

2 Thessalonians 1:7 in the Navajo Bible

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Áádóó nihich'í' nidaho'diilnáanii nihit háádadoolyihgo nihaididoo'áál, Bóhólníihii Jesus bidiyingo nidaal'a'í ayóó ádabóodziilii yit' yá'aqshdéé' yit'íní áyiilaago índa ákóhodooníít. (2 Thessalonians 1:7) ¹

[A]nd give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. (2 Thessalonians 1:7) ²

Introduction

The church will be delivered when Christ comes in glory, not secretly seven years before then. *Bóhólníihii Jesus bidiyingo nidaal'a'í ayóó ádabóodziilii yit' yá'aqshdéé' yit'íní áyiilaago índa ákóhodooníít* ("When Jesus is revealed from heaven along with His might angels, that's when this will happen").

A Popular Misconception

Those who teach a secret rapture don't say Jesus will be revealed when He takes the church from the world. That's why they say the rapture is "secret," i.e., because when it takes place (in their model) He does *not* reveal Himself. In their view the church will be removed – or delivered, or raptured – without anyone knowing it. Such a view is simply unbiblical.

Another point is that there's nothing about angels in their model. How could there be? How do you hide ten million angels, each one shining brightly enough to make a contingent of Roman soldiers fall down like dead men (see Matthew 28:2-4)? But in 2 Thessalonians 1:7 Paul says that when Jesus delivers the church, Jesus will be surrounded with angels.

In the popular model the church doesn't go through the tribulation at all, but here Paul says the church will be delivered out of it. The words *nihich'í' nidaho'diilnáanii* ("those things that trouble us") refer to an experience that troubles us. It is an experience we experience. It is a trial we go through.

The Larger Context

Let's look at our passage from a larger context. Below I quote vss. 2-10. Notice a few things about what Paul says here.

¹ Navajo Bible quotations are from *Diyin God Bizaad. The Holy Bible in Navajo*. Revised edition. New York: American Bible Society, 2000.

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All this is evidence that God's judgment is right, and as a result you will be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are suffering. ⁶ God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you ⁷ and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. ⁸ He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. ⁹ They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power ¹⁰ on the day he comes to be glorified in his holy people and to be marveled at among all those who have believed. This includes you, because you believed our testimony to you. (2 Thessalonians 1:5-10)

"He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you" (vs. 6). In what way? In what way do these people trouble the church and in what way does He pay them back trouble for trouble? Verse 9 tells us, "They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power." This is not some trivial offense. The only way to know how bad the trouble is that God is punishing in vs. 9 is to notice how badly He punishes people for it. If this were some minor thing God would not punish the perpetrators with "everlasting destruction."

Nor does He punish them in passing as though He were merely correcting them, or warning them so they'll do better next time. This punishment is at the end of the age. It comes "on the day he comes to be glorified in his holy people and to be marveled at among all those who have believed" (vs. 10).

This is a punishment of eternal damnation and it is brought upon people at the second coming. So what sort of trouble are we talking about here? Look at the text again. The "troubles" Paul speaks of in 2 Thessalonians 1:7 do not happen to one individual. That would be *hach'i' nidaho'diilnánii* ("those things that trouble one"). Instead it is something that brings the entire church into trouble. Notice also that the words *nihit háádadootjihgo* ("giving rest *again*") implies that its rest has been taken away and that it *returns* to a state of rest. Something has happened therefore that removes the entire church's rest. This is the tribulation.

Conclusion

According to Paul the church is delivered from the tribulation not when it begins, but when it ends. The second coming is a rescue mission. Jesus does not come to rescue the church when His coming is most convenient; He rescues the church when His coming is most needed. It is most needed, not before any trouble starts, but when it seems the church will be destroyed if He doesn't step in and help.

According to the present verse, Jesus delivers the church not by coming secretly (as some suppose), but by coming in power and glory. *Bóhólníihii Jesus bidiyingo nidaal'a'í ayóó ádadóodziilii yit yá'qashdée' yit'íní áyiilaago índa ákóhodooníit* ("When Jesus is revealed from heaven along with His mighty angels, that's when this will happen"). Not seven years before.