

The Second LETTER of PAUL to the THESSALONIANS

LAST GENERATION VERSION

Translation & Notes by Tim Warner, April 2014

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Chapter 1

Greeting

Paul, and Silvanus,¹ and Timothy, to the Congregation of Thessalonians in God our Father and the Master Jesus Christ: 2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and [from] the Master Jesus Christ.

The Reward for Enduring Persecution & the Annihilation of the Persecutors

3 We are obliged to always thank God concerning you, brothers, just as it is appropriate because your trust is flourishing and the love of each of you all for one another is increasing. 4 So too, we ourselves boast in you among the congregations of God over your endurance and trust in [the midst of] all your persecutions and afflictions which you are tolerating.² 5 [This is] an indication of the just judgment of God, to consider you worthy of the Kingdom of God³ over which you are also suffering, 6 since it is just to repay those afflicting you with affliction from God, 7 and to [repay] you – the ones being afflicted – [with] rest⁴ along with us at⁵ the revealing of the Master Jesus from heaven with His mighty angels,⁶ 8 in blazing fire,⁷ delivering vengeance to those who have not perceived God,⁸ also to those who disobey the Good Message of our Master Jesus Christ.⁹ 9 These¹⁰ shall incur the judgment of permanent annihilation¹¹ from the

¹ The formal name of Silas

² 1 Thess. 2:14

³ 1 Thess. 2:12

⁴ See Hebrews 3 - 4

⁵ Persecution for Christians will cease at the second coming of Christ after the tribulation, not before (Matt. 24:29-31).

⁶ See notes on 1 Thess. 3:13

⁷ Isaiah 66:13-16; Mal. 4:1-3; 2 Peter 3:7-13

⁸ Referring to the pagans who chose to be ignorant of the one true God (Rom. 1:18-32)

⁹ Referring to the Jews who refused to believe Jesus, His Apostles, and the Good News (Rom. 2:1-11)

¹⁰ "These" are two distinct groups, which is evident from the Greek grammar (Granville Sharp construction – both groups having the definite article yet separated by "και"). It is significant that Paul's language does not include those who have never heard the Gospel, because in both groups the emphasis is on blatant rejection. The same is true in similar passages that speak of the destruction of the wicked (cf. John 3:36). Nowhere does the Bible condemn to permanent destruction the ignorant (cf. Rom. 4:15 & Rom. 5:13).

¹¹ This expression leaves no room for unending torment of the wicked. See also: Psalm 37:10; Isaiah 1:28-31; Isaiah 66:24; Matt. 3:12; Mark 9:42-48; 2 Peter 2:6,12; Jude 1:7.

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presence of the Master and from the glory of His power 10 when¹² He should come to be esteemed among His holy ones,¹³ and to be marveled at among all the trusting ones in that Day, because our witness to you was believed. 11 For this we are also praying always concerning you so that our God may count you worthy of the invitation, and He should fulfill, with power, every delight of goodness and act of trust, 12 by which the name of our Master Jesus Christ may be glorified among you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Chapter 2

The Signs that Must Precede our Gathering by the Angels

1 Yet we plead with you, brothers, concerning the arrival of our Master Jesus Christ and our being collected together to Him,¹⁴ 2 not to be so quickly unsettled from understanding,¹⁵ nor to be alarmed¹⁶ (not by a spirit, nor by a message, nor by a letter as if by us¹⁷) to the effect that the Day of Christ has become imminent.¹⁸ 3 None of you should succumb to anyone's deception through any method.¹⁹ Because, should not the apostasy come first²⁰ and the revealing of the Man of Sin,²¹ the Son of Destruction, the one opposing and self-exalting above every named god or worshipped thing, so also as a god to appoint himself into the Temple of God, portraying himself that he is a god? 5 Don't you remember that while being with you I told you these things? 6 And now you have perceived that which restrains in order to reveal him at his appointed time. 7 For the mystery of lawlessness is already acting, only one (is) now restraining until he should go out from between. 8 And then the lawless one will be revealed (whom the Master will consume by the breath of His mouth, and shall destroy by the manifestation of His arrival) 9 whose arrival is in accord with the energy of Satan with all power, and

¹² This term links the timing of the total destruction of the wicked with the gathering of Jesus' elect, when they see Him for the first time.

¹³ His holy angels (See vs. 7 & the notes on 1 Thess. 3:13).

¹⁴ Matthew 24:29-31

¹⁵ From their former teaching by Paul in the first Epistle, particularly chapter 5, where he discussed the "times and appointments," and directed them to be soberly watching for the specific signs that Jesus gave in His Olivet Discourse.

¹⁶ This is the term Jesus used in the Olivet Discourse when He told the disciples not to be "alarmed" by certain signs that must precede the coming tribulation, but in themselves do not signal His return (Matt. 24:6; Mark 13:7).

¹⁷ See note on 2 Thess. 3:17.

