

Second Thessalonians 1:1-10

Written very soon after 1 Thessalonians.

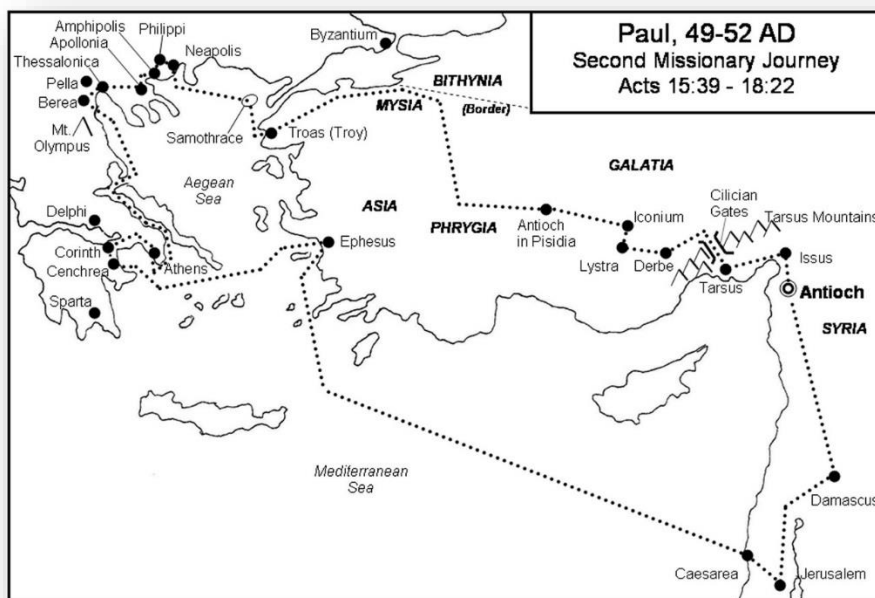
Reasons for the letter:

1. Increased persecution
2. Time of the Day of the Lord
3. The disruption from idle believers

Paul gives us two important perspectives in this letter:

- the ultimate outcome of the Gospel message
- how to practically live this Gospel truth in our everyday lives among the pagans

1:1-10 The opening thanksgiving addresses persecution and the Day of the Lord.



Verse 1:1 Timothy has gone to and returned

from Thessalonica. Silas may have stayed in Corinth with Paul and is possibly the scribe of this letter for Paul.

Paul uses the first person plural (we, us) all through the letter except at 2:5 and 3:17 (he uses "I").

See 2 Thessalonians 3:17 where Paul takes the pen to write a closing greeting and sign his name.

Verses 1:2 identify the divine blessings of grace and peace as coming from both God the Father and the Lord Jesus. "Grace and Peace" are used to identify the totality of the salvation blessing the believer has in Jesus.

- In 2:16 "grace" provides us with encouragement and hope because of the ultimate eschatological results
- In 3:16 "peace" is offered to believers from "the Lord of peace himself" and is to be available and used by believers "at all times" and "in every way." Peace is harmony, exemption from war, that sense of wellbeing that is available even in the midst of persecution in life and in the face of death.

Verses 1:3-10 is a single sentence in the Greek that can be broken down like this:

- 3-4 thanks God for preserving the Thessalonian believers in their trials and persecutions
- 5 is a transition between Paul's addressing the persecution and the coming judgment of the Lord
- 6-9 declaration of the Lord's intention to return and bring judgment on the persecutors
- 10 statement of the hope and glory for believers on the day the Lord comes

The purpose of this opening thanksgiving (1:3-10) is to thank God and encourage the Thessalonians.

1:3-4 “ought always to thank God” is *opheilomen* and means it is our duty, obligation and necessary to thank God. This is true because God is doing good things in the midst of our lives.

“rightly so” is *axios* which has the basic meaning of “worthy” and is used here to mean it is proper, it is right it is fitting because God is the source of the good.

In the Thessalonian’s case God was the one causing:

1. “your faith is growing more and more”
 - a. In the midst of trials their faith is growing
 - b. God is the source and cause of that growth
 - c. Paul desires to feed their faith and help it grow in the midst of persecution by reminding them of the eschatological results found in 2:1-12. This information concerning the ultimate result was to help strengthen their faith.
2. “the love every one of you has for each other is increasing.”
 - a. Paul addresses “love” and again adds to their knowledge concerning “love” and what it looks like in 3:6-16
 - b. This “love” is manifesting in actions, attitudes and words among the Thessalonians. It does not mean they were “feeling more love” but that they were manifesting love in their relationships with each other.
 - c. Notice Paul is not simply concerned with the Thessalonians getting saved or having faith to get saved, but was now writing to teach them in order to help their faith manifest in mature strength and fullness of love in their daily lives.

Thanksgiving prayers in Second Thessalonians:

1. 1:3-5
2. 2:13-17

Thanksgiving prayers in First Thessalonians:

1. 1:3
2. 2:13
3. 3:9

This opening thanksgiving leads Paul into his first of three concerns: encourage them in persecutions and trials.”

Paul does this by connecting the current situation of suffering/persecution with the final eschatological result.

