

A People of the Book
8-Year Curriculum
Year 4 Quarter 1

A Study of
Selected Texts from

I and II Thessalonians

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1 & 2 Thessalonians

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Introduction to 1 & 2 Thessalonians

AUTHOR

The author was **Paul**, who joined in his greetings by **Silvanus** and **Timothy (1:1)**, with Timothy being mentioned again later in the letter (**2:18**). Early church history attributes this letter to Paul: Clement of Alexandria (200 A.D.), Tertullian (200 A.D.), and Irenaeus (200 A.D.).

THE CITY OF THESSALONICA

It was the capital and largest city of the Roman province of Macedonia. Located on the Egnatian Way, a major road from Rome to the eastern provinces, the city was a center of trade and commerce. Today, it is known as Thessaloniki, or Salonica.

IMPORTANT BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE – Acts 16:11 – 18:17

The basis of the persecution of Christians in Thessalonica was not an isolated event in Thessalonica. To better understand Paul's letters to the Thessalonians one must understand what Paul endured to preach the Gospel in the region.

Since Paul's persecution in Philippi (**Acts 16:11-40**) is discussed in 1 Thessalonians, let us begin there. He taught and baptized Lydia and her household (**Acts 16:11-15**). Paul and Silas were beaten and thrown into prison because Paul cast out a spirit from a slave girl and thereby deprived her owners of great gain (**Acts 16:16-24**). After God released them from prison through the use of an earthquake, they taught and baptized the Philippian jailer (**Acts 16:25-34**). The magistrates then pleaded with Paul and Silas to leave the city and they left (**Acts 16:35-40**).

When Paul came to Thessalonica, He went to the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews for three Sabbaths that Jesus was the Christ. Some of the Jews and a great many of the Greeks were persuaded. But the Jews who were not persuaded were full of envy and put the whole city in an uproar. The trouble with the envious Jews at Thessalonica was not over.

These Jews followed Paul to Berea and stirred up the crowds to the extent that he went to Athens for a short time and then to Corinth (**Acts 17:10-18:1**). He was in Corinth when Gallio was proconsul of Achaia (**Acts 18:12**). His reign is accurately reported from history to be A.D. 51-52. Therefore, most scholars believe that 1 Thessalonians was written during that time in **A.D. 51 or 52**, about 6 months after Paul fled Thessalonica. 1 Thessalonians is considered one of Paul's earliest epistles, if not the first. From the letter itself (**3:1-6**), and the record of Paul's travels in Acts (**Acts 17:10-18:11**), it appears that Paul wrote this letter soon after arriving in **Corinth** on his second journey.

2 Thessalonians appears to have been written just a few months, possibly a year, after 1 Thessalonians. This would place the writing of the epistle during Paul's extended stay at **Corinth** on his second missionary journey (**Acts 18:1-11**), sometime around **53 A.D.** (**See map**)

THE CHURCH AT THESSALONICA

On his second missionary journey, Paul and his companions (Silas and Timothy) had just left Philippi and passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia to arrive at Thessalonica. Paul's custom was to immediately locate the synagogue and reason with the Jews for three Sabbaths that Jesus was the Christ. While some of the Jews were persuaded, including a great number of devout

Greeks and leading women, **it is vital to understand certain parts of 2 Thessalonians to see how the unbelieving Jews became jealous and created uproar in the city.** The church then sent Paul and Silas away secretly by night to Berea. Despite such difficult beginnings, a strong church was established in Thessalonica (**1:2-10**). Mostly Gentile (**1:9**), its members included Jason (**Acts 17:9**), Aristarchus, and Secundus (**Acts 20:4**).

PURPOSE OF THE LETTERS

1 Thessalonians

The quick departure from Thessalonica so soon after the church began there left Paul anxious about their condition. When Timothy joined Paul at Athens (**Acts 17:14-16**), his concern prompted Paul to send Timothy back to Thessalonica to encourage and ground the new Christians in the faith, and to learn how they were enduring persecution (**3:1-5**). When Timothy returned to Paul in Corinth (**Acts 18:5**), the news was encouraging (**3:6-7**). Despite persecution they had remained strong (**2:13-16**), and even proved themselves to be an example to others (**1:6-8**). Yet, as with any young church, they needed more instruction concerning holy living (**4:1-12**). They also needed reassurance that their loved ones who died in Christ would not miss out on the blessings when the Lord returned (**4:13-18**). Paul's purpose in writing to them was:

- ♦ To praise them for their steadfastness under persecution
- ♦ To instruct them about holy living
- ♦ To correct misunderstanding, especially about the second coming of Christ

2 Thessalonians

The first letter to the Thessalonians had been written in response to news brought back by Timothy who had made a quick trip there while Paul was in Athens (cf. **1 Thess 3:1-3, 6**). Encouraged by their steadfastness in the face of persecution, Paul had exhorted them to holiness in view of the Lord's coming (**1 Thess 3:12-13; 5:23**). From the second letter, it appears that they remained strong in the Lord in spite of persecution (cf. **1:3-4**). But it is apparent from this letter that they misunderstood about the Lord's coming. Some of the members were troubled by false reports (cf. **2:1-2**); others had stopped working, assuming that the Lord's imminent return meant one did not need to work anymore (cf. **3:11-12**). Paul's purpose in writing was:

- ♦ To encourage them in their steadfastness under persecution
- ♦ To correct their misunderstanding about the imminence of the Lord's return
- ♦ To instruct them what disciplinary action to take toward those who *refused* to work

THEME OF THE LETTERS

1 Thessalonians

This book is unique because every chapter ends with a reference to the second coming of Christ (**1:10; 2:19; 3:13; 4:13-18; 5:23**). With his emphasis on perseverance and living holy, a theme might be:

LIVE HOLY IN VIEW OF THE COMING OF CHRIST

KEY VERSES: 1 Thessalonians 3:12-13

"And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all, just as we do to you, so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints." NKJV

2 Thessalonians

In correcting their misunderstanding about the return of Christ, Paul explains that the Lord will not come right away (2:1-3). They then need to continue in their walk of faith with perseverance and patience for which they had been commended. A theme might be:

PERSEVERANCE WHILE WAITING FOR THE COMING OF CHRIST

KEY VERSES: 2 Thessalonians 2:15-17

"Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle. Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and our God and Father, who has loved us and given us everlasting consolation and good hope by grace, comfort your hearts and establish you in every good word and work." NKJV

REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1) On which missionary journey was the church at Thessalonica established?**
- 2) Where can we read about the establishment of the church at Thessalonica?**
- 3) How long did Paul preach in the Jewish synagogue before trouble arose?**
- 4) Where did Paul go after leaving Thessalonica?**
- 5) Why did Paul have to leave so soon again and go on to Athens?**
- 6) While at Athens, whom did Paul send back to Thessalonica?**
- 7) When Paul left Athens, where did he go and who arrived later?**

THOUGHT QUESTIONS

- 1) Is your faith well known to others?**
- 2) What prevents us from having a faith like the Thessalonians?**
- 3) Where did the faith of the Thessalonians come from?**

Your Questions.....what questions do you have from this lesson?



Paul's Second Missionary Journey

1 Thessalonians 1

The Importance of Our Reputation in Christ

OBJECTIVES

- 1) To understand how faith, hope, and love should express themselves
- 2) To notice the potential that even Summit has for spreading the gospel of Christ, and being a positive example to all believers

SUMMARY

Joined by Silvanus and Timothy who had been with him when the gospel was first preached in Thessalonica, Paul offers his greetings along with a plea for grace and peace. He follows with an expression of thanksgiving for their work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope, knowing they were elected and chosen by God (**verses 1-4**).

His assurance of their election is in the manner in which they received the gospel. It had come to them not only in word, but in power, in the Holy Spirit, and in much assurance. Having imitated Paul and the Lord by receiving the word in much affliction, suffering and joy, they in turn had become examples to *all* the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. From them the word had gone out everywhere, even to us today, and the news of their own faith toward God had spread so that Paul did not need to tell others about them. Other people were telling Paul of the Thessalonians' conversion from idols to serve the living God, and how they were waiting for the resurrected Jesus to return from heaven who delivers them from the wrath to come. In fact, scripture indicates He was *already* delivering them (**versus 5-10**).

