

PAUL'S SECOND LETTER TO THE COMMUNITY IN THESSALONICA^a

Greeting

1 From Paul, Silvanus,^b and Timothy, to the community of the Thessalonians,^c who are in God our Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ. ²Grace and peace to you, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ!

A Prayer of Thanks and a Promise of Rescue from Persecution

³We owe thanks to God for you all the time, brothers and sisters—which is exactly appropriate. Because your faith is really growing! And the love that all of you have for each other is increasing! ⁴It's to the point that^d we're bragging about you ourselves, in all the communities of God. We tell them about your endurance and faith, amidst all the persecutions and distress^e that you're going through. ⁵Your faithful endurance is proof of God's just judgment, and it's making you truly worthy of God's Reign. That's what you're suffering for. ⁶And it's only fair^f for God to pay back distress to those who are distressing you, ⁷and to give relief to you and to us, the ones who are being distressed. Our relief is going to come at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with his mighty angels.^g ⁸In flaming fire, he's going to deal out retribution to those who don't know God,^h who don't respond toⁱ the good news of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹They're the ones who're going to experience the sentence of eternal destruction when he comes. They'll flee “from the presence of the Lord and from his powerful glory,”^j ¹⁰when he comes to be glorified with his holy ones. And he'll be looked on with wonder by all the believers on that day—because in your case, our testimony was believed. ¹¹And that's what we're praying for all the time about you: that God will make you

^a Pm. thess-a-la-nye-ka.

^b Pm. sil-vain-us.

^c Pm. thess-a-loe-nee-ans.

^d Lit. “...increasing, with the result that.”

^e Lit. “distresses,” or “pressures,” which refers to actively hostile treatment by outsiders.

^f Lit. “...suffering for, if indeed it is just.”

^g Lit. “with the angels of his might.”

^h See Isa. 66:15; Jer. 10:25.

ⁱ Or “don't obey.”

^j Lit. “from the glory of his power.” See Isa. 2:10, 19, 21.

worthy of the calling that we all have. And that God will fill all your desire for goodness, and your faithful activity, with power. ¹²That way, the name of our Lord Jesus will be glorified in you—and you'll be glorified in him—by the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.^a

The Rebellion and the “Lawless One” Have to Come First

2 Now, let's talk about our Lord Jesus Christ's coming,^b and about our gathering to meet him.^c We ask you, brothers and sisters, ²not to suddenly lose your head^d or panic over anything you hear. It may be something said through the Spirit, or a teaching, or a letter that's supposedly from us, that says something like “The Day of the Lord has arrived.” ³Don't let anybody trick you in any way. Because the rebellion has to come first, and the lawless one^e is going to be revealed. He's the one who's destined for destruction.^f ⁴He is against, and he puts himself above, everything that's called “God”^g or is worshiped. He finally sits in God's temple, publicly presenting himself as being God.^h ⁵Don't you remember that we used to tell you all this when we were with you? ⁶And you know what's now holding him back—so that he can be revealed in his own time. ⁷Because the secret of lawlessness is already at work. It's just that someone's holding him back—until he gets out of the way.ⁱ ⁸And then the lawless one is going to be revealed. He's the one that the Lord Jesus “is going to wipe out with the breath from his lips.”^j ⁹Jesus is going to do away^k with him by his appearance when he comes. ¹⁰This person's coming is in line with the operation of Satan. It'll be with all kinds of power, and false miracles^l and wonders. ¹¹And there'll be all kinds of dishonest trickery.^m It'll be aimed at those who are being lost, because they haven't accepted the love of the truth that would've resulted in their salvation.ⁿ ¹²And because of that, God sends them a process of deception, so that they believe the lie. ¹³That way, everybody that doesn't believe in the truth, but prefers what's wrong, will be judged.

^a Or, just possibly, “by the grace of our God and Lord, Jesus Christ.”

^b Or “arrival.”

