First Thessalonians

Introduction

While in the city of Troas the apostle Paul received the call in a vision which said:

*Acts 16:9 Come over into Macedonia and help us*

Macedon was a region that Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea belonged to. Philip II ruled over Macedon, and it was so strategic that it enabled the son of Philip II named Alexander to go out from there and eventually rule over that whole part of the world.

Paul and Silas first established a church at Philippi which was the chief city in that part of Macedonia, where they were shamefully entreated, before going on to Thessalonica which is along the southern coastline of what is modern day Greece, between the cities of Philippi and Berea.

   Thessalonica was a very strategic place for the spread of the gospel of the grace of God, and chapter seventeen of the book of Acts records for us the circumstances of Paul's visit there. Take a few moments and read Acts chapter 17 before reading 1st Thessalonians.

Chapter One

The Wrath to Come

1 Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul: Paul’s name always appears as the first word in each of his 13 epistles, Romans through Philemon. These are known as the Pauline epistles. Paul did not write Hebrews. Hebrews 2:3.

Notably missing here, and in second Thessalonians is Paul’s usual reference to himself as being an apostle in his opening remarks. He does mention it later in chapter 2:16.

There was no need for Paul to throw his apostolic authority and title around with the Thessalonians because there was no question with them of Paul’s apostleship like with some of the other churches.

The church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ: There is no safer place to be than in Christ, which happens the moment a person trusts the gospel for their salvation. 1st Corinthians 15:1-4.

Obviously if the individuals in this local assembly are in Christ, then the church itself is in God the Father, and in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Grace be unto you, and peace: The usual mention of grace and peace are mentioned as being from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, they do not come from Paul.

Both the Father, and the Son, were rejected by Israel in the past, and because of Israel’s rejection of the Son, the Father was ready to pour out his wrath on Israel and the world at that time:

*Psalm 2:12 Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.* *Psalm 110:1-6.*

God instead interrupted Israel’s prophecy program, and he instituted an un-prophesied dispensation of grace. Ephesians 3:1-10.

Grace is the dispensation that we live in today, which is sparing us for the time being from the wrath of God which he promised to pour out to avenge the rejection of his Son.

God has interrupted the prophecy program and ushered in the mystery program of grace and peace, where he is not imputing our sins unto us today as he was under the Law.

That was welcome news for those expecting Christ to return to make his enemies (unbelieving Israel, and the lost world) his footstool: 2nd Corinthians 5:19 & Psalm 110:1.

We are at peace today with God because he has decided to dispense to us grace. The time is coming when God's mystery program will be over, and the prophetic program for Israel will kick back in.

Then God's wrath will be poured out at that time, not grace and peace, when the time of Jacob’s trouble comes upon them. Jeremiah 30:7.

2 We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers; 3 Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father;

We give thanks to God always for you all: They thanked God every time they prayed for having known them and the faithfulness in their mutual suffering that they endured.

Work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope: Paul, in his letter to the Corinthians, mentioned the same three gifts that the believers in Thessalonica exhibited towards them and those they ministered to. 1st Corinthians 13:13.

4 Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.

Your election of God: The Thessalonians were elect, as are all believers in this age, to have a work of faith, a labour of love along with a patience of hope in Christ Jesus.

Since Christ is the elect of God, and we are in Christ, we become elect in Him. Isaiah 42:1 & Romans 8:1.

5 For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake.

Our gospel: Paul first mentions our gospel instead of the gospel, or my gospel, as he so often does because he is clarifying which gospel he is talking about.

He is talking about the gospel that he preached and the same one the Thessalonians believed and were saved by.

The gospel of the grace of God, as opposed to the gospel of the kingdom that had been preached during Christ's earthly ministry. Acts 20:24 & Matthew 10:17.

The gospel that Paul preached to them was not just good words (news) only, they were words that had the power to save people through the regenerating work of the holy Spirit of God.

They could all attest to the character of those that had accompanied the Apostle Paul as they preached to the people of Thessalonica as men without reproach.

In power, and in the Holy Ghost: There were demonstrations of God’s power in the performance of miracles in Thessalonica.

There was a church was established in just a short amount of time there in Thessalonica and some of Paul’s men would stay behind to help it be strengthened before returning to their team.

6 And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost: 7 So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia.

Followers of us: We are to follow Paul as he followed Christ.

We are also to follow others who are following the Christ according to the revelation of the mystery that Christ gave to us through the apostle Paul. 1st Corinthians 4:1, 11:1, 1st Thessalonians 1:6 & 2nd Thessalonians 3:7-9.

The Thessalonians suffered for their new-found faith, and it endeared them to the apostle Paul who suffered along with them.

This explains why he did not have to explain his apostolic authority in the opening words of his two epistles to them as he does in all of his other epistles.

It is easy to follow someone who has suffered for the faith he is preaching. It was also easier for those around Thessalonica to serve Christ because of the example of how the Thessalonians continued to serve through all their sufferings.

8 For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing.

Paul's job of spreading the word in that region was easier because of their testimony of suffering and service there in Thessalonica.

