

BIBLE CORRESPONDENCE FELLOWSHIP

Second Thessalonians



Answer Key

The book of 2 Thessalonians was probably written a few months after Paul's first epistle to the same church. Like the first letter it addresses confusion the believers had about when the Lord would return and how they fit into God's plan for the last days. Apparently some had tried to deceive the Thessalonians to convince them that Christ had already returned and they were left behind to suffer tribulation and persecution. Paul encourages them because of their constant faith but also reprimands those who are lazy and not working to support themselves.

Before beginning this study you should take time to read through 2 Thessalonians from beginning to end. This will help you better understand each section in the context of the entire book. While doing the study, read each question carefully using the given Scripture reference to find your answer. May the Lord bless you as you study the book of 2 Thessalonians.

INTRODUCTION

AUTHOR: The apostle Paul

PLACE OF WRITING: Written from Corinth.

DATE OF WRITING: 2 Thessalonians was probably written in 50 or 51 AD while Paul was residing in Corinth for 18 months as recorded in Acts 18:11. It probably was written about six months after First Thessalonians.

PURPOSE, THEME AND SUBJECT MATTER

OF THE LETTER: Thessalonica was the most prominent city in the area of northern Greece known as Macedonia. It was a bustling seaport and at the intersection of two major Roman roads. It had a population of about 200,000 at the time Paul visited it. It had a fairly large Jewish population and thus a synagogue where Paul preached for three Sabbath days (Acts 17:2).



After establishing the church in Thessalonica, Paul moved on to Berea, Athens and Corinth (Acts 17-18). While in Corinth he was joined by Timothy and Silas (Acts 18:5). They returned with news from the Thessalonian church which prompted Paul to pen the first letter of encouragement and instruction to them. Paul was thankful that the believers had remained faithful but apparently there were a number of issues that had arisen and Paul felt it was

necessary to correct their thinking. The issue of greatest concern was that there was confusion among the believers about the nature of the coming of the Lord and the resurrection of believers that had died. After Timothy and Silas returned from delivering the letter, apparently there were still questions among the believers about whether the persecution they were going through meant that they had missed the rapture and were going through the period of tribulation spoken of in the Old Testament. Paul explains in this second letter that certain things had to take place before Christ would return to bring forth judgment on the earth.

Please read the entire book of 2 Thessalonians. _____ Check.

Please memorize the following verse and be prepared to write it out at the end of this lesson.

“And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.”
(2 Thessalonians 3:5 – KJV)

CHAPTER ONE

Read 2 Thessalonians Chapter 1 _____ Check

GREETING AND THANKSGIVING

1. (v. 1) Who was together with Paul when he wrote this letter? Silas and Timothy (Silvanus and Timotheus)
2. (v. 1) How does Paul describe the Thessalonian church? In God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ

3. (v. 2) What does Paul wish for them? Grace and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ

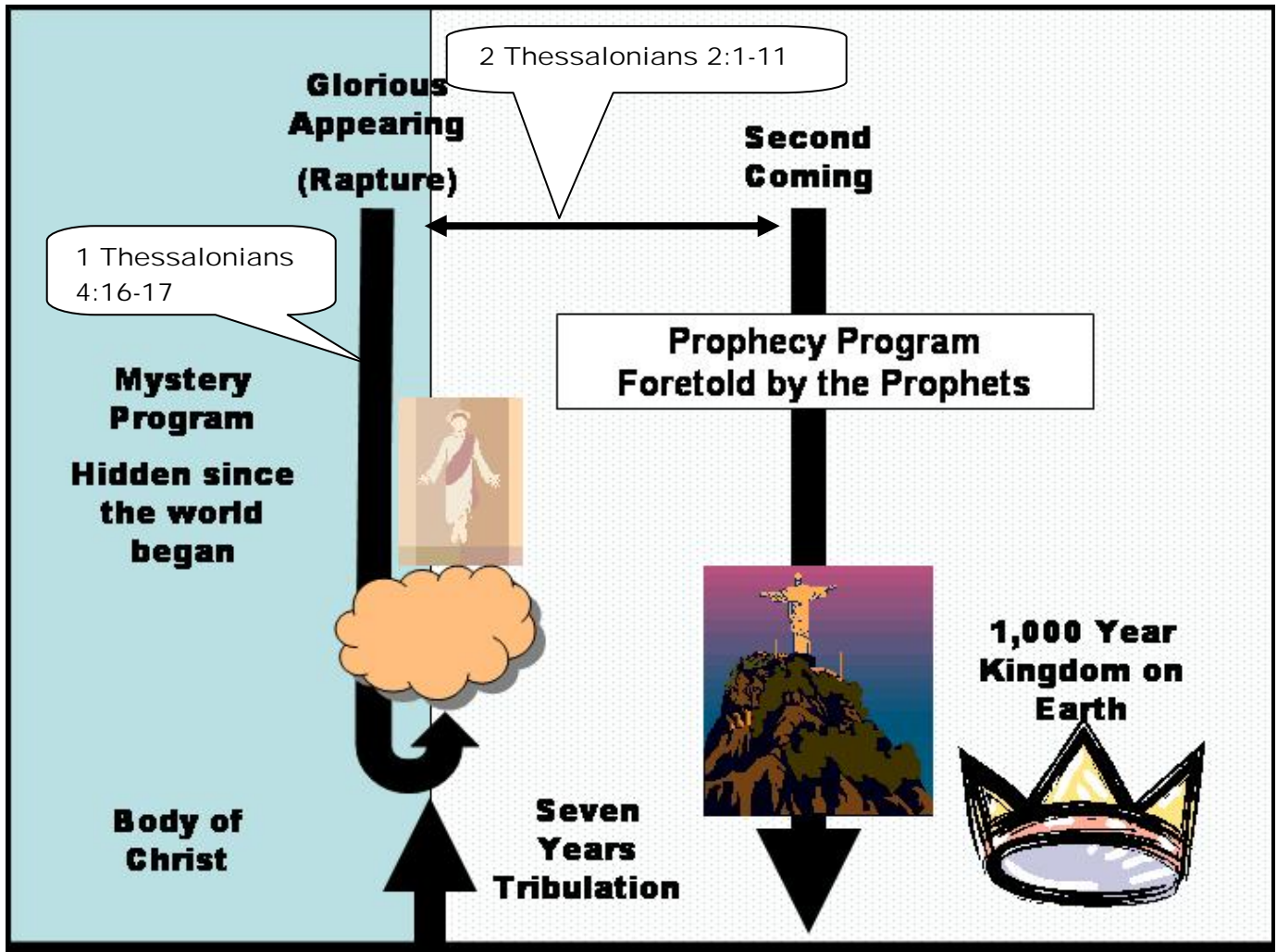
4. (v. 3) Why does Paul thank God for the Thessalonian believers? Because their faith is growing and love for one another is increasing. (faith groweth exceedingly and charity toward one another increaseth – KJV)

5. (v. 4) What does Paul glory in (boast – NIV) to the other churches about the Thessalonians? Their perseverance (patience – KJV) and faith

6. (v. 4) What were the Thessalonian believers going through when Paul wrote to them? Persecutions and tribulations (trials – KJV)

Note: In 2 Thessalonians 1:5 – 2:12 Paul is clarifying the confusion in the Thessalonian church about the persecution they were experiencing and how that related to the end times that are prophesied in the Old Testament. In 1 Thessalonians Paul reassures the believers that they, and those that had already died, would not be left behind when the Lord appeared to take the believers to be with Him. In that letter he introduced the truth of the “glorious appearing” of the Lord, or the event commonly called the “Rapture” in which the Church, the Body of Christ, would be removed from the Earth before the beginning of the Great Tribulation.