OUTLINE OF THE CHAPTER

I. INTRODUCTION (1:1-4)

A. GREETINGS

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

B. THANKSGIVING

1. Offered to God in their behalf, making mention of them in his prayers
2. Mindful always of their:
 - a. Work of faith
 - b. Labor of love
 - c. Patience of hope in the Lord Jesus Christ in the sight of our God and Father
3. Knowing their election by God

II. PAUL'S OBSERVATIONS ABOUT THEIR CONDITION (1:5-10)

A. THEIR RECEPTION OF THE GOSPEL

1. The gospel came to them not only in word, but...
 - a. In power
 - b. In the Holy Spirit
 - c. In much assurance...because they knew what kind of men Paul and his companions had been

2. They had become followers of Paul and of the Lord, having received the word...
 - a. In much affliction
 - b. With joy of the Holy Spirit
 3. They had become examples to the believers in Macedonia and Achaia
- B. THEIR REPUTATION**
1. From them the message of the Lord's word had gone out in Macedonia, Achaia, and beyond
 2. Their faith toward God had gone out, so Paul did not need to say anything
 3. Others were telling Paul...
 - a. What manner of entry Paul had to them
 - b. How they had turned from idols to serve the living and true God
 - c. How they were waiting for the resurrected Jesus to return from heaven, who delivers from the wrath to come

REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1) Who joined Paul in the greetings of this letter?
- 2) How did Paul address the church?
- 3) What three things was Paul especially thankful for regarding the Thessalonians?
- 4) What did Paul know concerning the Thessalonians?
- 5) How had the gospel come to the Thessalonians?
- 6) How had they become followers of Paul and the Lord?
- 7) For who had they become examples?
- 8) What two things had gone out from the Thessalonians?
- 9) What two things describe the manner in which they received Paul?
- 10) How does a reputation tell others you "wait for His son from heaven"?

THOUGHT QUESTIONS

- 1) How was it possible for the message of the Lord's word to go out from Thessalonica?**

- 2) Could Summit spread it in the same way today?**

- 3) What prevents you from being like the brethren in Thessalonica?**

Your Questions.....what questions do you have from this lesson?

1 Thessalonians 2

Examples & Attitudes of Love towards Others

OBJECTIVES

- 1) To see from Paul's example how preachers should conduct themselves among brethren with whom they labor
- 2) To appreciate how the thought of seeing each other at the coming of Jesus should affect our attitude towards one another

SUMMARY

Having described their reception of the gospel, Paul reflects upon his own conduct while he was with them. He describes his preaching as one that was free of guile, deceit, flattery, greed and covetousness. He did not want to trick them nor did he desire to take anything from them. Paul did not seek the glory of men, but of God, he spoke with boldness despite conflict, and was gentle among them as a nursing mother would be with her own children. He loved them dearly (**verses 1-8**).

He lived a sacrificial life among them, working hard not to be a burden, behaving righteously, devoutly, justly, and blamelessly among them. As a father does his own children, he exhorted, urged, comforted and charged them to walk in a way worthy of God who was calling them into His own kingdom and glory (**verses 9-12**).

Paul then begins to share the concern that he had for their condition. Thankful for their reception of his teachings as the word of God and not of men, he tells them how they had imitated the churches in Judea by receiving the gospel despite persecution from their own countrymen (**verses 13-16**).

Even though it has only been a short time since he has seen them, he desired to come to them time and again, but Satan had stopped him. His longing to see them is due to his view of them as his hope, glory, joy and crown of rejoicing in the presence of Jesus when He comes again (**verses 17-20**).

OUTLINE OF THE CHAPTER

I. REFLECTIONS REGARDING HIS CONDUCT (1-12)

A. THE MANNER OF HIS PREACHING

1. Not in vain, but with boldness in the middle of abuse and persecution
2. Not in deceit, greed, impurity, or guile, but in pleasing God
3. Not with flattery, covetousness, nor seeking man's glory by making demands as apostles of Christ
4. As a mother caring for her children, with gentleness and love he shared not only the gospel but his own life as well

B. THE MANNER OF HIS LIFE

1. Paul worked night and day, so he would not be a burden while preaching the gospel
2. Behaved in a devout, just, righteous, holy and blameless manner
3. As a father treats his children, he exhorted and comforted them, encouraging them to walk a life worthy of God who calls them into His kingdom

II. REFLECTIONS REGARDING HIS CONCERN (13-20)

A. THANKFUL FOR THEIR RECEPTION OF THE WORD

1. They received his word as it was in truth, the word of God which works in those who believe
2. They became imitators of the churches in Judea which are in Christ
 - a. Suffering persecution from the Jews and their own countrymen
 - b. Just as those in Judea received from the Jews
 - 1) Who killed the Lord Jesus and their own prophets
 - 2) Who persecuted the apostles, forbidding them to speak to the Gentiles
 - 3) *Who are piling up their sins, and upon whom wrath has come at last*

B. CONCERNED FOR THEIR WELFARE

1. He is eager and longed to see them again with great desire
2. He had wanted to come to them, but Satan stopped him
3. Because they are his hope, glory, joy, and crown of rejoicing in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ at His coming

REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1) What had Paul endured before to coming to Thessalonica?
- 2) What was his attitude when he arrived?
- 3) What did *NOT* characterize his actions while he was at Thessalonica?
- 4) What figures did Paul use to describe his treatment and encouragement of them?
- 5) What *DID* characterize his conduct while at Thessalonica?
- 6) How did Paul want them to walk?
- 7) How had the Thessalonians received the word of God which they heard from Paul?
- 8) What is said about the Word of God and those who believe it?
- 9) What had the Jews done?
- 10) Who had stopped Paul from coming back to Thessalonica?

THOUGHT QUESTIONS

- 1) Did Paul teach that preachers must never be fully supported by the church?**

- 2) In what ways can we treat others as a mother and father?**

- 3) Do we at Summit show that we love one another and those that come in our midst?**

Your Questions.....what questions do you have from this lesson?

1 Thessalonians 3

The Joy & Encouragement from Persecution

OBJECTIVES

- 1) To see the very real danger of temptation, and the need to stand and hold fast to the Lord
- 2) To appreciate how our own perseverance can be a source of joy and strength to those who taught us in the faith
- 3) To understand the need to increase and abound in love, in order to establish our hearts blameless before God when Christ returns

SUMMARY

As Paul expresses his concern for their faithfulness, he explains why Timothy had been sent to them while he himself remained in Athens. Fearful that their afflictions might have given Satan an opportunity to tempt them and render his labors with them in vain, Timothy was sent to establish and encourage them in their faith (1-5).

Timothy brought back good news to Paul concerning the church at Thessalonica, telling him of their faith and love, their fond memories of Paul, and their desire to see him again. This greatly comforted Paul who was suffering his own afflictions, and he is overwhelmed with thankfulness and joy. Praying night and day that he might see them again and perfect what is lacking in their faith, he offers a prayer that God and Jesus might direct his way to them. He also prays that the Lord will help them *to increase and abound in love to one another and to all*, and to establish their hearts blameless in holiness before God at the coming of Christ with all His saints (6-13).

OUTLINE

I. PAUL'S CONCERN FOR THEIR FAITHFULNESS (1-10)

A. TIMOTHY'S MISSION

1. When he could endure it no longer, Paul remained in Athens alone
2. He sent Timothy...
 - a. To establish and encourage them in the faith
 - b. That they not be shaken by their afflictions
 - 1) To which they had been appointed
 - 2) As Paul told them before
 - c. To know of their faith...
 - 1) Whether they had been tempted
 - 2) Whether his labor might be in vain

B. TIMOTHY'S REPORT

1. Timothy's return brought good news...
 - a. Of their faith and love
 - b. Of their fond memories of Paul
 - c. Of their desire to see him, just as he desires to see them
2. Such news brought comfort to Paul in his affliction
 - a. He was comforted, knowing of their faith
 - b. He felt alive, knowing stood firm in the Lord

3. He is thankful beyond words
 - a. Thankful to God for them, for the joy they bring to him
 - b. Praying night and day that he may soon see them and perfect what is lacking in their faith

II. PAUL'S CONCERN FOR THEIR CONTINUED GROWTH (11-13)

A. HIS PRAYER FOR HIMSELF

1. A request made to both God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ
2. That he may come to the Thessalonians again

B. HIS PRAYER FOR THEM

1. That the Lord makes them to increase and abound in love...
 - a. To one another and to all
 - b. Just as Paul does toward them
2. So that the Lord might establish their hearts blameless in holiness...
 - a. Before our God and Father
 - b. At the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints

REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1) **Where did Paul stay when he sent Timothy back to Thessalonica?**
- 2) **Why did Paul send Timothy?**
- 3) **What was Paul fearful of that might have shaken their faith?**
- 4) **What two reasons did Paul give for sending Timothy to learn of their faith?**
- 5) **What good news had Timothy brought back to Paul?**
- 6) **How did this news affect Paul?**
- 7) **What did Paul pray for night and day?**
- 8) **What did Paul pray about concerning himself?**
- 9) **What did Paul pray for concerning the Thessalonians?**

THOUGHT QUESTIONS

1) When Paul wrote that his labor might have been in vain, could we apply that to those today that have obeyed the gospel but later departed from the faith?

