
Δεύτερη Επιστολή του Παύλου Προς Θεσσαλονικείς



PAUL'S SECOND LETTER TO THE THESSALONIANS

INTRODUCTION

The *Second Letter to the Thessalonians* deals with issues that are also central to *First Thessalonians*: understanding fulfilment in Christ's return and how to behave in the meantime. It appears to be an attempt to 'correct' the impression given in 1st Thessalonians that 'the Day of the Lord' is either imminent or already here (2:2).

Thessalonica was the capital of the Roman province of Macedonia and was important to both land and sea travel in the region. Paul founded its church shortly after he left Philippi (2:1-2, Ac 17:1-8).

AUTHORSHIP AND DATE

The traditional view is that the *Second Letter to the Thessalonians* was written by Paul a few months after *First Thessalonians* (so 51 CE) and also in Corinth. However, some argue that the literary resemblance to the first letter is so strong that the second may be a 'forgery', written much later (possibly even as late as 80-110 CE) by one who had absorbed Paul's ideas. A more obvious idea is that, when Paul wished to clarify (or even correct) some of the ideas he expressed in his earlier letter, he deliberately repeated expressions from that in his follow-up. The letter is also quoted by Ignatius and Polycarp. The earliest surviving manuscript of the letter is *Papyrus 30*, dating to around 300 CE.

Προς Θεσσαλονικεις Β' Ι

¹ Παῦλος καὶ Σιλουανὸς καὶ Τιμόθεος τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ Θεσσαλονικέων ἐν Θεῷ πατρὶ ἡμῶν καὶ κυρίῳ Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ· ² χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη ἀπὸ Θεοῦ πατρὸς καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.

³ Εὐχαριστεῖν ὀφείλομεν τῷ Θεῷ πάντοτε περὶ ὑμῶν, ἀδελφοί, καθὼς ἄξιόν ἐστιν, ὅτι ὑπεραυξάνει ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν καὶ πλεονάζει ἡ ἀγάπη ἐνὸς ἐκάστου πάντων ὑμῶν εἰς ἀλλήλους, ⁴ ὥστε αὐτοὺς ἡμᾶς ἐν ὑμῖν ἐγκαυχᾶσθαι ἐν ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις τοῦ Θεοῦ ὑπὲρ τῆς ὑπομονῆς ὑμῶν καὶ πίστεως ἐν πᾶσιν τοῖς διωγμοῖς ὑμῶν καὶ ταῖς θλίψεσιν αἷς ἀνέχεσθε, ⁵ ἔνδειγμα τῆς δικαίας κρίσεως τοῦ Θεοῦ, εἰς τὸ καταξιωθῆναι ὑμᾶς τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ Θεοῦ, ὑπὲρ ἧς καὶ πάσχετε, ⁶ εἶπερ δίκαιον παρὰ Θεῷ ἀνταποδοῦναι τοῖς θλίβουσιν ὑμᾶς θλίψιν ⁷ καὶ ὑμῖν τοῖς θλιβομένοις ἄνεσιν μεθ' ἡμῶν ἐν τῇ ἀποκαλύψει τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ

2 THESSALONIANS 1

¹ Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, to the church of the Thessalonians that is in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ² Grace to you and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

³ We must always thank God for you, brothers; as is right; for, your faith is growing so wonderfully and the love that each of you has for one another never stops increasing. ⁴ Among the churches of God, we boast of you for your perseverance in faith under all the persecutions and hardships you have to bear. ⁵ This shows God's judgement is just, so that you may be made worthy of the kingdom of God; it is for the sake of this that you are suffering now. ⁶ For, God's justice will surely mean affliction for those who are now afflicting you; ⁷ and, for you who are now suffering hardship, relief with us, when the Lord Jesus appears from heaven with the angels of his power.

2 THESSALONIANS 1

¹ Cf. 1Th 1:1 and see the footnote thereto.