The Thessalonians must have still been confused, since they were experiencing persecution, and they could know from the Old Testament scriptures that a period of tribulation would precede the second coming of the Lord (Jeremiah 30:7). They must have believed that they were experiencing that period of history at that time. Paul explains to them that the trials they were experiencing were not part of the prophesied tribulation because certain things had to take place before that period of time could begin, specifically a personality he calls “the man of lawlessness” (KJV – Man of Sin) must appear. He is referring to the Antichrist figure that Daniel calls “the prince (ruler- NIV) that shall come” (Daniel 9:26) and the “king that exalts himself” (Daniel 11:36) and that John identifies as the “beast” in Revelation 13:1-10. Refer to the chart below and notice that 1 Thessalonians is teaching about the Rapture while this portion of 2 Thessalonians is describing the events after the Rapture which the members of the Body of Christ will not experience.



THE LORD'S VENGEANCE

7. (vs. 5) For what were the Thessalonians suffering? For the kingdom of God
8. (vs. 6) What will God do to those who persecute the Church (compare Romans 12:19)? He will pay them back (Recompense tribulation – KJV)

9. (vs. 7) What will He do for those that are persecuted? **He will give comfort (rest – KJV)**

10. (vs. 7) When will God's judgment take place? **When the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire**

Note: Compare this description of the Lord's return with Revelation 19:12; Matthew 25:31; Daniel 7:9

11. (vss. 8-9) Describe the punishment for those that do not obey the gospel of the Lord Jesus? **They will be punished with everlasting destruction and from the presence of the Lord and from His glory**

12. (vs. 10) What will happen when the Lord comes? **He will be glorified in His people and marveled at (admired in – KJV) by those that have believed.**

13. (vss 11-12) Describe in your own words Paul's prayers for the Thessalonian believers. **That they would be found worthy of His calling and that every good purpose would be fulfilled and that the Lord Jesus would be glorified through them. (Answers will vary)**

CHAPTER TWO

THE MAN OF LAWLESSNESS (SIN)

Read 2 Thessalonians Chapter 2:1-12 _____ Check

1. (vs. 1) What is the topic Paul is about to discuss? **The coming of our Lord Jesus and our being gathered to Him.**

2. (vs. 2) What reaction does Paul not want from the believers concerning this topic? **That they should not be unsettled or alarmed (shaken in mind or troubled – KJV)**

3. (vs. 2) What would the false reports be saying that might upset the believers? **That the day of the Lord (Christ – KJV) had already come.**

4. (vs. 3) What two things must take place before the day of the Lord (Christ – KJV) can take place? **There must be a rebellion (falling away – KJV) and the man of lawlessness (sin – KJV) must be revealed**

5. (vs. 3) How is the man of lawlessness (sin – KJV) described? **the man doomed to destruction (son of perdition – KJV)**

Note: The Greek word that is translated as “rebellion” in the NIV and “falling away” in the KJV is *apostasia* which can refer to a departure, in fact the root word from which this is derived is often translated “depart” in the New Testament. Furthermore, the Greek contains the definite article “the.” Therefore, the passage can be talking about “the departure” and Paul is most likely referring to the Rapture. Therefore, he is saying that the Antichrist cannot be revealed until the Rapture of the Church, the Body of Christ takes place.

6. (vs. 4) Describe how the man introduced in verse 3 will behave. **He will exalt himself over all that is called God, he will set himself up in God’s temple and will proclaim himself to be God**

Note: Compare the description here with Daniel 9:27; 11:36-37; Matthew 24:15 and Revelation 13:5-8. It seems clear that they are referring to one and the same.

7. (vs. 5) Was this first time the Thessalonian believers heard this teaching? **No**

8. (vss. 6-7) Why has the Man of Lawlessness (Sin – KJV) not yet been revealed? **There is something that is holding him back that must be taken out of the way**

Note: These verses tell us that the Antichrist cannot be revealed to the world until something which holds him back is removed. This could refer to one of two things. It might mean the Church, the Body of Christ, which must first be removed through the Rapture before the Antichrist will be known. It might also refer to the Holy Spirit who indwells believers, who will be removed at the time of the Rapture. The second option is a possibility because the phrase “the one who holds it back” (he who letteth – KJV) uses a masculine pronoun which usually refers to a personality. However, although the Holy Spirit will accompany the believers at the rapture, He can never be removed from the world, and He will play a prominent role in the events of the end times. In either case, it seems clear that Paul is saying that the Antichrist cannot be revealed until after the Rapture of the Church.

