

NT 615 EXEGETICAL PROCESS NOTEBOOK

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PASSAGE: _____

Instructions: Use this template for your investigation of either Jonah or 1 Thessalonians. Word step by step and answer each question using good observational skills. Include scriptural references for easy referral later when you begin to write your projects. There are no page limits for any of the steps. This “Exegetical Process Notebook” is your personal study and the work product that you will use for the final project at the end of this course.

STEP 4: OVERVIEW OF LITERARY CONTEXT

4.1 Describe the literary character of the document (i.e., identify what kind of literature your passage reflects such as narrative [extended story form], a psalm, law, prophecy, epistle, or apocalypse). Remember, some biblical literature contains mixed forms such as the Book of Revelation, which consists of letters, prophecy, an extended narrative, and hymns.

The literary character of my passage is that of a letter. This was a formal letter sent to the church to clarify the misunderstanding concerning the death of saints and the return of the Lord. Technically, this work is considered an occasional document, since it was written by an apostle and meant for a specific occasion. In addition, the epistle is written within the center of “task theology” as it addresses the task at hand.

4.2 All literary works have a structure in the mind of the human author. Biblical writers have a purpose in writing that guides their choices, whether to write a letter or produce a narrative. Even the very words they use are intentional. Cast the interpretive net widely before looking at the individual pieces that make up the message.

OUTLINE OF 1 THESSALONIANS

- I. Greeting (1:1)
- II. Thanksgiving (1:2-10)
- III. The Behavior of the Apostles (2:1-12)
- IV. Reception of the Gospel (2:13-16)
- V. Apostle’s Concern for the Church (2:17-3:13)
- VI. Instructions on Holy Living (4:1-12)
- VII. Introductions on the Return of the Lord (4:13-5:11)
- VIII. Exhortation on Life in the Church (5:12-24)
- IX. Final Request and Benediction (5:25-28)

1 THESSALONIANS 5:1-11

5 But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.

2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.

3 For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

4 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.

5 Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.

6 Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.

7 For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.

8 But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.

9 For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,

10 Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.

11 Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.

PERISCOPES OF 1 THESSALONIANS 5:1-11

The time of the Lord's return 1

The secret and sudden return of the Lord 3-4

Be awake and be aware of your surroundings 6-7

Be fully clothed with faith, love, and hope of salvation 8

Appointed to obtain salvation in our Lord Jesus Christ 9

Christ dies for His people 10

Death does not separate Christ from His people 10

We shall live with Christ 10

Comfort and encourage one another in the faith 11

4.3 Start to make informed observations. Remember, you are not referring to commentaries right now, otherwise, you will become commentary-dependent and not able to bring fresh insight to the passage. You do not want to simply recycle other people's ideas!

My text belongs to the body of the letter just before the final exhortation and the benediction. My passage discusses the return of the Lord and is related to the passage immediately ahead (which also addresses the return of the Lord), as well as the resurrection and ascension of believers. This prepares me for what follows since it is the continuation of the same topic.