2) With life and society becoming faster paced, how can we pray earnestly and exceedingly night and day for the faith of others?

3) Are we at Summit concerned enough for the faith of others that we desire to see them and provide what is lacking in their faith?

Your Questions.....what questions do you have from this lesson?

1 Thessalonians 4

Living Holy in View of the coming of Christ

OBJECTIVES

- 1) To understand how the Christian should increase more and more in matters of obedience, holiness, love, and diligence
- 2) To appreciate the precious hope and comfort we have for those who have died in Christ

SUMMARY

With this chapter Paul begins a series of instructions related to the Christian's walk in holiness especially in view of the coming of Christ. He urges them to live holy more and more so that they might please God. He first focuses on their sanctification and the need to abstain from sexual immorality (1-8).

He urges them to increase in brotherly love more and more, even though they had been taught by God to love another and did love all the brethren in Macedonia. So they might act properly toward outsiders, he urges them to lead quiet lives, mind their own business, and to work with their own hands (9-12).

Paul then talks about those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. He did not want the Thessalonians to sorrow over them like those who have no hope. Just as God raised Jesus from the dead, even so He would bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. Paul describes the Lord's coming, especially as it relates to how those who are alive and remain until His coming. They will in no way precede those who have died. Indeed, when the Lord comes from heaven, the dead in Christ will rise first, and we who are alive and remain will at that time be caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air, *to be with Him forever*. We should always comfort each other with these words (13-18).

OUTLINE

I. WALK IN HOLINESS (1-8)

A. TO PLEASE GOD

1. An urging in the Lord Jesus to abound more and more
2. According to the commandments Paul gave them through Jesus

B. TO AVOID SEXUAL IMMORALITY

1. For this is the will of God, their sanctification
2. That each one know how to possess his own vessel
 - a. In sanctification and honor
 - b. Not in passionate lust, like unbelievers who do not know God
3. That no one take advantage of and defraud his brother
 - a. Because the Lord is the punisher
 - b. As Paul warned and testified
4. For God called us in holiness, not to uncleanness
5. To reject this is to reject God, who also gives us His Holy Spirit

II. WALK IN LOVE

A. AS TAUGHT BY GOD

1. Concerning brotherly love, Paul really did not need to write anything
2. For they were taught by God to love one another

B. TO INCREASE MORE AND MORE

1. Indeed, their love was known to all the brethren in Macedonia
2. Yet Paul urges them to increase in their love even more

III. WALK IN DILIGENCE

A. TO WORK WITH THEIR HANDS

1. They should aspire to lead quiet lives, to mind their own business
2. Working with their own hands, as Paul commanded them

B. TO WALK PROPERLY TOWARD OUTSIDERS

1. Conduct themselves properly toward those outside
2. So that they may lack nothing

IV. WALK IN HOPE

A. WITH NO GRIEF CONCERNING THOSE WHO HAVE DIED

1. Paul does not want them to be ignorant
 - a. Concerning those who have fallen asleep
 - b. So they won't sorrow like others who have no hope
2. Since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus

B. FOR WE SHALL BE REJOINED WITH THEM WHEN JESUS RETURNS

3. Those that are alive when Christ comes will not go before those who are asleep
 - a. The Lord will descend from heaven
 - 1) With a loud command and shout
 - 2) With the voice of an archangel
 - 3) With the trumpet of God
 - b. And the dead in Christ will rise first
2. Then we who are alive and remain
 - a. Shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord
 - b. And we shall always be with the Lord
3. Therefore we should encourage and comfort each other with these words

REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1) What are the main "walking" points in this chapter?
- 2) What is the will of God regarding our sanctification?
- 3) What should each person do regarding "his own vessel"?
- 4) Why should we be careful not to take advantage of our brother in this matter?
- 5) If we reject Paul's warning, who is it we are *really* rejecting?

6) Why did Paul not need to write to the Thessalonians about brotherly love? Yet what does he urge them?

7) Why did Paul not want them to be ignorant concerning those who have fallen asleep?

8) Who will God bring with Jesus?

9) What is said of those who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord?

10) In view of these coming events, what we should we do?

THOUGHT QUESTIONS

1) Where is the line between “minding your own business” and exhorting and encouraging one another in love?

2) How can we as Christians avoid sexual immorality in today’s society?

3) Is verse 5 of the song “Trust and Obey” inaccurate in light of 1 Thessalonians 4:17?

Your Questions.....what questions do you have from this lesson?

1 Thessalonians 5

The Day of the Lord

OBJECTIVES

- 1) To note the unexpected nature of the comings of the Lord, and how we should prepare for that event
- 2) To see what our responsibilities are toward those who are over us in the Lord, and what responsibilities we have to one another
- 3) To appreciate what the will of God is for us as it relates to joy, thanksgiving, and prayer

SUMMARY

Continuing his instructions, Paul knows he does not need to write to the Thessalonians concerning the timing of the Lord's coming, for they know full well that He will come as a thief in the night and with sudden destruction catch people unexpectedly. Such should not be the case for Christians, however, for they are "sons of light" and "sons of the day"; therefore they should watch and be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and having as a helmet the hope of their salvation (1-8).

Knowing that God has appointed them to obtain salvation through Jesus Christ, they know that whether dead or alive they will live with Christ. Through such hope they should therefore comfort and edify one another, just as they were doing, living in peace with everyone (9-13).

He urges them to have concern for one another, to rejoice always, to pray without ceasing, to give thanks in everything, to not quench the Spirit nor reject prophecies, to test all things, hold fast to what is good and abstain from all that is evil (14-22).

Paul concludes with a prayer for their sanctification, a reminder of the faithfulness of God, a plea for prayer, and final instructions concerning greeting one another and having the epistle read to all the brethren. He finishes with a prayer for grace from the Lord Jesus in their behalf (23-28).

OUTLINE

I. WALK IN LIGHT (1-11)

A. THE DAY OF THE LORD WILL COME AS A THIEF IN THE NIGHT

1. Concerning times, dates and seasons, Paul did not need to write to them
2. They understood that the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night
3. It will come unexpectedly, and people will not escape
4. But they are not in darkness, that day would not overtake them as a thief

B. FOR WE ARE TO BE SONS OF LIGHT AND SONS OF THE DAY

1. We are not to be of the night or darkness
2. Therefore we must watch and be sober, unlike those who sleep and get drunk
3. Those of the day are to be sober by putting on...
 - a. The breastplate of faith and love
 - b. The hope of salvation as a helmet

C. FOR GOD HAS APPOINTED US TO SALVATION

1. He did not appoint us to wrath, but to salvation through Jesus Christ
2. Who died for us whether dead or alive and we should live together with Him
3. Therefore we need to comfort and build one another up

II. WALK IN OBEDIENCE (12-22)

A. WITH RESPECT TOWARD THOSE OVER US

1. To recognize those...
 - a. Who work among us
 - b. Who are over us in the Lord
 - c. Who admonish us
2. To regard them highly in love
3. To be at peace among ourselves

B. WITH CONCERN FOR ONE ANOTHER

1. Encourages us to...
 - a. Warn those who are idle
 - b. Encourage the timid
 - c. Help the weak
 - d. Be patient with everyone
2. Do not pay wrong for wrong to anyone
3. ***TO ALWAYS BE KIND TO EVERYONE***

C. ALWAYS – GOD’S WILL FOR US IN CHRIST

1. Rejoice
2. Pray
3. Give thanks

D. DO NOT QUENCH THE SPIRIT, BUT TEST

1. They were not to quench the Spirit, nor despise prophecies
2. Yet they were to test all things; holding fast to that which is good, and abstaining from all forms of evil

III. FINAL REMARKS (23-28)

A. A PRAYER FOR THEM

1. That the God of peace sanctify them completely
2. That their whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ
3. Reminding them that the One who calls them is faithful, and He ***WILL*** do it

B. A REQUEST FOR PRAYER FOR HIMSELF

C. FINAL CHARGES

1. To greet all the brothers with a holy kiss
2. To read this letter to all the brethren

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1) Why did Paul feel no need to write about times, dates and seasons to the Thessalonians?

2) What will people be saying when the Lord comes?

3) What will come upon them when the Lord comes?

- 4) Why will the Day of the Lord not overtake Christians as a thief?
- 5) What is our responsibility as "sons of light" and "sons of the day"?
- 6) What should we put on to be self-controlled?
- 7) Why did Jesus die for us?
- 8) How do we admonish one another in love and still live in peace?
- 9) What five encouragements does Paul give about the Spirit and prophecies?
- 10) What assurance is there that God will do this?

THOUGHT QUESTIONS

- 1) How hard is it to be thankful in all circumstances?
- 2) Is Paul talking about the end of time here?
- 3) When Paul asked that God sanctifies us through and through, does that mean the working of the Holy Spirit is real and active?

Your Questions.....what questions do you have from this lesson?

A Closer Look at “the Days of the Lord”

FOREWARD

There is often great confusion and great concern about the phrase *the day of the Lord* in all of scripture and, in particular, the letters to the Thessalonians. Does it mean the end of time? Does it mean a particular apocryphal event? Does it refer to one day? Does it refer to final judgment? The confusion and concern about the phrase *the day of the Lord* can lead to unsettledness and uncertainty about faith. The lack of knowledge and study of God’s word because of the confusion and concern can lead to an acceptance of doctrines contrary to the will of God. This leads to all manner of speculation and conjecturing about *the day of the Lord*.

OBJECTIVES

- 1) To have a better understanding of what the phrase *the day of the Lord* means.
- 2) To understand that it is vital to read scripture in the view of who it is written to and what the context of the passage is
- 3) To appreciate the fact that God is truly not the author of confusion but gives scripture so that the man of God is thoroughly equipped for every good work

PASSAGES CONTAINING “DAY OF THE LORD”

Isaiah 13:6 - wail, for *the day of the LORD* is at hand. It will come as destruction from the Almighty.

This *day of the LORD* referred to the coming judgment against Babylon. This *day of the LORD* was "at hand." It did not refer to the judgment at the end of time.

Isaiah 34:8 - For it is *the day of the LORD's* vengeance, the year of recompense for the cause of Zion.

Note that *the day of the LORD's* vengeance referred to the vengeance that God was going to bring on Edom. Isaiah 34:5 says, “For My sword shall be bathed in heaven; indeed it shall come down on Edom, and on the people of My curse, for judgment.” It is not about the end of time.

Jeremiah 46:7 - For this is *the day of the Lord* GOD of hosts, a day of vengeance, that He may avenge Himself on His adversaries. The sword shall devour; it shall be satiated and made drunk with their blood; for the Lord GOD of hosts has a sacrifice in the north country by the River Euphrates.

This *day of the Lord God* refers to vengeance that would be poured out upon Egypt and those in that area. This *day of the Lord God* was not referring to the end of time.

Ezekiel 13:4 - You have not gone up into the gaps to build a wall for the house of Israel to stand in battle on *the day of the LORD*.

This refers to *the day of the LORD* when some from Judah had been taken into captivity by the Babylonians in 606 and 597 BC while Jerusalem was about to be destroyed in 586 BC. This *day of the LORD* did not refer to the end of time.

Joel 1:15 - Alas for the day! For *the day of the LORD* is at hand; it shall come as destruction from the Almighty.

Punishment was coming upon Judah and Jerusalem at this *day of the LORD* in the form of a locust plague, a drought, a famine, and destruction from the Lord. It was a day of judgment and it was "at hand." It did not refer to the end of time.

Amos 5:18 - Woe to you who desire *the day of the LORD!* For what good is *the day of the LORD* to you? It will be darkness, and not light.

Israel would be taken into captivity by the Assyrians in 734 to 721 BC. Their *day of the LORD* was not at the end of time.

Zephaniah 1:4-2:3

Here in Zephaniah "the day of the LORD," "the day of the LORD'S sacrifice," "the great day of the LORD," "the day of the LORD's wrath," "the day of the LORD's anger," was speaking of a day of devastation and desolation that was soon coming upon Judah and Jerusalem. It was "at hand." It was "near." The city of Jerusalem and the temple would be utterly destroyed. Zephaniah was not describing *the day of the Lord* at the end of time.

Malachi 4:5-6 - 5Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of *the great and dreadful day of the LORD*. 6And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse.

We know that "Elijah the prophet" referred to John the Baptist. (Matthew 11:13-14; 17:10-13; Mark 9:11-13; Luke 1:17) John the Baptist was not literally Elijah (John 1:21), but, he came in "the spirit and power of Elijah." (Luke 1:17) So John the Baptist came before *the great and dreadful day of the LORD*.

The question is what day or time is meant by *the great and dreadful day of the LORD*? Is it speaking of the judgment day at the end of time? Or is it speaking of another day of great significance? If we believe that *the great and dreadful day of the LORD*, refers to the judgment at the end of time, then we are led to the conclusion that Malachi 4:5 was prophesying that John the Baptist would come just before the end of time. But, what significance would such a prophecy have? Isn't it obvious that everyone who has ever lived or ever will live will do so before the end of time? Therefore, *the great and dreadful day of the LORD* of Malachi 4:5 does not refer to the judgment at the end of time and refers to a judgment that was near at hand when John was on earth.

1 Corinthians 5:4-5 - 4In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, along with my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, 5deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in *the day of the Lord Jesus*.

In the passages that we have already seen, *the day of the LORD* had to do with physical punishment on physical bodies and the deliverance of God's people from that anguish. Here it is the spirit of the man that needed to be saved. Therefore, we must conclude that "the day of the Lord Jesus" in verse 5 refers to the end of time judgment.

2 Peter 3:10-13 - 10But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. 11Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, 12looking for and hastening the coming of *the day of God*, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? 13Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

There should be no doubt that this *day of the Lord* is that of the end of time.

Now let us return to the interesting passage in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:3:

13But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. 14For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. 15For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. 16For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. 18Therefore comfort one another with these words.

There is no doubt that 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 refers to the end of time, but note that it is *not* referred to as a *day of the Lord*. However, we should not hastily assume that 1 Thessalonians 5:1-3 refers to the end of time. Note the contrasting "But" of 1 Thessalonians 5:1.

1 Thessalonians 5:1-3 - 1But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. 2For you yourselves know perfectly that *the day of the Lord* so comes as a thief in the night. 3For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape.

“COMING IN CLOUDS”

It is interesting to note how *the day of the Lord* often happens with clouds. *The day of the Lord* is often characterized or described in terms of natural events or disasters.

Ezekiel 30:3 - For the day is near, even *the day of the LORD* is near; *it will be a day of clouds*, the time of the Gentiles.

The *day of the LORD* concerned the plundering about to come upon Egypt by the Babylonians and did not refer to the end of time.

Joel 2:1-2 - 1Blow the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in My holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble; for *the day of the LORD* is coming, for it is at hand: 2a day of darkness and gloominess, *a day of clouds* and thick darkness, like the morning clouds spread over the mountains. A people come, great and strong, the like of whom has never been; nor will there ever be any such after them, even for many successive generations.

Punishment was coming upon Judah and Jerusalem in this *day of the LORD*. It was a day of judgment and it was "at hand." It did not refer to the end of time.

Joel 2:10-11, 10The earth quakes before them, the heavens tremble; the sun and moon grow dark, and the stars diminish their brightness. 11The LORD gives voice before His army, for His camp is very great; for strong is the One who executes His word. For *the day of the LORD* is great and very terrible; who can endure it?

Joel 2:30-32 - 30"And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: blood and fire and pillars of smoke. 31The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the coming of *the great and awesome day of the LORD*. 32And it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the LORD Shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be deliverance, As the LORD has said, among the remnant whom the LORD calls.

Note that nothing is said here about this particular *day of the LORD* being "near" or "at hand." So we are not surprised when we see Joel 2:28-32 quoted hundreds of years later at the beginning of the church in Acts 2:16-21. We see that *the great and awesome day of the LORD* prophesied by Joel was in connection with Zion and Jerusalem.

Joel 3:12-16, 12"Let the nations be wakened, and come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat; For there I will sit to judge all the surrounding nations. 13Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Come, go down; for the winepress is full, the vats overflow-- for their wickedness is great." 14Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For *the day of the LORD* is near in the valley of decision. 15The sun and moon will grow dark, and the stars will diminish their brightness. 16The LORD also will roar from Zion, and utter His voice from Jerusalem; the heavens and earth will shake; But the LORD will be a shelter for His people, and the strength of the children of Israel.