Macedonia and Achaia: The regions in Greece where Paul was working at on this part of his missionary journey.

9 For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God;

What manner of entering in we had unto you: How their work affected those in the area.

Ye turned to God from idols: This is faith in action. They were turning to God from idols.

To serve the living and true God: This chapter is about the believer (you) and their (your) faithfulness to give the truth to a lost world.

10 And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.

To wait for his Son from heaven: These believers were instructed by Paul to wait for the Lord's return.

Paul elaborates more clearly on that teaching in the following chapters where he describes it as a secret return in the clouds. This is called the blessed hope by Titus:

*Titus 2:13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;*

The kingdom saints were told by Jesus that he would return in the same manner in which he went, physically and visibly. That will also happen at the end of the tribulation period.

The rapture was first revealed to us by Paul in the first epistle to the Thessalonians, and that was many years after what Jesus said at his ascension to Israel. The Rapture was still a mystery in Acts 1.

The rapture could not be called a mystery to the Corinthians if Christ had already taught it to his disciples in the book of Acts before his ascension.

Jesus was speaking of his coming back to set up his kingdom in Acts 1, not the rapture.

Christ's revealing is, and was, no secret to the Jews, but the rapture was a mystery before Paul told the body of Christ about it. If it were not a mystery Paul should have never said, behold I show you a mystery. 1st Corinthians 15:51.

When the angels mention Christ's return in Acts 1, there was no mention of a secret catching away of saints, only the visible return of Christ from heaven, because that is concerning Christ’s prophesied return to Israel.

Today, as believers in the body of Christ, we are to wait for God's Son to return from heaven to meet us in the air, to be delivered from the wrath to come.

*1st Corinthians 15:51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep; but we shall all be changed, 52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. 53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.*

This return seven years prior to his setting up of his kingdom concerns Christ’s return for the body of Christ.

This is part of our mystery program that was kept secret from before the foundation of the world Romans 16:25, but now is made manifest.

The wrath to come: This is not hell, for billions are there now. We are delivered from that time of great wrath that shall come upon this earth.

*Zephaniah 1:14 The great day of the LORD is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the LORD: the mighty man shall cry there bitterly. 15 That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness,*

This will occur during the seventieth week of Daniel, known also as the time of Jacob's trouble, and as the tribulation period. Daniel 9:24-27, Jeremiah 30:7, Revelation 1:9 & 2:22.

Chapter Two

The Gospel of God

1 For yourselves, brethren, know our entrance in unto you, that it was not in vain: 2 But even after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated, as ye know, at Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God with much contention.

Shamefully entreated: Acts 16:12-40. The church at Thessalonica was a model church that all churches should seek to follow as a pattern for service amidst the suffering of great persecution.

Paul serves the body of Christ as our pattern for all of us who have believed on Christ after him. 1st Timothy 1:15-16.

The gospel of God: Many times Paul calls the gospel of God “my gospel, which I received,” because it was given directly to him from God. Romans 2:16 & 16:25.

It is called “our gospel” one chapter earlier instead of the gospel to show us that it is specific to one group, and different from what another group was receiving. 1st Thessalonians 1:5, 2nd Thessalonians 2:1 4 & 2nd Corinthians 4:3.

He did not receive “his gospel” from the twelve apostles, who were still offering the kingdom to the nation of Israel. Galatians 1:11-12.

Much contention: The much contention was from the Jews in Thessalonica. 1st Thessalonians 2:8-9.

3 For our exhortation was not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile:

Our exhortation: Their preaching was not deceitful to the Thessalonians concerning Jesus actually being the Son of God. Nor were their statements about what God was now doing through the apostle Paul for the Gentiles.

4 But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts.

To be put in trust with the gospel: God put in the apostle Paul, a great trust to carry the gospel of the grace of God to the world.

This was not the gospel of the kingdom that the twelve preached, which was to the Jew only and it was followed by signs and wonders because the Jews require a sign. Acts 20:24.

The kingdom of heaven will not be set up on earth if people repent today, but that was what was promised to Israel if they would repent as a nation.

They did not repent however, and God ushered in the dispensation of grace which was given to the apostle Paul to give unto us. Ephesians 3:1-6.

5 For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloke of covetousness; God is witness: 6 Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ.

There were no speeches given to woo the masses, only the word of God delivered with sincerity, love, and with boldness when necessary.

Sought we glory: Paul could have sought to be recognized by the people as the apostle of the Gentiles, and to have set himself up as a dictator, but that was not Paul’s desire, he wanted the praise of God, not of man.

Burdensome: He could have demanded that they were to cover his expenses, but he did not so as not to hinder his message from some who would criticize him if he took even a shekel.

7 But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children: 8 So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us.

The gospel of God: This is found in 1st Corinthians 15:1-4, not in Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John’s gospels.

Paul, and those with him, loved the Thessalonians, and were willing to suffer for them so that they might receive the truth, just like a mother would do for her children.