² Most MSS have *πατρὶ ἡμῶν*, reading 'God our Father', in apparent emulation of Paul's almost universal style, but the omission of the pronoun (reading just *πατὴρ* - 'God the Father') may be the earlier wording of this salutation. Nestle-Aland places *ἡμῶν* in brackets, indicating some doubts as to its authenticity.

³ After 'brothers', the NRSV adds 'and sisters'.

⁴ The NJB has 'take special pride in' in place of 'boast of'.

⁵ In place of 'made', the NJB has 'found'.

⁶ Vv. 6-10 form a parenthesis: v. 11 follows on from v. 5.

⁷ The NRSV has 'his mighty angels' in place of 'the angels of his power', reading an attributive genitive.

μετ' ἀγγέλων δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ ⁸ ἐν πυρὶ φλογός, διδόντος ἐκδίκησιν τοῖς μὴ εἰδόσιν θεὸν καὶ τοῖς μὴ ὑπακούουσιν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ, ⁹ οἵτινες δίκην τίσουσιν ὀλεθρον αἰώνιον ἀπὸ προσώπου τοῦ κυρίου καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς δόξης τῆς ἰσχύος αὐτοῦ, ¹⁰ ὅταν ἔλθῃ ἐνδοξασθῆναι ἐν τοῖς ἁγίοις αὐτοῦ καὶ θαυμασθῆναι ἐν πᾶσιν τοῖς πιστεύουσιν, ὅτι ἐπιστεύθη τὸ μαρτύριον ἡμῶν ἐφ' ὑμᾶς, ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ. ¹¹ εἰς ὃ καὶ προσευχόμεθα πάντοτε περὶ ὑμῶν, ἵνα ὑμᾶς ἁξιώσῃ τῆς κλήσεως ὃ θεὸς ἡμῶν καὶ πληρώσῃ πᾶσαν εὐδοκίαν ἀγαθωσύνης καὶ ἔργον πίστεως ἐν δυνάμει, ¹² ὅπως ἐνδοξασθῇ τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ ἐν ὑμῖν, καὶ ὑμεῖς ἐν αὐτῷ, κατὰ τὴν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.

⁸ He will come amid flaming fire; he will impose a penalty on those who do not acknowledge God and refuse to accept the gospel of our Lord Jesus. ⁹ Their punishment will be eternal destruction, excluded from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his strength ¹⁰ on that day when he comes to be glorified among his saints and marvelled at by all who believe in him; and you are among those who believed our witness. ¹¹ In view of this, we also pray continually that our God will make you worthy of his call and, by his power, fulfil all your desires for goodness, and complete all that you have been doing through faith; ¹² so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you and you in him, by the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁸ Paul here alludes to Is 66:15 & Jr 10:25.

⁹ The 'will be eternal destruction', the NJB has 'is to be lost eternally'.

¹⁰ The NJB has 'holy ones' in place of 'saints'.

¹¹ Some MSS read 'his desires' in place of 'your desires'.

¹² Here, 'the name' refers to Jesus' fame and character (cf. Ph 2:9). The *Textus Receptus* adds 'Christ' after the 1st instance of 'Lord Jesus'.

