saints unto him in the air according to 1 Thessalonians 4:15-18.
- The answer to this conundrum lies in understanding the context of II Thessalonians 2:2.
- II Thessalonians 1:4—the Thessalonians have been enduring tribulation.
- II Thessalonians 1:5-6—God recompenses tribulation to those that persecute the body of Christ.
- II Thessalonians 1:7—the Thessalonians will have rest when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels.
- II Thessalonians 1:8—the Lord takes vengeance on those that obey not the gospel.

- II Thessalonians 1:9—God’s enemies shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the “PRESENCE” of the Lord.
 - Recall from Zephaniah 1:7 that the DOTL = the presence of the Lord God.
- What II Thessalonians 1 is about is God taking vengeance on the adversaries of the body of Christ while the body of Christ is at rest.
- II Thessalonians 2:1—Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and [by] our gathering together unto him,
 - Paul beseeches the Thessalonians on the basis of the Catching
- II Thessalonians 2:2—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.
 - Basic sentence structure requires that the “day of Christ” in 2:2 not be the same thing referred to in 2:1.
 - What 2:1-2 is saying is we beseech you on the basis of THIS don’t be troubled about THAT.
 - THIS and THAT must be different for the sentence to make any sense.
 - The sense of 2 Thessalonians 2:1-2 is that since the Thessalonians will be part of the Catching (2:1), they do not need to worry about the wrath of the day of Christ, i.e., the Second Coming (2:2).
 - Although when Paul uses the term “day of Christ” elsewhere it may refer to the Catching, it is clear that II Thessalonians 2:2 is not referring to the Catching when it uses the term “day of Christ.”
- 2:2 In this verse, the DOC refers to the pouring out of wrath at the Second Coming.
 - The term “day of Christ” means different things in different places just as the term DOTL covers over 1000 years and diverse events.
 - Just as the Cross, the first coming, purchased salvation for both prophetic and mystery saints, the Second Coming executes wrath upon both the persecutors of the prophetic saints and the persecutors of the mystery saints.
 - The theme of II Thessalonians is not as much about the BOC’s deliverance from wrath as it is about the execution of wrath upon those who persecuted the BOC.
 - Revelation 6:9-10 The Second Coming is where God takes vengeance on those who during the tribulation have persecuted the saints. God’s righteousness requires him to execute this judgment.
 - The DOC is not simply the Catching up, the redemption of the body, and the Judgment Seat of Christ. It also settles the score with the adversaries of the BOC. The BOC, and

the Thessalonians in particular, have suffered from persecutors that God must judge.

- The confusion is cleared up when one recognizes that a day must begin before it comes. We have already seen that the Pauline expression DOC refers to events in the heavenly places that relate to the body of Christ and also the earthly judgment upon the enemies of the body of Christ. II Thessalonians 2:1-3 explains that the Thessalonians do not need to worry that the DOC is at hand because it cannot come to earth until after the falling away and the revelation of the man of sin, the son of perdition. The DOC does not come to earth until after the tribulation when it comes in the form of the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