This describes a day of doom and gloom and decision and judgment that was near for those who would defy God and persecute God's people. But, God would shelter His people who were the strength of the children of Israel. This *day of the LORD* was not the end of time.

Zephaniah 1:14-16 - 14*The great day of the LORD* is near; it is near and hastens quickly. The noise of the day of the LORD is bitter; there the mighty men shall cry out. 15That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of devastation and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, *a day of clouds* and thick darkness, 16a day of trumpet and alarm against the fortified cities and against the high towers.

Acts 2:14-21 - 14But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to them, "Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words. 15For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day. 16But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: 17'And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams. 18and on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; and they shall prophesy. 19I will show wonders in heaven above and signs in the earth beneath: blood and fire and vapor of smoke. 20The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and awesome *day of the LORD*. 21And it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the LORD Shall be saved.'

Peter quoted from Joel 2:28-32. Acts 2:19-20 speaks of the same type of events that Jesus described as He discussed the destruction of Jerusalem that would immediately follow the tribulation that He described in detail in Matthew 24:15-28. There Peter said that the things occurring on that day were the things prophesied by Joel and that they were *preceding* the coming of the great and notable *day of the LORD*. Peter was not speaking about the end of time.

Note carefully then what Jesus said in Matthew 24:29-31:

Matthew 24:29-31 - 29Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. 30Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man *coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory*. 31And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

I believe that *the great and notable day of the LORD* in Acts 2:20 had its primary fulfillment in the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. Some conjecture that it will also have a fulfillment for all of the earth at the end of time.

CONCLUSION

We have seen from the Old Testament and the New Testament that *the day of the Lord* always referred to a time of punishment upon evil persons or nations and generally a time of relief for the true children of God. Sometimes it was on nations such as Babylon or Egypt or Edom and others. But, numerous times *the day of the Lord* referred to a judgment upon Judah and Jerusalem. In fact the evil persons of Judah and Jerusalem were threatened with *the day of the Lord* more than any other group of people.

We have seen that less frequently, *the day of the Lord* referred to the judgment that will come at the end of time. It will result in punishment for those who rebel against God. It will be a day of eternal blessings for the children of God. The specific meaning of *the day of the Lord* must be determined by the context in which it is found.

The central point for us, indeed, the *ONLY* point for us, is are we ready and prepared for a day of the Lord? Whether He tarries or comes in judgment on clouds of glory or comes at the end of time, we must be ever watchful and ever faithful to His will for our lives and trust in Him.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS

- 1) Does the *day of the Lord* refer to a 24 hour period?
- 2) What is the significance of clouds in prophecies about *the day of the Lord*?
- 3) Generally, what does the world think of when people speak of *the day of the Lord*?
- 4) In Joel 3:12-16, what does Zion and Jerusalem represent?
- 5) If *the great and awesome day of the LORD* in Joel 2 is not about the end of time, what event is Joel prophesying about?
- 6) If John the Baptist was the Elijah as spoken about by Malachi, then did his coming portend a *day of the Lord* was at hand?
- 7) Why would there be many *days of the Lord*?

Your Questions what questions do you have from this lesson?

2 Thessalonians 1

The Righteous Judgment of God

OBJECTIVES

- 1) To note the virtues that demonstrated the spiritual growth and development of the church at Thessalonica
- 2) To see what will happen when God brings righteous judgment, and who His vengeance will fall upon
- 3) To compare our lives at Summit to the brethren of Thessalonica

SUMMARY

Like the first letter, Paul is joined by Silvanus and Timothy as he extends a greeting to the church in Thessalonica, along with a prayer for grace and peace in their behalf. He mentions his obligation to always thank God for the growth of their faith and the way their love increased towards one another. He is so impressed that he has boasted to other churches of their perseverance and faith in the midst of persecutions and trials (**1-4**).

Paul then offers encouragement in their persecutions by reminding them of the righteous judgment of God. Because of their suffering, which made them worthy of the kingdom of God, God will be right to bring trouble upon those who trouble them, and to give them rest along with Paul and others. This will happen when Jesus comes from heaven with His mighty angels and in blazing fire punish those who do not know God and who do not obey the gospel of Jesus. While these are punished with everlasting destruction away from the presence of the Lord, Christ Himself will be glorified in that day and marveled and admired by all those who believe, *including* the Thessalonians (**5-10**).

This leads to his prayer concerning them that God would count them worthy of His calling, fulfill His good purpose and the acts of faith with power, and that the name of the Lord might be glorified in them, and they in Him, according to the grace of God (**11-12**).

OUTLINE

I. INTRODUCTION (1-2)

A. GREETINGS

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

II. ENCOURAGEMENT IN PERSECUTIONS (3-12)

A. THANKFUL FOR THEIR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

1. His thanks is fitting in view of:
 - a. Their faith grows more and more
 - b. Their love increases toward each other
2. Paul and his companions even boast of them among churches
 - a. About their perseverance and faith
 - b. In all their persecutions and trials they endured

B. ENCOURAGEMENT IN TRIAL IN VIEW OF CHRIST'S RETURN

1. Their persecutions are evidence of God's righteous judgment to come
 - a. In which they shall be counted worthy of the kingdom of God
 - b. In which God will repay with trouble those who trouble them
 - c. In which they will receive relief and rest
2. Jesus will be revealed from heaven
 - a. With His mighty angels, in blazing fire giving punishment
 - 1) On those who do not know God
 - 2) On those who do not obey the gospel of Jesus
 - b. Punishing them with everlasting destruction
 - 1) From the presence of the Lord
 - 2) From the majesty and glory of His power
3. Jesus will come in that day...
 - a. To be glorified in His saints
 - b. To be admired and marveled among all those who believe
 - 1) including the Thessalonians
 - c. Because Paul's testimony among them was believed

C. HIS PRAYER FOR THEM

1. That God would...
 - a. Count them worthy of His calling
 - b. Fulfill His good purpose and their work of faith with power
2. That according to the grace of God and the Lord Jesus Christ...
 - a. The name of the Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in them
 - b. And they may be glorified in Him

REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1) Who joins Paul in sending this letter?
- 2) What two reasons does Paul give for why he thanks God always for them?
- 3) What did Paul boast among the churches of God in regards to the Thessalonians?
- 4) What was one consequence of their suffering?
- 5) What does God consider it a righteous thing to do?
- 6) What will those who are troubled receive when the Lord is revealed from heaven?
- 7) Who will be with Jesus when He is revealed from heaven?

8) Upon whom will Jesus take vengeance in blazing fire?

9) How will they be punished?

10) What kind of things can God fulfill when we act in faith?

THOUGHT QUESTIONS

1) Will those who are punished cease to exist or be destroyed?

2) What does it mean to be shut out from the presence of the Lord?

3) Why is it difficult to take comfort in the midst of trials?

Your Questions what questions do you have from this lesson?

2 Thessalonians 2

The Man of Sin versus Believing the Truth

OBJECTIVES

- 1) To examine what is revealed about the man of sin or lawlessness whom the Lord will destroy and is doomed to destruction
- 2) To consider how we are setting ourselves up to be deceived if we do not believe the truth
- 3) To understand that God will allow us to believe a lie

SUMMARY

Paul found out that some of the Thessalonians had the impression that *the day of the Lord* had come. To reassure them it was not the case, he reminds them of things he had told them while he was with them. That is, Christ will not come in judgment until the rebellion and falling away occurs, and the man of sin is revealed. Paul then describes this man of sin and lawlessness and explains that he is currently held back from being revealed. When that which holds him back is removed, the man of sin and lawlessness will be obvious and the Lord will destroy him with His coming (1-8).

The coming of the lawless one is further described, whose coming will be according to the working with Satan. With all power, signs, and lying wonders, he will deceive those who do not have a love for the truth. God will also send a strong and powerful delusion to those who do not love the truth, that they might believe the lie and be condemned for taking pleasure in unrighteousness instead of believing the truth (9-12).

As for the Thessalonians themselves, Paul is always thankful that God has chosen them for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth, having called them by the gospel to obtain the glory our Lord Jesus Christ. He exhorts them to stand fast and hold to the traditions taught by word of mouth or letter, and prays that Jesus and God the Father will comfort their hearts and establish them in every good word and work (15-17).