9. (vs. 8) What will happen to the lawless one (the Wicked – KJV)? **He will be overthrown and destroyed (consumed and destroyed –KJV) by the Lord Jesus**

10. (v. 8) When will the overthrow of the Lawless One take place? **When the Lord Jesus comes in glory**

11. (vss. 9-10) The Lawless One will do whose bidding while on Earth? What kinds of things will he do? **Satan’s work, he will perform all types of false miracles and wonders**

Note: Compare this description of the activity of the Antichrist with that of Revelation 13:13-14.

12. (vs. 10) Why will those that are deceived perish? **Because they have refused to believe (received not – KJV) the truth**

13. (vs. 11) What will be sent to those that do not believe the truth? **A strong delusion so that they will believe a lie**

ENCOURAGEMENT TO STAND FIRM

Read 2 Thessalonians Chapter 2:13-16 _____ Check

14. (vs. 13) How have the believers been chosen for salvation? **Through the sanctification of the Spirit and belief in the truth**

15. (vs. 14) How did God call the Thessalonians? **By our gospel**

16. (vs. 15) What does Paul encourage the Thessalonians to do? **Stand firm and hold on to the teachings they had received from him**

17. (vs. 15) In what two ways had the teachings (traditions –KJV) been communicated to the Thessalonians? **By word of mouth and through letters (epistles – KJV)**

18. (vs. 16-17) What blessing does Paul wish for the readers of the epistle? **That they would be encouraged in their hearts and strengthened for every good word and work**

CHAPTER THREE

PAUL’S REQUEST FOR PRAYER

Read 2 Thessalonians Chapter 3:1-5 _____ Check

1. (vs. 1) What is Paul’s first prayer request? **That the message of the Lord would spread rapidly (have free course – KJV) and be honored (glorified – KJV)**

2. (vs. 2) What else does Paul ask prayer for? **That they would be delivered from evil and wicked men**

3. (vs. 3) What is Paul confident the Lord will do? **Strengthen (stablish - KJV) them and deliver them from the evil one (evil – KJV)**

4. (vs. 4) What is Paul confident of? **That they will do the things which he (Paul) has commanded them to**

5. (vs. 5) What does Paul wish for the believers **That the Lord direct their hearts to the love of God and and the perseverance (patient waiting – KJV) of Jesus Christ**

WARNINGS AGAINST IDLENESS AND FINAL GREETINGS

Read 2 Thessalonians Chapter 3:6-18 _____ Check

6. (vs. 6) What command does Paul give the readers? **That they keep away from any believer (brother - KJV) that is idle and disruptive (walketh disorderly – KJV)**
7. (vss. 7-8) What example did Paul and his companions set for the Thessalonians believers? **They worked night and day with their own hands so as not to be a burden to anyone**
8. (vs. 9) Why did Paul and his companions work the way they did? **To be an example (ensample – KJV) for the Thessalonians**
9. (vs. 10) What was the rule that Paul set for the Thessalonians? **If a man does not work, neither shall he eat**
10. (vs. 11) What report had Paul heard about some of the Thessalonians? **That they were idle (disorderly - KJV), and were not working but were busybodies**
11. (vs. 12) What command does Paul give to those people? **That they should settle down (live in quietness - KJV) and work to earn their food**
12. (vs. 13) What should the readers not become weary of? **Doing what is right (well doing – KJV)**
13. (vs. 14) How should the church deal with someone that ignores Paul's instructions? **They should not associate with them so that the person would feel ashamed**
14. (vs. 15) How should this person be regarded (counted – KJV)? **Not as an enemy but as a brother**
15. (vs. 16) What is Paul's wish for the believers? **That the Lord of Peace would give them peace at all times**
16. (vs. 17) What was the distinguishing mark of Paul's letters? **The greeting (salutation – KJV) written with his own hand**
17. (vs. 18) What final blessing does Paul give to the believers? **That the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with them all**

Use the space below for any questions or comments:

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