

Book of 2Thessalonians

Synopsis



Introduction

Book No	53
Name	2Thessalonians
Written By	Paul
Testament	New
Category	Epistles
Date Written	Approx. 51 – 52 A.D
Place Written	Corinth
Audience	Church in Thessalonica
Purpose	To clear up the confusion about the second coming of Christ
History Covered	NA
Chapters	3
Verses	47
Key Verse	And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ. (3:5)
Key People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Paul ❖ Silaus ❖ Timothy
Key Places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Thessalonica

Purpose of the Book

Effective communication is difficult; often the message sent is not the message received in the home, marketplace, neighborhood, or church. Even when clearly stated or written, words can be misinterpreted and misunderstood, especially when filtered through the sieve of prejudices and preconceptions.

Paul faced this problem with the Thessalonians. He had written them earlier to help them grow in the faith, comforting and encouraging them by affirming the reality of Christ's return. Just a few months later, however, word came from Thessalonica that some had misunderstood Paul's teaching about the second coming. His announcement that Christ could come at any moment had caused some to stop working and just wait, rationalizing their idleness by pointing to Paul's teaching. Adding fuel to this fire was the continued persecution of the church. Many felt that indeed this must be the "day of the Lord."

Responding quickly, Paul sent a second letter to this young church. In it he gave further instruction concerning the Second Coming and the day of the Lord (2:1-2). Second Thessalonians, therefore, continues the subject of 1 Thessalonians and is a call to continued courage and consistent conduct.

The letter begins with Paul's trademark—a personal greeting and a statement of thanksgiving for their faith (1:1-3). He mentions their perseverance in spite of their persecution and trials (1:4) and uses this situation to broach the subject of Christ's return. At that time, Christ will vindicate the righteous who endure and will punish the wicked (1:5-12).

Paul then directly answers the misunderstanding concerning the timing of the events of the end times. He tells them not to listen to rumors and reports that the day of the Lord has already begun (2:1-2), because a number of events must occur before Christ returns (2:3-12). Meanwhile, they should stand firm for Christ's truth (2:13-15), receive God's encouragement and hope (2:16-17), pray for strength and for the spread of the Lord's message (3:1-5), and warn those who are idle (3:6-15). Paul ends with personal greetings and a benediction (3:16-18).

Almost 2,000 years later, we stand much closer to the time of Christ's return; but we also would be wrong to see his imminent appearance as an excuse for idle waiting and

heavenward gazing. Being prepared for his coming means spreading the gospel, reaching out to those in need, and building the church, his body.

Scripture presents both signs and suddenness as descriptions of the Lord's return. That may seem contradictory. But alert Christians observe the signs and know that the "mystery of lawlessness" is perennial. They avoid date-setting, leaving the times and the seasons in the hands of the Lord of history (1 Thess. 5:1). Yet they live expectantly, knowing that whether they live or die they are the Lord's (Rom. 14:8; 1 Thess. 5:10).

Before novel teachings that originated with charismatic prophecy are adopted, they should be tested (1 Thess. 5:19, 20). One such test is surely consistency with the generally accepted beliefs—"traditions"—of the historic church and especially alignment with apostolic beliefs. It is sobering to learn that even the Man of Sin, the Antichrist, will possess miraculous powers. Miracles, surprisingly, are never a sufficient ground for faith (Matt. 7:21–23; John 2:23–25): they can be imitated. But the enduring love of God, which is poured out in the hearts of believers by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 5:5), continues into eternity even after charismatic gifts have passed (1 Cor. 13:8–13). Love, then, is the way believers experience eternity within time.

As elsewhere in the New Testament, God is seen as the Father (1:1; 2:16), the source of grace (1:12) and love (3:5), and the object of thanks (1:3; 2:13). He has chosen (2:13) those in His kingdom (1:5) and makes them worthy of His saving call (1:11), but as well He repays evildoers (1:6) and allows delusion to those who despise the truth (2:11) and who do not know Him (1:8). The churches are His (1:4), they rest in Him (1:1).

As you read 2 Thessalonians, then, see clearly the reality of his return and your responsibility to live for him until that day.

Overview

- ❖ 53th book of the BIBLE, 14th in the New Testament, 9th of the 21 epistles and 9th of the 14 epistles written by Paul
- ❖ 2 Thessalonians is Paul's 2nd letter.
- ❖ 2 Thessalonians is Paul's shortest epistle to a congregation.
- ❖ Philemon is shorter, but it is addressed to an individual.
- ❖ Paul uses two words in 2 Thessalonians that are not to be found anywhere else in the New Testament.