OUTLINE

I. THE TRUTH ABOUT THE COMING OF THE LORD (1-12)

A. DO NOT BE TROUBLED OR ALARMED

1. Concerning the coming of the Lord and being gathered to Him
2. By false reports, as though the *day of the Lord* has come

B. A FALLING AWAY OR REBELLION

1. The *day of the Lord* will not come until...
 - a. A falling away or rebellion comes first
 - b. The man of sin and lawlessness is revealed
 - 1) The son of perdition, doomed to destruction
 - 2) Who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God and that is worshipped
 - 3) He sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God -- As Paul told them while he was with them
2. The man of sin and lawlessness is being held back
 - a. They knew what it was that was holding him back
 - b. He will be revealed in his own time

- c. The secret mystery of lawlessness is already at work
- d. But the one who holds back will do so until he is taken out of the way
- 3. When the lawless one is revealed
 - a. The Lord will...
 - 1) Overthrow and consume him with the breath of His mouth
 - 2) Destroy him with the brightness of His coming
 - b. The coming of the lawless one...
 - 1) Will be according to the working of Satan
 - 2) With all power, signs, and lying wonders
 - 3) Will deceive those who are perishing
 - a) Because they refused to love and receive the truth
 - b) That they might be saved
 - c. For this reason...
 - 1) God will send them a strong and powerful delusion
 - a) That they should believe the lie
 - b) That they may be condemned
 - 2) Because they did not believe the truth but had pleasure in wickedness

II. STAND FAST AND FIRM (13-17)

A. PAUL IS THANKFUL AND CALLS THEM TO STAND

- 1. He is bound and ought to always to give thanks to God
 - a. Who from the beginning chose them for salvation
 - 1) Through sanctifying work of the Spirit
 - 2) And belief in the truth
 - b. To which He called them
 - 1) By the gospel
 - 2) To obtain and share in the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ
- 2. Stand fast and firm and hold the traditions and teachings which they were taught
 - a. Whether by word of mouth
 - b. Or by his letter

B. PAUL'S PRAYER FOR THE THESSALONIANS

- 1. May the Lord Jesus Himself, and our God and Father
 - a. Who loved us
 - b. Who has given us...
 - 1) Everlasting encouragement
 - 2) Good hope by grace
- 2. Comfort and encourage your hearts
- 3. Strengthen you in every good word and deed

REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1) What did Paul not want them to be unsettled about?
- 2) What two things must happen before the Lord comes?
- 3) What are the various descriptions of the "man of sin"?

- 4) What had Paul told the Thessalonians before?
- 5) What was already at work at the time Paul wrote the Thessalonians?
- 6) What will the Lord do to the lawless one?
- 7) Who will be deceived by this lawless one? Why?
- 8) What will God send those who are deceived?
- 9) What two reasons does Paul give for God doing this?
- 10) How did God choose to save the Thessalonians?

THOUGHT QUESTIONS

- 1) How hard is it to be thankful in all circumstances?
- 2) Is Paul talking about the end of time here?
- 3) When Paul asked that God sanctifies us through and through, does that mean the working of the Holy Spirit is real and active?

Your Questions what questions do you have from this lesson?

2 Thessalonians 3

Don't be Idle

OBJECTIVES

- 1) To notice the importance of prayer in spreading the Word and in assisting the spiritual development of brethren
- 2) To examine the purpose and methods of discipline in a local congregation

SUMMARY

In this last chapter we first find Paul asking for prayer in his behalf, that the word of the Lord might spread and be honored and glorified, and that he might be delivered from evil and wicked men. Confident that the Lord is faithful to strengthen, protect and guard them from the evil one, he is also confident that they will do the things he commands them. He prays that the Lord directs their hearts into the love of God and into the patience and perseverance of Christ (1-5).

Paul commands them of the need for action towards those who are not walking according to the traditions and teachings received from Paul. He reminded them of his own example of laboring night and day while with him and charges that if anyone *will not* work he should not eat. Paul had heard there were members who had stopped working, were idle and had become busybodies. He commanded and urged such people to work and earn their own bread to eat. If they do not obey, the others are to note such persons and not associate with them, that they may be ashamed. Warn him in a brotherly way; do not regard him as an enemy (6-15).

Paul then closes by first asking that the Lord of peace give them peace always in every way. He then offers a greeting in his own handwriting as his distinguishing mark, followed with a prayer that the grace of the Lord be with all of them (16-18).

OUTLINE

I. PAUL REQUESTS PRAYER AND PRAYS FOR THEM (1-5)

A. PAUL'S REQUEST

1. That the word of the Lord may spread, honored and glorified, as it was with them
2. That Paul and his companions be delivered from evil and wicked men, since not all are believers

B. PAUL IS CONFIDENT

1. In the Lord
 - a. He is faithful
 - b. To strengthen them
 - c. To guard and protect them from the evil one
2. In them
 - a. In doing the things he commands them
 - b. To continue do the things he commands them

C. A PRAYER FOR THEM

1. That the Lord direct their hearts
2. Into the love of God and the patience and perseverance of Christ

II. PAUL CHARGES THEM TO DISCIPLINE THE IDLE (6-15)

A. KEEP AWAY FROM THEM

1. Commanded in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ

2. Toward those...
 - a. Who do not live according to Paul's teachings and traditions
 - b. Who do not follow Paul's example
 - 1) For Paul was not disorderly or idle among them
 - 2) For Paul was not a burden to them, but gave them an example

B. ESPECIALLY THOSE WHO WILL NOT WORK

1. They had been commanded that if anyone will not work, he should not eat
2. Yet there were some not working at all, but were idle busybodies
3. Such are commanded and urged to work, settle down and eat their own bread

C. MORE INSTRUCTIONS

1. Do not grow weary or tired of doing good
2. For those who do not obey the instructions in this letter...
 - a. Note that person
 - b. Do not keep company or associate with him
-- That he may be ashamed
3. Don't regard him as an enemy, but warn him as a brother

III. CLOSING (16-18)

A. PRAYER IN THEIR BEHALF

1. May the Lord of peace give them peace always in every way
2. May the Lord be with them all

B. CONFIRMS HIS AUTHORSHIP

1. His own greeting with his own hand
2. As he writes in every letter

C. FINAL PRAYER

1. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with them all

REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1) For what two things does Paul ask them to pray in his behalf?
- 2) In what way did Paul say the Lord is faithful?
- 3) What confidence did Paul have about the Thessalonians?
- 4) When Paul gave them teachings and traditions to keep, did he have to go through a list of what *NOT* to do?
- 5) What example did Paul himself set while he was with them?
- 6) What had Paul commanded them, even when he was with them?

7) What had Paul heard was going on among them?

8) What did Paul command and urge idle busybodies to do?

9) What served as a sign of Paul's authorship of this letter?

10) What did Paul charge them to do if anyone did not obey his word in this letter?

THOUGHT QUESTIONS

1) Do we harm someone by feeding them when they will not work?

2) Has political correctness destroyed church discipline?

3) Can we be “idle” in the church?

Your Questions what questions do you have from this lesson?

A Closer Look at the “Man of Sin and Lawlessness”

FOREWARD

Along with confusion about *the day of the Lord*, there is always debate about who the “man of sin” or lawlessness is. There is always much conjecture and prognostication about him, about who he is and if he is someone yet to come. People throughout the ages have tried to point to truly evil men of society to proclaim the “man of sin”. By looking closely at scripture we can see that Paul plainly indicates who the “man of sin” is.

OBJECTIVES

- 1) To have a better understanding of whom the man of sin and lawlessness is
- 2) To understand that it is vital to read scripture in the view of who it is written to and what the context of the passage is
- 3) To appreciate the fact that God is truly not the author of confusion but gives scripture so that the man of God is thoroughly equipped for every good work

WHO IS "THE MAN OF SIN," "THE SON OF PERDITION," "THE LAWLESS ONE"?

We should take the meaning of the words in this passage to be literal unless there is evidence that the word should be taken in a spiritual or figurative sense. It would be illogical for us to do otherwise. It would also be dishonest to choose which of the words should be taken literally and which should be taken spiritually or figuratively in order to support a particular point of view.

BACKGROUND

Let us study the background for 2 Thessalonians 2 by looking at the New Testament to determine the leaders of the persecution of Christians. Let us observe who often came to the aid of Christians when they were being persecuted.

Who was responsible for persecuting Jesus and having Him crucified? It was the Jewish leadership in Jerusalem with the high priest being their leader. For example in Matthew alone, read Matthew 23:1-24:2; 26:1-16, 47-68; 27:1-2, 11-26.

Who restrained the Jews who were under the leadership of their high priest? It was the Roman government who wanted to restrain them and to release Jesus because they knew He was innocent. For example, the governor Pontius Pilate in Matthew 27:11-26, Mark 15:1-15, Luke 23:1-25, and John 18:29-19:16. It is particularly interesting to see how they protected Paul and permitted him all the freedom that they could under house arrest and let Paul's friends come to see him even while he was in Rome to be tried in Acts 28:30-31.

Who was it that arrested Peter and John in Acts 4, put the apostles in jail in Acts 5, had Stephen stoned and persecuted the church in the account from Acts 6:8-8:3, gave Saul the authority to persecute Christians in Acts 9:1-2, plotted to kill Paul after he became a Christian in Acts 9:22-23, opposed Paul in Acts 13:45, poisoned the minds of people against Paul in Acts 14:2, stoned Paul in Acts 14:19, persecuted the church in Thessalonica and forced Paul to leave Thessalonica

and Berea in Acts 17:1-14, brought Paul to the judgment seat in Acts 18:12-17, were going to deliver Paul to the Gentiles in Acts 21:11, stirred up the multitude against Paul to beat him in Acts 21:27-28, provided letters to Paul that permitted him to deliver Christians to death and so forth in Acts 22:4-5, commanded that Paul be struck on the mouth contrary to the law in Acts 23:1-5, plotted to kill Paul in Acts 23:12-22, lied to the Roman governor in Acts 24:1-9, plotted again to kill Paul through deceiving Festus in Acts 25:1-26, and so on and so on? It was the Jews under the leadership and urging of the high priests who continually persecuted Christians during the New Testament days. It was the Roman government that restrained the Jews.

PUNISHMENT FOR DISOBEDIENCE

Paul was proud of the way the Thessalonian Christians were remaining faithful as they were being literally persecuted at that time.

2 Thessalonians 1:1-8 - 1Paul, Silas and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: 2Grace and peace to you from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 3We ought always to thank God for you, brothers, and rightly so, because your faith is growing more and more, and the love every one of you has for each other is increasing. 4Therefore, among God's churches we boast about your perseverance and faith *in all the persecutions and trials you are enduring*. 5All 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. 6God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you 7and 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. 8*He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.*

To whom would God pay back trouble? He would trouble those who were at that time troubling the Thessalonian Christians. Note in verse 8 that they were those who at that time "do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus." Notice that Paul did not include all those persons who would not obey the gospel up to the end of time.

From verse 6, when would this trouble be paid back? It would be in the life time of these persecutors rather than at the end of time. "Trouble" is hardly the word to describe the terrible things that would be in store for the persecutors at the end of time.

From verse 7, when would the Thessalonian Christians and Paul be given relief? It would be in the life time of some of them. It hardly seems logical that Paul was consoling these suffering Christians by saying that they would only be given relief at the end of time.

In verses 7 and 8, we are told specifically that the unbelieving persecutors would be repaid trouble and be punished "when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels." He must be speaking about the coming of Jesus with His mighty or powerful angels in the destruction of Jerusalem. Let us remind ourselves concerning what would happen at that time as prophesied by Jesus.

First Jesus warned the unbelieving Jews in Jerusalem while he looked down upon the city.

Matthew 23:29-36 - 29"Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You build tombs for the prophets and decorate the graves of the righteous. 30And you say, 'If we had lived in the days of our forefathers, we would not have taken part with them in shedding the blood of the prophets.' 31So you testify against yourselves that you are the descendants of those who murdered the prophets. 32Fill up, then, the measure of the sin of your forefathers! 33"You

snakes! You brood of vipers! How will you escape being condemned to hell? **34Therefore I am sending you prophets and wise men and teachers.** Some of them you will kill and crucify; **others you will flog in your synagogues and pursue from town to town.** 35And so upon you will come all the righteous blood that has been shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah son of Berekiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. 36I tell you the truth, **all this will come upon this generation.** NIV

Then Jesus went into Jerusalem with His apostles and gave them this warning.

Matthew 24:30-35 - 30"At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man **coming on the clouds of the sky,** with power and great glory. 31And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other. 32"Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. 33Even so, when you see all these things, you know that it is near, right at the door. 34I tell you the truth, **this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened.** 35Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away. NIV

This generation was the generation of those who were being persecuted in Thessalonica and in the life time of those were doing the persecuting—the high priest and his followers.

A study of the writings of Josephus in his Wars of the Jews, Books IV, V, and VI truly reveals the wickedness of the high priests just before and during the siege of Jerusalem by the Roman General Titus in A.D. 70. The high priests were exposed as frauds and false prophets. Even those high priests that Josephus regarded most highly (like Ananus) were completely opposed to Christianity and were lawless. The home of the high priest, the temple, was burned to the ground. The high priests and their followers in Jerusalem were severely punished.

Let us note an event that Paul described in the first letter to the Thessalonians.

1 Thessalonians 2:14-16 - 14For you, brothers, became imitators of God's churches in Judea, which are in Christ Jesus: You suffered from your own countrymen the same things those churches suffered from the Jews, **15who killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets and also drove us out.** They displease God and are hostile to all men 16in their effort to keep us from speaking to the Gentiles so that they may be saved. In this way they always heap up their sins to the limit. The wrath of God has come upon them at last. NIV

It seems that this passage speaks about the punishment of God that would come soon upon the high priest and the evil leadership of the Jews with the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. They would "heap up their sins to the limit" or "fill up the measure of their sins" (NKJV) as Jesus had prophesied.

Again, we must conclude that 2 Thessalonians 1:6-8 refers to the time of the destruction of Jerusalem when punishment was brought upon the Jews who were responsible for the persecution of the Thessalonian Christians.

THEN WHO IS THE MAN OF SIN?

Who proclaimed to be and set himself up to be God?

2 Thessalonians 2:1-4 - 1Concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered to him, we ask you, brothers, 2not to become easily unsettled or alarmed by some prophecy, report or letter supposed to have come from us, saying that **the day of the Lord** has already

come. 3Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. 4He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, *so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God.* NIV

The NASV has, "who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship *so that he takes his seat in the temple of God displaying himself as being God.*"

The RSV has, "who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, *so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God.*"

The NRSV has, "He opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, *so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, declaring himself to be God.*"

The NKJV has, "who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, *so that he sits as God in the temple of God.*"

The man of sin or the man of lawlessness was already in existence and doing the things he is accused of when 2 Thessalonians was written. We saw how the Jewish high priest was already the leader in opposing Christ and His church. No one else even came close in rivaling his opposition to God's will.

ANOTHER VIEW OF THE MAN OF SIN

Some refer to the man of sin, the man of lawlessness, or the son of perdition as being the antichrist. Let us look at the only passages in the Bible that use the term antichrist or any form of the word.

1 John 2:18-23 - 18Dear children, this is the last hour; and as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, *even now many antichrists have come. This is how we know it is the last hour.* 19They went out from us, but they did not really belong to us. For if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us; but their going showed that none of them belonged to us. 20But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and all of you know the truth. 21I do not write to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it and because no lie comes from the truth. 22Who is the liar? It is the man who denies that Jesus is the Christ. Such a man is the antichrist—he denies the Father and the Son. 23No one who denies the Son has the Father; whoever acknowledges the Son has the Father also.

First note that at the time of the writing of 1 John, it was "*the last hour.*" They knew it was the last hour because "many antichrists have come." Obviously the last hour was not speaking of the end of time. It was speaking of the time when the antichrist had already come. The antichrist was anyone who was denying that Jesus is the Christ. That person was guilty of denying both "the Father and the Son" when he denied the Son. No one at that time was guiltier of denying the Son than was the high priest. It was the last hour for Judaism because the Jews could not worship as God had commanded them when the temple was destroyed. Likewise, the Jewish high priest had no abode when the temple was destroyed.

Let us look at the other two scriptures that contain the word "antichrist."

1 John 4:1-3 - 4:1Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. 2This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the

flesh is from God, 3but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and *even now is already in the world*.

2 John 7 - 7Many deceivers, who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh, have gone out into the world. Any such person is the deceiver and the antichrist.

Again we must acknowledge that the Jewish high priest was the leader of the antichrists. He was the one who most vigorously opposed Christ.