Προς Θεσσαλονικείς Β' 2

¹ Ἐρωτῶμεν δὲ ὑμᾶς, ἀδελφοί, ὑπὲρ τῆς παρουσίας τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ ἡμῶν ἐπισυναγωγῆς ἐπ' αὐτόν, ² εἰς τὸ μὴ ταχέως σαλευθῆναι ὑμᾶς ἀπὸ τοῦ νοῦς μηδὲ θροεῖσθαι μήτε διὰ πνεύματος μήτε διὰ λόγου μήτε δι' ἐπιστολῆς ὡς δι' ἡμῶν, ὡς ὅτι ἐνέστηκεν ἡ ἡμέρα τοῦ κυρίου. ³ μὴ τις ὑμᾶς ἐξαπατήσῃ κατὰ μηδέν· ὅτι ἐὰν μὴ ἔλθῃ ἡ ἀποστασία πρῶτον καὶ ἀποκαλυφθῇ ὁ ἄνθρωπος τῆς ἀνομίας, ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀπωλείας, ⁴ ὁ ἀντικείμενος καὶ ὑπεραιρούμενος ἐπὶ πάντα λεγόμενον θεὸν ἢ σέβασμα, ὥστε αὐτὸν εἰς τὸν ναὸν τοῦ θεοῦ καθίσαι, ἀποδεικνύντα ἑαυτὸν ὅτι ἔστιν θεός. ⁵ Οὐ μνημονεύετε ὅτι ἔτι ὡν πρὸς ὑμᾶς ταῦτα ἔλεγον ὑμῖν; ⁶ καὶ νῦν τὸ κατέχον οἴδατε, εἰς τὸ ἀποκαλυφθῆναι αὐτὸν ἐν τῷ ἑαυτοῦ καιρῷ. ⁷ τὸ γὰρ μυστήριον ἥδη ἐνεργεῖται τῆς ἀνομίας· μόνον ὁ κατέχων ἄρτι ἕως ἐκ μέσου γένηται. ⁸ καὶ τότε ἀποκαλυφθήσεται ὁ ἄνομος, ὃν ὁ κύριος ἀνελεῖ τῷ πνεύματι

2 THESSALONIANS 2

¹ About the coming of the Lord Jesus Christy, brothers, and our being gathered to him: ² please do not be too easily thrown into confusion or alarmed by the Spirit or any word or any letter claiming to come from us, suggesting that the Day of the Lord has already arrived. ³ Never let anyone deceive you in any way. It cannot happen until the rebellion has taken place and there has appeared the lawless One, the lost One, ⁴ the Enemy, who raises himself above every so-called God or object of worship to enthrone himself in God's temple and claims that he is God. ⁵ Do you not recall me telling you about this when I was with you? ⁶ And you know, too, what is holding him back from appearing before his appointed time. ⁷ The mystery of lawlessness is already at work but let him who is restraining it once be removed ⁸ and the wicked One will appear openly. The Lord will destroy him with the breath of his mouth and will annihilate him with his glorious appearance at his coming.

2 THESSALONIANS 2

¹ After 'brothers', the NRSV adds 'and sisters'.

² The NJB has 'statement' in place of 'word'.

³ For 'lawless', the NJB has 'wicked'; other MSS read 'the man of sin'. Another reading for 'rebellion' is 'falling away' or 'defection'.

⁴ In place of 'the Enemy' (literally, 'the one who opposes'), the NRSV & NETB have 'he'.

⁵ The NJB opens with, "Surely you remember."

⁶ The literal translation of 'what is holding him back' is 'the thing that restrains'.

⁷ The NJB has 'wickedness' in place of 'lawlessness'.

⁸ After 'Lord', some MSS (mostly Alexandrian and Western) add 'Jesus' (as does the NRSV); Nestle-Aland has the word (Ἰησοῦς) in brackets.

τοῦ στόματος αὐτοῦ καὶ καταργήσῃ τῇ ἐπιφανείᾳ τῆς παρουσίας αὐτοῦ, ⁹ οὗ ἐστὶν ἡ παρουσία κατ' ἐνέργειαν τοῦ Σατανᾶ ἐν πάσῃ δυνάμει καὶ σημείοις καὶ τέρασιν ψεύδους ¹⁰ καὶ ἐν πάσῃ ἀπάτῃ ἀδικίας τοῖς ἀπολλυμένοις, ἀνδ' ὧν τὴν ἀγάπην τῆς ἀληθείας οὐκ ἐδέξαντο εἰς τὸ σωθῆναι αὐτούς. ¹¹ καὶ διὰ τοῦτο πέμπει αὐτοῖς ὁ θεὸς ἐνέργειαν πλάνης εἰς τὸ πιστεῦσαι αὐτοὺς τῷ ψεύδει, ¹² ἵνα κριθῶσιν πάντες οἱ μὴ πιστεύσαντες τῇ ἀληθείᾳ ἀλλὰ εὐδοκήσαντες τῇ ἀδικίᾳ.