- ❖ Paul established the congregation at Thessalonica during his 2nd missionary journey, and remained there for about a month.
- ❖ Since 1 Thessalonians was written, some false doctrine had been taught in Thessalonica.
- ❖ 2 Thessalonians was written to replace error with truth.
- ❖ One of his main subjects is again the proper understanding of the Lord's 2nd coming.
- ❖ It is mentioned in 23 of the 27 New Testament books.
- ❖ Of 7,959 verses in the New Testament, at least 370 of them refer to the 2nd coming of Christ.
- ❖ 1 Out of every 21 verses in the New Testament touches on the subject of the Lord's return.
- ❖ In 2 Thessalonians, Paul also deals with the subject of withdrawing fellowship from the disorderly. 3:6-15
- ❖ In Paul's salutation to the brethren at Thessalonica:
 - He uses the customary Greek, "grace."
 - He uses the customary Hebrew, "peace."
- ❖ The city of Thessalonica.
 - Capital of the Roman province of Macedonia.
 - A prominent seaport city.
 - Situated on the great northern military highway from Rome to the east.
 - Located 100 miles west of Philippi

Hebrew Names of GOD used in 2Thessalonians

NA

Revelation of JESUS CHRIST

The coequality of Christ with God receives particular attention in this book. Father and Son together are the source of grace and peace (1:2, 12; 3:16, 18), comfort and stability (2:16, 17), love and patience (3:5).

Though the church is located geographically in Thessalonica, its spiritual position lies "in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (1:1; 3:12). As in 1 Thess., the Lord Jesus will come again (1:7, 10; 2:1); and He will, "with the breath of His mouth" (2:8),

discomfit the Man of Sin at the moment of His return (2:8) and take vengeance on those who have no knowledge of God (1:8).

Work of THE HOLY SPIRIT

In the single direct reference to the Holy Spirit in 2 Thessalonians, Paul gives thanks to God for the Thessalonians, whose selection for salvation by God “from the beginning” the apostle describes comprehensively as “through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth” (2:13). The Spirit’s sanctifying work can be seen as one way to view the intent of God for His people in saving them. Prophetic utterance from the Spirit, or alleged to be so (2:2), must always be tested (1 Thess. 5:20, 21; 1 Cor. 14:29).

Mega Themes of 2Thessalonians

PERSECUTION

Paul encouraged the church to persevere in spite of troubles and trials. God will bring victory to his faithful followers and judge those who persecute them.

God promises to reward our faith by giving us his power and helping us bear persecution. Suffering for our faith will strengthen us to serve Christ. We must be faithful to him.

CHRIST’S RETURN

Since Paul had said that the Lord could come at any moment, some of the Thessalonian believers had stopped working in order to wait for Christ.

Christ will return and bring total victory to all who trust in him. If we are ready, we need not be concerned about when he will return. We should stand firm, keep working, and wait for Christ.

GREAT REBELLION

Before Christ’s return, there will be a great rebellion against God led by the man of lawlessness (the Antichrist). God will remove all the restraints on evil before he brings judgment on the rebels. The Antichrist will attempt to deceive many.

We should not be afraid when we see evil increase. God is in control, no matter how evil the world becomes. God guards us during Satan’s attacks. We can have victory over evil by remaining faithful to God.

PERSISTENCE

Because church members had quit working and become disorderly and disobedient, Paul chastised them for their idleness. He called on them to show courage and true Christian conduct.

We must never get so tired of doing right that we quit. We can be persistent by making the most of our time and talents. Our endurance will be rewarded.

Life Lessons in 2Thessalonians

Truth	Lesson
<p>Growing in Godliness</p> <p>Jesus warned us that in this world we would experience persecution (John 16:33). The apostle Paul tells us that we are to endure these trials with faith and patience, knowing that it is for the kingdom of God that we suffer. We are also to intercede and pray for other believers and look expectantly for the return and vindication of Jesus Christ.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Endure persecution with faith and patience. Be willing to face persecution, knowing that your suffering is for the kingdom of God. Know that God will punish those who persecute you. ❖ Follow Paul’s example of prayer and intercession for those being persecuted in the church. ❖ Pray that they would fulfill all of the good purposes of God for them and that Jesus would be glorified through them. ❖ Work diligently and pay your bills. ❖ Do not encourage idleness by supporting those who will not work
<p>Cultivating Dynamic Devotion</p> <p>In the midst of suffering and persecution, it is imperative that our devotion to Jesus is strong, growing in faith, and securely rooted in the love of God our Father. Seek to know God. Pursue an ever-deepening relationship with Jesus, so that when you face</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Understand that rich, growing faith in God and an abundance of love for others is the kind of devotion needed to endure suffering. ❖ Receive from Jesus Christ and God our Father love, eternal comfort, and good hope by grace.

<p>opposition, you will be able to stand.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Pray that God would direct the devotion of your heart into a deepening love for Him and the patient endurance of Christ.
<p>Pursuing Holiness</p> <p>In our pursuit of holiness, we must pursue two things: the Holy Spirit, and knowing the Bible, the Word of Truth.</p> <p>Spend time daily in the Bible. Respond to what you read with obedience. Welcome the Holy Spirit and His sanctifying, cleansing, and transforming work in your life daily.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Read and obey the Bible. Welcome the work of the Holy Spirit. God chose you for salvation in Jesus Christ. Through the Holy Spirit and belief in the truth, God works His sanctification in and through you.
<p>The Walk of Faith</p> <p>Walking by faith involves loving and holding fast to the Truth, the Bible. As we place our faith in truth, know the truth, and exercise the discernment that comes from the Holy Spirit, we will be able to recognize the true works of God.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Be discerning, understanding that Satan can imitate signs and wonders. Through the Spirit and the truth of the Scriptures, you will be able to discern and affirm true signs and wonders done for the glory of God. ❖ Stand faithfully, holding firmly to the truth of God’s Word, the Bible. ❖ Pray for leaders, that God would use them powerfully and effectively to preach the gospel. ❖ Pray for their protection and the protection of their families from those who oppose their faith in Jesus.
<p>A step to faithful obedience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ recognize the importance of obeying GOD’s Word.

We must practice discriminating sensitivity in our fellowshiping	❖ Notice that restoration is the object of rejecting fellowship with careless disciples
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Praise Points in 2Thessalonians

- ❖ His grace in the lives of others (1:3-4)
- ❖ His justice (1:5-10)
- ❖ His ability to fill our life with purpose (1:11)
- ❖ Our participation in bringing honor to Jesus (1:12)
- ❖ His power to overcome Satan (2:8)
- ❖ His calling that brought us to Him (2:13-14)
- ❖ His power to protect us from the evil one (3:2-3).

Worship Insights in 2Thessalonians

In the apostle's sharp warning, we see that it is important that worship be grounded in truth. Worship overly focused on the spectacular sometimes blurs our vision of the God we worship (2:9). Worship that is not grounded in the discipline of holy living compromises our witness to the world and spreads discontent among believers (3:6, 11). This letter lovingly calls a congregation back to its first love, gently correcting and encouraging these people whom Paul truly loved.

As Paul thanked God for the Thessalonians, he did not spare his praise (1:3-5; 2:13-14). He openly boasted of their faith and perseverance like the proud spiritual father he was to them. Those who understand worship realize that a person growing in faith is certainly a cause for celebration and affirmation.

Such thanksgiving recognizes God's work in us and encourages us to persevere. Without it we wither. "Blessed are those who heal us of our self-despising," writes Mark Rutherford. Praise the Lord for his gift of grace, evidenced in the affirmation we receive from fellow Christians. It is not only high praise, it is healing praise.

- ❖ Worship includes giving thanks to God for our fellow believers (1:3).
- ❖ Our life becomes an act of worship by reflecting the glory of Christ (1:12).
- ❖ We worship a God who holds the world's destiny in his hands (2:8).
- ❖ Our focus of worship must be on God and not on signs and wonders (2:9).
- ❖ Work is a part of our worship and brings glory to God (3:6-13).

An Outline of 2Thessalonians

- I. Faith, Hope—and Endurance:** [2Th 1:1-12](#)
 - A. Hello, Again:** [2Th 1:1-2](#)
 - B. The Contagion of a Growing Faith:** [2Th 1:3-4](#)
 - C. Joys and Sorrows in God's Final Judgment:** [2Th 1:5-10](#)
 - D. Paul Prays Again:** [2Th 1:11-12](#)

- II. The Return of Christ:** [2Th 2:1-12](#)
 - A. The Error to Be Avoided:** [2Th 2:1-2](#)
 - B. The Apostasy and the Man of Sin:** [2Th 2:3-5](#)
 - C. The Restrainer:** [2Th 2:6-7](#)
 - D. The Coming and Triumph of Christ:** [2Th 2:8-12](#)

- III. Strength for Today:** [2Th. 2:13-3:5](#)
 - A. The Gospel in Summary:** [2Th 2:13-17](#)
 - B. A Request for Prayer:** [2Th 3:1-2](#)
 - C. Great is Thy Faithfulness:** [2Th 3:3-5](#)

- IV. The Dignity of Work:** [2Th 3:6-15](#)
 - A. The Tough Question of Church Discipline:**[2Th 3:6](#), [2Th 3:14-15](#)
 - B. The Example of the Apostles:** [2Th 3:7-9](#)
 - C. The Command of the Apostles:** [2Th 3:10-13](#)

- V. The Final Benediction:** [2Th 3:16-18](#)