¹⁸ The KJV has "is at hand," (implying that they thought the Day of Christ was imminent) because the Greek verb "ενεστηκεν" means to "stand near." Most modern versions have "is present" because the verb is in the perfect tense, which implies past completed action with results that continue to the present. However, "has become imminent" embodies both meanings. (See: Heb. 9:9 for the same word with the same sense). Something had occurred that was being falsely reported to signal the imminent coming of Christ.

¹⁹ None of the Thessalonians should have been deceived by reports that Christ's return was imminent, because Jesus had provided the sequence of events in His Olivet Discourse (Matt. 24), including the apostasy followed by the "abomination of desolation."

²⁰ Matthew 24:10-13

²¹ The "abomination of desolation" (Matt. 24:15), spoken of by Daniel (Dan. 9:27; Dan. 12:11)

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signs, and false miracles, 10 and with every deception of injustice among those being destroyed because they rejected the love of the truth for their deliverance. 11 And through this²² God will dispatch a fraudulent energy for them to believe the lie, 12 so that all those having disbelieved the truth, but having delighted in injustice, should be condemned.

Exhortation to Stand Firm

13 Yet we are obliged to always thank God concerning you, brothers having been beloved²³ under the Master, that God chose you from the beginning unto deliverance by purification of the breath²⁴ and trust of the truth, 14 into which he invited you through our Good Message for procuring of the glory²⁵ of our Master Jesus Christ. 15 Consequently then, brothers, stand firm and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word²⁶ or by our letter. 16 And may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father – the One having loved us and having given us permanent consolation and a good hope by grace – 17 console your hearts, and may He establish you in every word and good deed.

Chapter 3

Request for Prayer

1 Furthermore, brothers, pray for us so that the word of the Master may progress swiftly and may be valued, just like [it is] also with you, 2 and so that we may be rescued from injurious and wicked men, since faithfulness is not from all. 3 But the Master is faithful, who will strengthen you and guard [you] from the wicked.²⁷ 4 Yet we have confidence concerning you in the Master, that what we are commanding you, you are also doing and will do. 5 And may the Master guide your hearts unto the love of God and the endurance of Christ.²⁸

²² God's dispatching the fraudulent energy is by means of the restrainer removing himself from the midst of his restraining the working of Satan. Thus, it is not that God Himself deceives people. Rather, the full deception is now being held back and restrained at His command, but will be released at the appointed time so that those refusing the truth may condemn themselves by their swift embracing of the deception, thus revealing their true motives and hearts.

²³ See notes on 1 Thess. 1:4.

²⁴ See notes on 1 Thess. 5:23 & Heb. 12:23.

²⁵ This is accomplished in the resurrection. See: Rom. 8:18-21

²⁶ The oral teaching of the Apostles has not been preserved for us intact. However, there are imperfect witnesses to it in the writings of the Apostolic Fathers, a source that is neglected by most modern Christians.

²⁷ The articular genitive, singular, masculine noun "του πονηρου" can refer either to "the wicked one" (Satan) or to "the wicked" as a single class of people. The previous verse makes it clear that the latter interpretation is correct here. See also John 17:15.

²⁸ Measuring up to the endurance that Christ Himself demonstrated under trials and persecution (See: Heb. 12:1-4).

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Separate from Those Walking Disorderly

6 Yet we command you, brothers, in the name of our Master Jesus Christ, to separate yourselves from every brother who is walking disorderly and not according to the tradition which he received from us. 7 For you yourselves have observed how [you] are to imitate us because we were not disorderly among you.²⁹ 8 We did not eat bread gratuitously from anyone, but in work and labor, working night and day so as not to burden any of you. 9 It is not that we have no authority³⁰ [to do so], but so that we may provide ourselves as an example to you for you to imitate us. 10 For when we were with you, this is what we commanded you: that if anyone is unwilling to work, neither let him eat. 11 For we hear [that] some are walking disorderly among you, working at nothing, but meddling. 12 Yet we command such, and urge by our Master Jesus Christ, so that working with quietness they may eat their own bread. 13 Yet you, brothers, should not become tired doing good. 14 But if anyone does not obey our word through this letter, determine also not to associate with him so that he may be ashamed. 15 Also, do not consider him like an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.

Closing Salutation

16 Now may the Master of peace Himself give you peace through all, in every way. The Master [be] with you all. 17 The salute with my own hand – Paul’s – which is the token in every letter, this I write:³¹ 18 The grace of our Master Jesus Christ [be] with you all, Amen.

The second letter to the Thessalonians was written from Athens.

²⁹ See 1 Thess. 2:1-12

³⁰ See note on 1 Thess. 2:6

³¹ While Paul dictated his letters and had others of his team write them for him (except Galatians which he wrote entirely himself), he closed every letter (including Hebrews) with this salute, written in his own handwriting. This was his signature which validated the original autograph as being authentic. This practice was no doubt to counter false letters claiming to be from Paul, as he mentioned in 2 Thess. 2:2.