¹³ Ἡμεῖς δὲ ὀφείλομεν εὐχαριστεῖν τῷ θεῷ πάντοτε περὶ ὑμῶν, ἀδελφοὶ ἡγαπημένοι ὑπὸ κυρίου, ὅτι εἴλατο ὑμᾶς ὁ θεὸς ἀπαρχὴν εἰς σωτηρίαν ἐν ἁγιασμῷ πνεύματος καὶ πίστει ἀληθείας, ¹⁴ εἰς ὃ ἐκάλεσεν ὑμᾶς διὰ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου ἡμῶν, εἰς περιποίησιν δόξης τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. ¹⁵ ἄρα οὖν, ἀδελφοί, στήκετε, καὶ κρατεῖτε τὰς παραδόσεις ἃς ἐδιδάχθητε εἴτε διὰ λόγου εἴτε δι' ἐπιστολῆς ἡμῶν.

¹⁶ Αὐτὸς δὲ ὁ κύριος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς καὶ [ὁ] θεὸς ὁ πατὴρ ἡμῶν, ὁ ἀγαπήσας ἡμᾶς καὶ δοὺς παράκλησιν

⁹ But the coming of the lawless One will be marked by Satan being at work in all kinds of miracles and signs and false wonders, ¹⁰ and every wicked deception aimed at those who are on the way to destruction because they would not accept the love of the truth and so be saved. ¹¹ And, therefore, God sends on them a power that deludes people so that they believe what is false ¹² and so that those who have not believed the truth and take their pleasure in wickedness may all be condemned.

¹³ But we must always give thanks to God for you, brothers whom the Lord loves, because God chose you from the beginning to be saved by the Spirit who sanctifies us and by faith in the truth. ¹⁴ Through our gospel, he called you to this so that you should claim as your own the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁵ Stand firm, then, brothers, and keep the traditions that we taught you, whether by word of mouth or by letter.

¹⁶ Now, may our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, who has given us his love and – through his grace –

⁹ For 'lawless', the NJB has 'wicked'.

¹⁰ In place of 'on the way to destruction', the NRSV & NETB have 'perishing'.

¹¹ The NRSV has 'powerful delusion' in place of 'power that deludes people'.

¹² The NJB has 'do not believe' in place of 'have not believed'.

¹³ In place of 'from the beginning', some MSS have 'as first fruits' (as does the NRSV).

¹⁴ The NRSV has 'good news' in place of 'gospel'.

¹⁵ After 'brothers', the NRSV adds 'and sisters'.

¹⁶ Cf. the Aaronic benediction (Nb 6:26).

αἰωνίαν καὶ ἐλπίδα ἀγαθὴν ἐν χάριτι, ¹⁷ παρακαλέσαι
ὑμῶν τὰς καρδίας καὶ στηρίζαι ἐν παντὶ ἔργῳ καὶ λόγῳ
ἀγαθῷ. such ceaseless encouragement and such sure hope, ¹⁷ comfort
your hearts and strengthen them in every good deed and
word.

¹⁷ The NJB has ‘encourage you’ in place of ‘comfort your hearts’.

Προς Θεσσαλονικείς Β' 3

¹ Τὸ λοιπὸν προσεύχεσθε, ἀδελφοί, περὶ ἡμῶν, ἵνα ὁ λόγος τοῦ κυρίου τρέχῃ καὶ δοξάζεται καθὼς καὶ πρὸς ὑμᾶς, ² καὶ ἵνα ῥυσθῶμεν ἀπὸ τῶν ἀτόπων καὶ πονηρῶν ἀνθρώπων· οὐ γὰρ πάντων ἡ πίστις. ³ πιστὸς δὲ ἐστὶν ὁ κύριος, ὃς στηρίζει ὑμᾶς καὶ φυλάξει ἀπὸ τοῦ πονηροῦ. ⁴ πεποιθάμεν δὲ ἐν κυρίῳ ἐφ' ὑμᾶς, ὅτι ἃ παραγγέλλομεν [καὶ] ποιεῖτε καὶ ποιήσετε. ⁵ Ὁ δὲ κύριος κατευθύνει ὑμῶν τὰς καρδίας εἰς τὴν ἀγάπην τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ εἰς τὴν ὑπομονὴν τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

⁶ Παραγγέλλομεν δὲ ὑμῖν, ἀδελφοί, ἐν ὀνόματι τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, στέλλεσθαι ὑμᾶς ἀπὸ παντὸς ἀδελφοῦ ἀτάκτως περιπατοῦντος καὶ μὴ κατὰ τὴν παράδοσιν ἣν παρελάβοσαν παρ' ἡμῶν. ⁷ αὐτοὶ γὰρ οἶδατε πῶς δεῖ μιμεῖσθαι ἡμᾶς, ὅτι οὐκ ἠτακτήσαμεν ἐν ὑμῖν ⁸ οὐδὲ δωρεὰν ἄρτον ἐφάγομεν παρὰ τινος, ἀλλ' ἐν κόπῳ καὶ μόχθῳ νυκτὸς καὶ ἡμέρας ἐργαζόμενοι πρὸς τὸ μὴ

2 THESSALONIANS 3

¹ Finally, brothers, pray for us that the word of the Lord's may spread quickly and be honoured, as it is among you ² and that we may be delivered from bigoted and evil people; for, not all have faith. ³ You can rely on the Lord, who will give you strength and guard you from the evil One; ⁴ and we, in the Lord, have every confidence in you, that you are doing and will go on doing all that we command. ⁵ May the Lord turn your hearts to the love of God and the endurance of Christ.

⁶ In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we urge you, brothers, to keep away from any of the brothers who live an undisciplined life, not in accordance with the tradition you received from us. ⁷ You know how you should take us as your model: we were not undisciplined when we were with you, ⁸ nor did we ever accept bread from anyone without paying for it; no, we worked with unsparing energy, night and day, so as not to

2 THESSALONIANS 3

¹ After 'brothers', the NRSV adds 'and sisters'.

² The NJB repeats 'pray' here from v. 1, opening a new sentence with, "and pray that we may be."

³ Another reading for 'from the evil One' is just 'from evil'.

⁴ The NJB ends the verse with 'tell you' in place of 'command'.

⁵ The genitive in the phrase τὴν ὑπομονὴν τοῦ Χριστοῦ ('the endurance of Christ') can be translated as either subjectively ('Christ's endurance') or objectively ('endurance for Christ').

⁶ Here, the NRSV has 'beloved' in place of 'brothers'.

⁷ The NRSV has 'idle' in place of 'undisciplined'.

⁸ The NJB has 'food' in place of 'bread'.

ἐπιβαρῆσαι τινὰ ὑμῶν· ⁹ οὐχ ὅτι οὐκ ἔχομεν ἐξουσίαν, ἀλλ' ἵνα ἑαυτοὺς τύπον δῶμεν ὑμῖν εἰς τὸ μιμεῖσθαι ἡμᾶς. ¹⁰ καὶ γὰρ ὅτε ἦμεν πρὸς ὑμᾶς, τοῦτο παρηγγέλλομεν ὑμῖν, ὅτι εἴ τις οὐ θέλει ἐργάζεσθαι μηδὲ ἐσθιέτω. ¹¹ ἀκούομεν γάρ τινες περιπατοῦντας ἐν ὑμῖν ἀτάκτως, μηδὲν ἐργαζομένους ἀλλὰ περιεργαζομένους· ¹² τοῖς δὲ τοιούτοις παραγγέλλομεν καὶ παρακαλοῦμεν ἐν κυρίῳ Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ ἵνα μετὰ ἡσυχίας ἐργαζόμενοι τὸν ἑαυτῶν ἄρτον ἐσθίωσιν. ¹³ Ὑμεῖς δέ, ἀδελφοί, μὴ ἐγκακήσητε καλοποιοῦντες.

