

besides in the N.T., and always in the sense of being present". In addition, he calls attention to that fact that in two of these instances, Rom. 8:38 and I Cor. 3:22 it is translated "things present" and directly contrasted with "things to come". Greek papyri from the times of the apostles have recently been discovered which show that this verb was regularly employed with reference to the current year. George Milligan, a noted authority on these Greek papyri, recommends translating our passage "as if the day of the Lord is now present."

Dean Alford says further of the A. V. rendering: "Besides which, Paul could not have so written, nor could the Spirit have so spoken by him. The teaching of the Apostles was, and of the Holy Spirit in all ages has been, that the day of the Lord is at hand. But these Thessalonians imagined it to be already come, and accordingly were deserting their pursuits in life, and falling into other irregularities, as if the day of grace were closed." ~~So Chrys.~~

Thus new evidence on the meaning of the Greek makes it clear that a faulty translation has led to a misunderstanding of the problem of the Thessalonians. Yet even without the new and unanswerable evidence from the papyri the mistranslation ought never to have been made by the translators of the Authorized Version, since the word is so clearly used in the sense of "present" rather than "at hand" in every other instance in the N. T. where it occurs. In four of these instances it refers to what was present when the book was written. In II Tim. 2:3, where the A.V. translates "shall come", it refers to those conditions which shall be present in a future time; in Heb. 9:9 where it speaks of what was present at a time in the past, the A. V. translates "for the time then present". Never does it mean "at hand".

So, then, the question under discussion was not whether the return of Christ was at hand, but whether the day of Christ had already come. Yet the problem still remains; If many other passages, one even by Paul himself, teach that there is no recognizable indication to lead us to become more ready than usual for the meeting of the church with the returning Lord, how can Paul say that two events--"the falling away" and the revelation of the man