

LESSON 6 – THE LORD’S RIGHTEOUS RETURN

II Thessalonians 1:1-12

Brief History and Background

Given the elaboration and continued development of themes established in the first epistle to the Thessalonians, it appears that Paul’s first epistle brought several issues to the surface that required additional definition and guidance in this second letter. Since the first letter was most likely written in AD 51-53, during Paul’s second missionary journey, while he was preaching in Corinth, the second letter was also most likely written about the same time. This letter may have been written almost immediately after the return and report of the first epistle’s courier.

Themes

Although it was a prominent issue in the writing of the first letter to the Thessalonians, the final coming of the Lord has evidently become the most critical matter troubling this young church. More details are provided concerning the related judgment and timeline of the Lord’s return. Although the church had already shown remarkable resilience toward enduring persecution, Paul calls upon further perseverance in maintaining the commands and traditions delivered to them. This required rejection of error and withdrawal from the obstinate. Specifically, some had refused to work and willingly relied upon the financial support of others. Possibly connected with misunderstandings about a possibly imminent or overlooked second coming, this willful indolence was not to be tolerated. Encouraging prayers for the Thessalonians’ ongoing spiritual growth and ultimate salvation are confidently offered, while prayers are requested for the further success of the gospel’s spread and glorification.

Chapter 1 Summary

Paul continued to exalt the Thessalonians’ tremendous endurance of persecution and troubles. However, they are reminded of the significance of this trial’s outcome and the Lord’s promised return, which will result in the reckoning of this persecution: fiery judgment upon the unbelieving and disobedient, and ultimate peace for those who believed and persevered. Paul prays for the final realization of God’s goodness and glory in them, which should have been encouraging for them, as well as for us.

Bible Reading With Questions

Greeting and Exaltation – II Thessalonians 1:1-5

1. What was the object of Paul’s “*boast*”? Is boasting not wrong? How can Paul be vindicated of his “*boast*” in this verse?
2. How might our endurance of “*persecutions and tribulations*” give proof to the “*righteous judgment of God*”?

Christ’s Return and Judgment – II Thessalonians 1:6-12

3. On Christ’s return, why will God “*repay with tribulation those who trouble you*”? How does this reflect upon God’s character?
4. Give some other Scriptures that exemplify how “*mighty*” angels can be.

5. What will be the fate of those who are ignorant of the gospel and those who merely believed it? How does this affect the faith-only doctrine?
6. Does verse 9 suggest that the condemned will be annihilated or spend eternity in hell? Will they suffer forever in hell, or will the Lord simply terminate their existence all together?
7. Based on this passage, why are saints separated from those who will be destroyed? How are they different?
8. What will be different in “*that Day*” so that we may then “*admire*” the Lord Jesus Christ? Can we not admire Him now?
9. Atheists accuse our God of being a sort of ego-maniac. Does verse 10 indicate that the Lord seeks our admiration and glory of Him?
10. What would be the fulfillment of all of God’s good pleasure of His goodness and the work of faith and power?
11. How could our name ever be glorified in Christ? And, by what means will it be achieved?