

PREPARATION FOR LESSON: Read 2 Thessalonians 1 - 3**BACKGROUND**

Believers in Thessalonica misunderstood Paul's original teaching about the return of Jesus. They thought only those living at the time could be a part of it. So when church members died, they were devastated. Paul wrote his first letter to assure them. When Jesus returns, all believers, living or dead, will receive resurrection bodies and meet Jesus in the air to be alongside Him (the *Parousia*). He will lead them to His home. This gave them great comfort.

But then false teachers came to the church and said that according to Paul, the *Day of the Lord* had already begun. This caused some of the believers to think Jesus returned and **they** missed out on the *Parousia*. Their persecution means they are suffering God's judgment.

Other believers still think Jesus is coming at any moment, so they refuse to work and are wandering around meddling in the lives of others, telling them what they should do and how they should do it.

Because of their wrong belief and wrong actions, Paul writes a second letter from Corinth just a few months after the first, c. 52 AD.

THEME Reproof and correction in relation to the teaching of Jesus' return**OUTLINE**

- Comfort in persecution 1
- Correction of belief 2
- Reproof of action 3

EXPLANATIONS**Contrast between the 2 letters**

In 1 Thessalonians, believers think those who **died** have missed the *parousia*.

In 2 Thessalonians, believers think they who are **living** have missed the *parousia*.

Chapter 1:5 *God's evaluation is right.* Because of their faith in Jesus, Thessalonian believers will be with Jesus.

At the Reviewing Stand, their worthiness of reward for faithfulness will be declared by Jesus Himself.

They have a desire for goodness and faithfulness. So in verse 11, Paul's prayer is that God's power enables them to put their desire into practice - that their lives are filled with good and faithful actions.

Chapter 2 Correction of belief: some think they have been left out of the *parousia* and the *Day of the Lord* has begun.

- **2:2** *unsettled* - word used to describe a boat loosed from its mooring, being wildly tossed about in heavy seas.

- **Day of the Lord** - Mentioned 16 times in the Old Testament

That day, that great day, the day - 75 times in Old Testament

Isaiah 13:6-9; Zephaniah 1:14-18 Not a literal 24 hours, but an extended period of time

Always includes a time of destruction, judgment, God's wrath (God's response to injustice and evil)

Cannot begin until: **The apostasy**: a massive world-wide turning from the basics of God's truth 2:3

The Holy Spirit and Church are removed from holding back

lawlessness and the man of lawlessness 2:6-7

The man of lawlessness is revealed (man of sin/rebel) 2:3

- **Man of lawlessness** (Satan's man; Antichrist because he is against and in place of Christ). Facts about him...

- Now restrained by something and by Someone 2:6-7 (The Holy Spirit working thru the Church).
- Cannot be revealed until the Holy Spirit is removed from holding him back 2:7
- Will work miracles, signs and wonders 2:9
- Takes over the Jewish temple in Jerusalem and demands worship as god 2:4
- Will be destroyed by Jesus after 7 years 2:8 cf. Rev. 11:2-6; 13:5

- **The greatest lie** - that Satan's man (Antichrist) is Jesus vs. 11

- **The future of believers** - we will share in the glory of Jesus vs. 14



EXPLANATIONS (continued)

- Two future events that are complete opposites

PAROUSIA	DAY OF THE LORD
Future of believers	Future of non-believers
Takes place in the air	Takes place on the earth
Blessing	Judgment
Encouragement	Darkness, wrath

Chapter 3 Reproof of action: because some believers think Jesus' return is so near, they refuse to work.

- vs. 11 ...*some among you are idle. They are not busy; they are busybodies.*
- vs. 14 ...*do not associate with him:* do not invite him for a meal; do not loan him money.

FUTURE EVENTS

What God Will Accomplish thru Satan's 7-year kingdom

He brings the Jews to national repentance (in Jeremiah 30:7 it is called the time of trouble for Israel / Jacob)

He brings Gentile individuals to repentance

Jewish believers will be the ones giving the message of Jesus world-wide

Many who rejected the message of Jesus during the days of the Church will believe

Hundreds and hundreds of thousands will respond and will suffer martyrdom

He proves Satan's kingdom is a failure - the best Satan has to offer is "hell on earth."

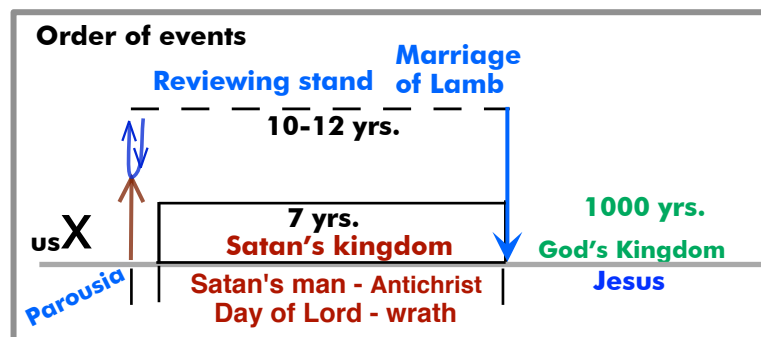
After Satan's kingdom is God's Kingdom

Jesus returns to earth, bringing us with Him. 1 Thess. 3:13; Rev. 19:7-14.

He will *overthrow Satan's man with the breath of His mouth and destroy him by the splendor of His coming.*

(Shekinah glory) 2 Thess. 2:8.

Jesus then sets up His kingdom. Rev. 20:1-6.



Why the "Tribulation" should not be called Tribulation.

Jesus said that from the beginning of the Church at Pentecost until the **Parousia**, believers will experience tribulation, meaning, "suffering and persecution." John 14:27. There is no one *special* time created specifically by God for the suffering or tribulation of **believers**.

What is commonly called the "**Tribulation**," is what Scripture calls the **Day of the Lord** – a time when God will bring judgment on the earth to those who have **rejected** Him. It is always connected with His **wrath**, meaning, "His response to evil and injustice."

Paul said believers were not connected with God's wrath.

Since we have now been justified by His blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath? Rom. 5:9

...and to wait for His Son from heaven... - Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath. 1 Thess. 1:10

For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath, but to receive salvation thru our Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Thess. 5:10



APPLICATION

Because of these statements, I personally do not believe we as believers will go thru the Day of the Lord. I believe we are removed to be alongside Jesus in heaven during that time.

Paul said believers should look forward to the *Parousia* - return of Jesus which is the last part of the Gospel message.

We are caught up to meet the Lord in the air and we will forever be with the Lord. 1 Thess. 4:17.

Jesus said,

In My Father's house are many rooms. I would not be telling you about them if they were not there. Do not let your hearts be troubled about My leaving, because I am going to make ready a place for you. Even tho you do not know the when or the how, I am going to make ready a place and I am coming again to take you alongside Me, so that where I am, you also may be. ...Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you. I do not give it like the world gives it to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. John 14:1-3, 27

Not everyone may agree with my personal view, but we all agree that as believers, we are accountable for our actions. God never wants us to be fearful and unsure about future events that involve us. He has given us information so that *the Lord of peace Himself may give us peace at all times and in every way.* 2 Thess. 3:16

This is what God wants for our lives.