In his opposition to Christ and His church, the high priest was already guilty of exalting himself above all that is called God or worshipped. The Jewish high priest in the physical temple was putting himself above the High Priest in His spiritual temple, the church. Note what is said about Jesus, our High Priest in the book of Hebrews.

Hebrews 8:1-2 - 8:1The point of what we are saying is this: We do have such a high priest, who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, 2and who serves in the sanctuary, the true tabernacle set up by the Lord, not by man.

Jesus became the High Priest in the church. The Jewish high priest exalted himself above our High Priest and in fact opposed Him. He was seating himself in the temple of God built by King Herod. He tried to put himself in place of our High Priest "who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven." Jesus "serves in the sanctuary, the true tabernacle set up by the Lord, not man."

Many believe that the papacy (or series of popes) is the "man of sin" and the "falling away" of 2 Thessalonians 2 is still underway under the papacy. But, can we honestly say that the Roman government is restraining the papacy today until it is taken away? No. The letters to the Thessalonians were meant to encourage them in their ongoing persecution. We should not attempt to steal the letters to them as though they were written directly to us today.

What all of this comes down to is that the "man of sin," "lawless one," or "son of perdition" was already in existence and set up in the temple when 2 Thessalonians 2:9 was written. No one else fits the description of 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12 as perfectly as did the Jewish high priest.

SUMMARY

1. Those who consistently and literally persecuted Christians were the Jews with their leader being the Jewish high priest.
2. In New Testament times, the Romans consistently and literally restrained the Jews and their high priest from persecuting Christ and His church. Sometimes the Jewish hierarchy would seduce the Romans into persecuting Christ and His church, but, when they discovered that they had been seduced, they restrained the persecutors.
3. God would literally take vengeance on the unbelieving Jews who were literally persecuting Christians including those in Thessalonica.
4. The "coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thessalonians 2:1) referred to His literal "coming" in the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 in the manner prophesied by Jesus in Matthew 24:30.

5. "The falling away" or "rebellion" (2 Thessalonians 2:3) referred to a literal falling away that would come before the Lord would destroy the temple and Jerusalem in AD 70. It was the apostasy that the writer of Hebrews was concerned about no more than 5 years before AD 70.
6. It was the high priest who was already literally opposing Christ and His church and exalting himself when Paul described him as "the man of sin," the "lawless one," and the "son of perdition," or "man of destruction." He was already literally sitting in the temple of God and showing himself as though he was God. The temple in which he was then literally sitting was the literal physical temple in Jerusalem.
7. The high priest was being literally restrained by the Romans (2 Thessalonians 2:7) and would be restrained until God would literally take him out of the way. It would occur when the Lord would destroy Jerusalem, the temple in which the high priest dwelt, and the unbelieving and persecuting Jews of Jerusalem in AD 70.
8. The high priest was literally the "lawless one" of 2 Thessalonians 2:8-9 who was trying to impose traditions of men and the Law of Moses on Christians after it had already been nailed to the cross. Therefore he had no law. He was lawless.
9. The Jewish high priest tried to usurp the authority of Jesus who is literally our High Priest.

THOUGHT QUESTIONS

- 1) Why is the man of sin and lawlessness important to study and understand?**
- 2) How do people oppose God today?**
- 3) Who persecuted Christians and opposed the preaching that Jesus was the Messiah?**
- 4) In Matthew 23 and 24, what generation did Jesus say punishment would come?**
- 5) Why would the man of sin and lawlessness proclaim or declare himself to be God by sitting in the temple?**
- 6) What evidence, if any, can be given to show that the man of sin and lawlessness is the pope or any other religious leader?**
- 7) What event removed what was holding the man of sin and lawlessness back and also brought the promised wrath of God to those who refused to believe Jesus was the Christ?**

Your Questions what questions do you have from this lesson?

The End of Time

FOREWARD

So often we look at a verse and see in it what we want to see without examining the context of what is written or who it was written to. People spend a great deal of energy, and sometimes money, in trying to understand, prepare and watch for the end of time. I contend that there are actually very few verses in scripture that clearly point to the end of time.

There have been some people who have believed and taught that when Jesus came in judgment upon Jerusalem that it was the final time of a promised return. I strongly reject that teaching as incorrect and false doctrine. It is a teaching that robs of the hope of the resurrection and final judgment.

There are many that teach Jesus will return and reign from Jerusalem a thousand years from a rebuilt temple. Some even teach He will even reinstitute the sacrificial system of the Law of Moses. I utterly reject those false doctrines in view of Jesus Himself being the perfect sacrifice doing away the need for the blood of bulls and goats.

OBJECTIVES

- 1) To have a better understanding of what scripture says about the end of time
- 2) To better understand the hope we have of our Lord's return
- 3) To see how we should always be ready for Jesus to suddenly return

THE END OF TIME DESCRIBED

1 Corinthians 15:20-28 - 20But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. 21For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. 22For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. 23But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming. 24***Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power.*** 25For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. 26The last enemy that will be destroyed is death. 27For "He has put all things under His feet." But when He says "all things are put under Him," it is evident that He who put all things under Him is excepted. 28Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all. NKJV

1 Corinthians 15:50-54 - 50Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. 51Behold, I tell you a mystery: ***We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed-- 52in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.*** 53For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory." NKJV

1 Thessalonians 3:11-13 - 11Now may our God and Father Himself, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way to you. 12And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another

and to all, just as we do to you, 13so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father *at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.* NKJV

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 - 13But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. 14For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. 15For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. 16For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. *And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.* 18Therefore comfort one another with these words. NKJV

2 Peter 3:10-13 - 10But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which *the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.* 11Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, 12looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? 13Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. NKJV

THE THIEF IN THE NIGHT / THE WISE & FOOLISH VIRGINS

The key points to always focus on about the end of time are that it will come very suddenly and that we should **ALWAYS** be ready. Jesus' return will be sudden and unexpected by those that do not know Him or who have not obeyed Him. Our attitude toward the return of Jesus and the end of time should always be one of expectation and the fulfillment of our hope in the resurrection and eternal life in the joy of our Master's rest.

Matthew 24:36-44 - 36"But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only. 37But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. 38For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, 39and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. 40Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. 41Two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left. 42Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. 43But know this, that if the master of the house *had known what hour the thief would come*, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. 44Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect. NKJV

Luke 12:39-40 - 39But know this, that if the master of the house *had known what hour the thief would come*, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. 40Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect." NKJV

1 Thessalonians 5:1-4 - 1But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. 2For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. 3For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. 4But you, brethren, are not in darkness, *so that this Day should overtake you as a thief.* NKJV

Revelation 3:3 - Remember therefore how you have received and heard; hold fast and repent. Therefore if you will not watch, ***I will come upon you as a thief***, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you. NKJV

Revelation 16:12-15 - 12Then the sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, so that the way of the kings from the east might be prepared. 13And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. 14For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. 15Behold, ***I am coming as a thief***. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame." NKJV

Matthew 25:1-13 - 1“Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. 2Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish. 3Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, 4but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. 5But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept. 6“And at midnight a cry was heard: ‘Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!’ 7Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. 8And the foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’ 9 But the wise answered, saying, ‘No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.’ 10***And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut.*** 11“Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open to us!’ 12But he answered and said, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, ***I do not know you.***’ 13“Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.” NKJV

May we always be ready. Are you ready?

THOUGHT QUESTIONS

- 1) If Jesus does not return again, what hope would we have in the resurrection?
- 2) Is there any benefit to Jesus returning to reign a thousand years?
- 3) What is the best way to be watchful and ready for the Lord’s return?

Your Questions what questions do you have from this lesson?

A People of the Book

8-Year Curriculum

	January - March	April - June	July - September	October - December
2007	<i>Matthew</i>	<i>Genesis</i>	<i>Galatians & Ephesians</i>	<i>Isaiah</i>
2008	<i>Exodus</i>	<i>I & II Timothy, Titus</i>	<i>Hebrews</i>	<i>Minor Prophets I (Hosea-Obadiah)</i>
2009	<i>Mark</i>	<i>Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy</i>	<i>Romans</i>	<i>Jeremiah and Lamentations</i>
2010	I and II Thessalonians	Joshua, Judges, Ruth	James, I & II Peter	Minor Prophets II (Jonah-Habakkuk)
2011	Luke	Samuel, Kings, Chronicles	I, II, III John & Jude	Daniel
2012	Acts	Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther	I Corinthians	Minor Prophets III (Zephaniah-Malachi)
2013	John	Job	II Corinthians	Psalms
2014	Philippians, Colossians & Philemon	Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon	Revelation	Ezekiel

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