¹⁴ Εἰ δὲ τις οὐχ ὑπακούει τῷ λόγῳ ἡμῶν διὰ τῆς ἐπιστολῆς, τοῦτον σημειοῦσθε, μὴ συναναμίγνυσθαι αὐτῷ, ἵνα ἐντραπή· ¹⁵ καὶ μὴ ὡς ἐχθρὸν ἡγεῖσθε, ἀλλὰ νουθετεῖτε ὡς ἀδελφόν.

¹⁶ Αὐτὸς δὲ ὁ κύριος τῆς εἰρήνης δώη ὑμῖν τὴν εἰρήνην διὰ παντὸς ἐν παντί τρόπῳ. ὁ κύριος μετὰ πάντων ὑμῶν.

be a burden on any of you. ⁹ This was not because we had no right to be but in order to make ourselves a model for you to imitate. ¹⁰ For, even when we were with you, we told you: "If anyone refuses to work, he should not eat." ¹¹ For, we hear that there are some of you who are living undisciplined lives, doing no work themselves but interfering with other people's. ¹² In the Lord Jesus Christ, we urge and call on people of this kind to go on quietly working and earning the food that they eat. ¹³ But you, brothers, never slacken in doing what is right.

¹⁴ If anyone refuses to obey what I say in this letter, take note of him and have nothing to do with him, so that he will be ashamed, ¹⁵ though you are not to treat him as an enemy but to correct him as a brother.

¹⁶ Now, may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times and in every way. The Lord be with you all.

⁹ The NRSV & NETB have 'example' in place of 'model'.

¹⁰ For this verse, here loosely following the NRSV & NETB, the NJB reads, "We urged you when we were with you not to let anyone eat if he refused to work."

¹¹ The literal translation of 'living undisciplined lives' is 'walking in an undisciplined way'; 'walking' is a common New Testament idiom for one's conduct or way of life.

¹² For 'urge and call on', the NRSV has 'command and exhort'.

¹³ After 'brothers', the NRSV adds 'and sisters'.

¹⁴ For this verse, here loosely following the NJB, NETB reads, "But if anyone does not obey our message through this letter, take note of him and do not associate closely with him, so that he may be ashamed."

¹⁵ The NRSV has 'believer(s)' in place of 'brother'.

¹⁶ The NJB lacks the opening 'Now', here following the NRSV & NETB.

¹⁷ Ὁ ἀσπασμὸς τῇ ἐμῇ χειρὶ Παύλου, ὃ ἐστὶν σημεῖον ἐν
πάσῃ ἐπιστολῇ· οὕτως γράφω. ¹⁸ ἡ χάρις τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν
Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ μετὰ πάντων ὑμῶν.

¹⁷ This greeting is in my own hand – PAUL. It is the mark of
genuineness in every letter; this is my own writing. ¹⁸ May the
grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

¹⁷ Up to 3:16, the letter was dictated by Paul but written down by a secretary; however, Paul now takes up the pen and writes vv. 17–18 personally, to authenticate that it was his.

¹⁸ Most MSS, including some early and important ones, conclude this letter with Ἀμήν ('Amen'). Such a conclusion is routinely added by scribes to NT books because a few of these books originally had such an ending (cf. Rm 16:27, Ga 6:18, Jude 25). A majority of Greek witnesses have the concluding Ἀμήν in every NT book except Acts, James, and 3 John; it is thus a predictable variant. Further, the witnesses for the omission are among the best MSS, giving sufficient base to prefer the shorter reading.