

in the New Testament refers to departure from the faith of Moses, and that it is followed by mention of the man of sin, the wrong interpreters as early as the second century A.D. erroneously took it in the specialized sense of departure from the faith, instead of in the sense that the passage requires of a departure in general, namely that described in I Thess. 4. Thus Justin Martyr spoke of the man of sin as "the man of the apostasia". It is easy to see how such interpretations arose, but sad to see how they misled believers. Alas, how neglected through much of Christian history has been Christ's oft repeated injunction to "watch, for ye know not the day nor the hour". A subordinate, but vital incentive to Christian faithfulness has been too much forgotten, and spiritual declension has frequently occurred.

Dr. English deserves much gratitude for his helpful suggestion. Careful philological examination shows the suggestion to be in line with fact. Close examination of the passage shows an inner unity and coherence, and a close agreement with other portions of the New Testament; superficial interpretation and very early misunderstanding has led to confusion which has persisted through the centuries. Surely we must praise the Lord that in these last days He is clearing away this misunderstanding in order that His people may have a more definite apprehension of the teaching of His Word on these vital matters. "Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly."