

Author - STEVEN R. DOUGLAS 2017

THE HOLY BIBLE **NKJV** REFERENCE GUIDE

NEW TESTAMENT

BOOK 53

2 THESSALONIANS



The Apostle Paul by Giovan Battista Tiepolo

SUMMARY

Just because Paul visited a city, preached the gospel for weeks or even months, and founded a church by guiding converts to the faith, this did not protect the new church from scheming heretics. In fact, the immaturity of any new church presented a perfect target for those who meant to mislead and distort the truth.

Paul, worried about his friends and their troubles with false teachers, wrote this second letter to the believers at Thessalonica in the hope of encouraging their young but burgeoning faith.

Paul wrote 2 Thessalonians from Corinth in AD 51 within months of writing the first letter. Since the subject matter of the second letter has a number of thematic similarities to the first, Paul probably had received a second report from the city detailing continuing questions or problems regarding the end times.

Several of Paul's references indicate that some in Thessalonica were deliberately misleading these new believers, even to the point of false teachers forging letters to make them look as if they had come from Paul.

The apostle, therefore, took extra care in this letter to make sure the Thessalonians understood not only his views on the end times but also what his handwriting looked like, so they would be able to identify letters as authentically his.

Second Thessalonians distinguishes itself by the detailed teaching it presents on the end times. False teachers had been presenting fake letters as if from Paul and telling the Thessalonian believers that the day of the Lord had already come.

This would have been especially troubling to them because Paul had encouraged them in his previous letter that they would be raptured before the day of wrath came upon the earth.

So Paul explained to them that this future time of tribulation had not yet come because a certain man of lawlessness had not yet been revealed. Comparisons with other passages in Daniel, Matthew, and Revelation reveal this man to be none other than the Antichrist.

But Paul encouraged the Thessalonians not to worry, because the Antichrist would not come until a mysterious restrainer—the Thessalonians apparently knew his identity—was removed from earth.

The identity of this restrainer has been heavily debated, though due to the nature of the work the restrainer does, He is likely the Spirit of God working redemptively through the church.

When the believers leave the earth in the rapture, all who remain will experience the wrath of the tribulation.

The apostle Paul, in concern for the Thessalonian believers who were trying to stand firm in their faith under pressure from false teachers, taught the Thessalonians in this letter that their hope in Christ's future return should serve as an encouragement to them in their suffering, motivating them to live responsibly for Him.

SUMMARY Continued

Paul always connected his teaching on Jesus with the practical growth he expected to see as a result of such a deeply held faith.

Discipline and self-control are two qualities that quickly slip away in a society so focused on the material that its people forget the spiritual realities that should dictate their lives.

Fat with financial and material success, many people today have descended into an unruly and lazy existence that possesses little care for others, especially of the kind that might conflict with our personal, fleshly desires.

Paul knew that hope in Christ would encourage perseverance in godly living. And hope is exactly what we lack today, one of the great roots of this gradual slip into increased self-centeredness.

As you read the words of 2 Thessalonians, allow them to rekindle your hope and fan into flame your desire to live in God-honoring, industrious ways.

NKJV SELECTED SCRIPTURE

- 1:4** so that we ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that you endure,
- 1:5** which is manifest evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you also suffer;
- 1:6** since it is a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you,
- 1:7** and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels,
- 1:8** in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- 1:11** Therefore we also pray always for you that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness and the work of faith with power,
- 1:12** that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.
- 2:2** not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come.
- 2:3** Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition,
- 2:4** 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, showing himself that he is God.
- 2:6** And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time.
- 2:7** For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way.

NKJV SCRIPTURE Continued

- 2:8** And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming.
- 2:9** The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders,
- 2:10** and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved.
- 2:11** And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie,
- 2:12** that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.
- 2:16** 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,
- 2:17** comfort your hearts and establish you in every good word and work.
- 3:3** But the Lord is faithful, who will establish you and guard you from the evil one.
- 3:5** Now may the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the patience of Christ.
- 3:16** Now may the Lord of peace Himself give you peace always in every way. The Lord be with you all.

BIBLE TIMELINE

52 AD

Paul Writes again to the Thessalonians 2 Thess. 1 - 3

MAP REFERENCES