^c See esp. 1 Thess. 4:13-17, based on “the word of the Lord” (i.e. Jesus) in Mt. 24:30-31; Mk 13:26-27.

^d Lit. “not to be shaken from your mind.”

^e Some mss have “the sinful one.”

^f Lit. “the son of destruction”; see Jn 17:12, which uses the same expression of Judas Iscariot, and “Bible Words” under “Children of.”

^g Or “everything that's regarded as divine.”

^h See Dan. 11:36; Ezek. 28:2.

ⁱ Or “only there is one that holds him back, until he is gone from among us.” See Jn 13:30; 1 Jn 2:18-19.

^j Lit. “with the breath of his mouth”; Isa. 11:4; Job 4:9. Some mss lack the name “Jesus.”

^k Lit. “...lips,” and do away.”

^l Lit. “signs.”

^m Lit. “...wonders, and with all deception of unrighteousness.”

ⁿ Lit. “...the truth, for them to be saved.”

Stand Firm!

¹³But we have to thank God all the time for you, brothers and sisters. You're loved by the Lord! Because God chose you for salvation as a first offering of the harvest—through the Spirit's work of making you holy,^a and through your belief in the truth. ¹⁴This is what God has called you to, through the good news that we preach.^b You're called to have the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁵So now, brothers and sisters, stand firm. And hold onto the traditions that you've been taught by us—whether by word of mouth or by letter.

¹⁶And may our Lord Jesus Christ himself,
 And God our Father,
 Who has loved us,
 And has given us eternal encouragement and good hope by grace,
¹⁷Encourage and strengthen your hearts,
 In every kind of good action and speech.

Request for Prayer

3 Finally, brothers and sisters, pray for us. Pray that the message about the Lord^c will make rapid progress and be honored,^d just like it was with you. ²And pray that we'll be saved from off-base and evil people—because not everybody has faith. ³But the Lord is faithful. He's going to strengthen you and protect you from the evil one.^e ⁴And we're convinced about you in the Lord, that you're doing, and are going to do, the things that we're instructing you to do. ⁵And may the Lord lead your hearts into God's love, and into the ability to hold out for Christ.

People Have a Responsibility to Work

⁶Now, we have an instruction for you, brothers and sisters, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ: keep away from every brother or sister that lives in an undisciplined way, and not in line with the tradition that they^f received from us. ⁷After all, you know that^g you're supposed to imitate us—and we weren't undisciplined around you. ⁸And we didn't eat anybody's food for free. Just the opposite—we worked with sweat^h and hard labor night and day, so we wouldn't be a burden to any of you. ⁹It's not that we don't have that authority—it was to offer ourselves as an example for you to follow.ⁱ ¹⁰Because when we were with you, we gave this instruction: if somebody doesn't want to work, they shouldn't eat either. ¹¹Because we're hearing that some of you are living in an undisciplined

^a "The Spirit's work of making you holy"—traditionally: "sanctification of the Spirit."

^b Lit. "through our good news."

^c Lit. "the word of the Lord."

^d Lit. "be glorified."

^e That is, from the devil. Or, possibly, "from evil."

^f Some mss have "you."

^g Lit. "how."

^h This word is a synonym of "hard labor."

ⁱ Lit. "but to give ourselves as an example for you to imitate us."

way. They're not doing any work, and minding other people's business instead. ¹²Well, in the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, we're instructing and urging people like that to work quietly and eat their own food.^a ¹³But you, brothers and sisters, don't get discouraged in your good work. ¹⁴But if somebody doesn't listen to our instructions in this letter, take note of that person. Don't associate with them, so they'll be ashamed. ¹⁵But don't consider them an enemy. Just the opposite—warn them as a brother or sister.

Final Greetings

¹⁶Now, may the Lord of Peace himself give you peace always and in every way. ¹⁷This hello is in my own handwriting—Paul. It's the sign of authenticity in every letter I write. This is how I write. ¹⁸May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all!^b

^a Or "to earn their own living."

^b Some mss add, "Amen."