

保罗的末世神学

Paul's Eschatology

杨克勤 美国西北大学

Yang Keqin Northwest College

[英文提要]

The purpose of this article is to examine Paul's eschatology in 1 and 2 Thessalonians within the contexts of Thessalonian politics, religion, as well as society. It makes use of the millenarian model to read the problems and interactions between Paul and the Thessalonian Christians. It points to the conclusion that Paul's eschatology clashes ideologically with the politics and religion of the Roman world. Paul believes that Roman politics and religion cannot bring about benefaction. In contrast, benefaction comes from God the Father. The article analyses three common words—epiphany, parousia, and apocalypse—used by Paul to refer to Christ's second coming. These and three other politically charged words—apantesis, kurios and euangelion—are also used in Roman politics and religion.

Pauline eschatology is not a fragmented utopian ideology, it is prophetic realism. His eschatology enables persecuted believers to thrive in the midst of affliction and to rest in God's promises. Eschaton is not termination but a new beginning. Eschatological hope encourages believers to live in faith, hope, and love. Millenarian ideology allows them to look beyond suffering and tribulation to the

utopian dream of millenarian peace and righteousness. Pauline eschatology holds in tension millenarian ideology and the utopian dream so that believers may remain steadfast in the work of faith, the labor of love, and endurance inspired by hope in their Lord Jesus Christ.

本文的目的是从帖撒罗尼迦的政治、社会和宗教情况去理解保罗的末世神学。文章分析保罗与帖撒罗尼迦人的辩论,从而表达文章的主题,即保罗神学与当代罗马文化在社会、政治和宗教的一种意识形态上之冲突。

背景与会众

保罗写了两封书信给帖撒罗尼迦的基督徒,其中受众的身份和所面对的问题都是非常复杂的,但对明白保罗与受众之间的辩论却非常重要。圣经学者提出不同的理论,尝试解释帖撒罗尼迦的会众处境和身份。以下简述学者的看法和交待笔者的评论。

一、软弱的会众

马沙尔(I. H. Marshall)、毕斯(E. Best)和马核比(Abraham J. Malherbe)曾提出帖撒罗尼迦书信的写作对象是一群软弱的会众,他们需要保罗在属灵上给予教牧性的鼓励。由于保罗最初在帖撒罗尼迦的布道行程是非常短暂,以致他们并未完全悔改归信,因此