1:5 “All this is evidence that God’s judgment is right, and as a result you will be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are suffering.

“evidence” (endeigma) means “evidence, proof, the means by which one knows that something is a fact.”

The word “evidence” is difficult to connect to the context of the thanksgiving.

1. Was the “evidence” the fact that God had strengthened the Thessalonians in the midst of persecution? Then this was a sign of God’s intention to ultimately deliver them in the end. The Thessalonians deliverance would result in the overthrow of their persecutors in the end.
2. Or, was the “evidence” the persecutions by the unbelievers? Then the “sign” that God’s ultimate deliverance was inevitable in the future was the Thessalonians current suffering. In the end the believing Thessalonians would be delivered and the unbelievers would be destroyed.

In Philippians 1:27-28 the Philippians faced persecution without fear and in full confidence in the face of their opposition. This fearlessness was a “sign to them that they will be destroyed, but that you will be saved” apparently on the “Day of Christ” mentioned in Phil. 1:6 and 1:10

1 Peter 4:17-19 says judgment begins with the household of God now and ends with the judgment of unbelievers.

1 Peter says suffering and trials test the believer’s character and faith during their life in 1:7 and 4:12.

1 Thess. 2:14 and 3:3-4 the Thessalonians suffering was the proof of their faith.

“worthy” (kataxioo) means “to consider worthy” or “declare worthy.” Faithfulness in suffering in the NT letters is often connected with being “worthy” of the coming kingdom.

1:6 “God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you”

Basic “eye for an eye” justice by the Lord who will “thlipsis” or bring affliction to those who brought you affliction. The Lord will give his afflicted believers “rest” and those who persecute his believers will be afflicted with “trouble.”

Isaiah 66:1-9

1:7 “and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels.”

“relief” means the lifting of the pressure caused by the persecution.

APOKALPSEI ---“revealed” is *apokalypsei* (1 Cor. 1:7; 1 Peter 1:7, 13; 4:13 and Luke 17:30) it means “the removal of the veil” most often used with a divine “revelation” or unveiling of a truth or part of the divine mystery. Here Jesus would be “unveiled”, “revealed” or *apokalypsei*.

The “revealing” or “apokalypses” includes the same as the first letter:

- “from heaven”
- “with the angels of his power” – as in Zech. 14:5 and 1 Thes. 3:13
- “in blazing fire” – as in Isaiah 66:15 with the end of the phrase coming from Isaiah 66:4
 - Paul in 1 Thes 1:6-8: *of the Lord Jesus...in flaming fire, giving punishment to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ*
 - Isaiah 66:15: *The Lord as fire will come, and as a storm his chariots, to recompense with wrath, punishment and repudiation in flaming fire*
 - Isaiah 66:4: *Says the Lord (verse 2)...I will repay them because I called them and they did not obey me*

In 1 Thess. 4:16 the Lord will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the arch angel and with the trumpet call of God. (“meet” is “apantesis” a technical term of a meeting of a delegation of citizens from a city with a dignitary approaching their city to show respect and to escort the dignitary back into their city as in Matt. 25:6, “But at midnight there was a shout, ‘Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet him,’ ” and Ac28:6, “And the brethren, when they heard about us, came from there as far as the Market of Appius and Three Taverns to meet us; and when Paul saw them, he thanked God and took courage.”)

PAROUSIA ---In other places in the books of First and Second Thessalonians the “coming” of Jesus is referred to as the *parousia* (1 Thess. 2:19; 3:13; 4:15; 5:23 and 2 Thess. 2:1). *Parousia* is an event, arrival, advent, presence. “presence, the coming, arrival, advent” . Used in 1 Thess. 3:13

1:8 “He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.”

1:9 “They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power...”

Literally: “They will pay the penalty.”

This is a double sided judgment also found in Isaiah 2:10:

1. “punished with everlasting destruction” – typical “fire is not quenched and worm does not die” stuff
2. “shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power” – their personal character is forever set incapable of knowing Jesus or perceiving his wisdom, light, power, glory. Forever they will be less than human. Isaiah refers to this in Isaiah 2:10 as hiding “from the face of the Lord” and “from the glory of his might.”

1:10 “...on the day he comes to be glorified in his holy people and to be marveled at among all those who have believed. This includes you, because you believed our testimony to you.”

ERCHOMAI --“come” is “erchomai” and means “to come” “to come from one place to another” and erchomai is used of persons arriving to appear, to come before the public and to make one’s appearance.

1:11 “With this in mind, we constantly pray for you, that our God may count you worthy of his calling, and that by his power he may fulfill every good purpose of yours and every act prompted by your faith.”

1:12 “We pray this so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

2:1-9 “(1) Concerning the **coming** (parousias) of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered to him (episunagoges)...(3) the man of lawlessness is **revealed** (apokaluphthe)...(6) And now you know what is holding him back, so that he may be **revealed** (apokaluphthenai) at the proper time...(8) And then the lawless one will be **revealed** (apokaluphthasetai), whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendor of his coming (parousias) (9)The **coming** (parousia)of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan...”