9 For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail: for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God. 10 Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe:

Not be chargeable unto any of you: Paul puts the Thessalonians in remembrance of their sincerity to reach their city for God.

They worked a secular job to provide for their physical needs so that the people would not be able to say they were just in it for the money.

11 As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children, 12 That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.

Walk worthy: Paul tells them that as he expected them to walk as a Christian should walk, so God expects them to do the same.

Called you unto his kingdom and glory: Paul never mentions the kingdom of heaven in all fourteen of his references to the word kingdom, it is always the kingdom of God.

It is a heavenly kingdom for the church, which is Christ’s body. 2nd Timothy 4:18. The kingdom of heaven comes down to earth in the millennium, and it is a part of Israel’s prophesied kingdom, the kingdom of God.

13 For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

The word of God: The difference between the word of men, and the word of God, is that the word of God does an effectual work in the believer’s life that no human philosophical argument can ever hope to do because it is carnal, and it is after the course of this world.

*Ephesians 2:2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:*

The word is often referred to as seed. When someone listens to the word, the seed finds fertile ground to produce fruit from.

The word of God is spiritual, and it is from the Creator of this world, and it alone has the power to do an effectual work in your life.

14 For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews:

   They did not seek to be persecuted as the churches in Judea were, but they sought to do what God wanted them to do in reaching their community, and that always brings about persecution.

The churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus: The statement made by Paul that the Jewish kingdom churches were “in Christ Jesus” has been used by some to confuse people. It shouldn’t.

Kingdom Saints needed to “abide in the vine” (Christ) to remain in Christ (John 15:4-7). We today in the body of Christ are placed “into Christ” by the holy Spirit the moment we believe the gospel. 1st Corinthians 12:13 & 15:1-4.

Saints in both programs are “in Christ,” just not in the same way, nor do they have the same purpose.

16 Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men: 16 Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins alway: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.

Paul was reminding them that they were not alone in their suffering because Paul, and his companions, also suffered harshly at the hands of unbelievers.

Israel was soon to be blinded in part as a nation, rejecting God as a whole, and they will not have another chance to believe nationally until the tribulation period reaches its end. Individually yes.

To fill up their sins alway: It was sin to not believe themselves in Christ, and then to kill him, but it was an entirely different thing to deny others the chance to hear and believe.

The wrath is come upon them to the uttermost: The wrath that is promised to Jacob’s descendants is the wrath that is poured out in the tribulation period, the time of Jacob’s Trouble:

*Jeremiah 30:7 Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it.*

17 But we, brethren, being taken from you for a short time in presence, not in heart, endeavoured the more abundantly to see your face with great desire. 18 Wherefore we would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us.

Satan hindered us: Paul and his companions were run out of Thessalonica (taken) by the same Jews he was trying to help, and they were hindered by Satan from returning.

Paul was thankfully able to send Timotheus to see how they were doing in his absence.

This was not because Satan was victorious in this situation over God's plan, but God wanted to strengthen this church to be able to stand on its own, so that Paul could move on, and minister in other places.

19 For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? 20 For ye are our glory and joy.

Crown of rejoicing: This is a literal crown that is earned for leading souls to Christ, either directly or indirectly.

We will be glorying in the souls we see in heaven that we have helped to bring to a saving knowledge of Christ. Paul calls the Philippians his joy and crown as well in Philippians 4:1.

Here Paul calls the Thessalonians his glory, and what he means by that is that they are the shining example of what a church should be.

When Paul thinks of them, he glories in them. Christ is the literal glory of God that is mentioned in the familiar soul wining verse in Romans.

*Romans 3:23 All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.*

Jesus alone did not fall short because he is perfection personified. He is what we are all measured to, and we all have fallen short of his perfection because we were born in sin, and because we chose to sin.

He was born of a virgin which kept him from inheriting Adams sin nature that we all have, and he never sinned. The scriptures say that we are drawn away of our own lust, and enticed, he had no lust. He is the glory of God. James 1:14.

Chapter Three

Appointed unto Afflictions

1 Wherefore when we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to be left at Athens alone; 2 And sent Timotheus, our brother, and minister of God, and our fellowlabourer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith:

Forbear: They couldn’t wait any longer.

To establish you: To build them up in the faith.

Because of the fact that Paul was run out of town, he felt as though he needed to return to finish what he had started, which he knew would be a great source of comfort to the believers in Thessalonica.

That was not to be, so he sent his companion back to Thessalonica to help further establish them in the truth.

3 That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto. 4 For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know.

That no man should be moved: They are to stand fast/firm in their trials. See verse below:

We are appointed thereunto: All who oppose darkness will be retaliated against by Satan and the world.

*2nd Timothy 3:12 Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.*

5 For this cause, when I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labour be in vain.

The tempter: This is speaking of Satan. Paul needed to know how his children were doing, and he wanted to give them more to help them as they continued on their journey serving God.

6 But now when Timotheus came from you unto us, and brought us good tidings of your faith and charity, and that ye have good remembrance of us always, desiring greatly to see us, as we also to see you: 7 Therefore, brethren, we were comforted over you in all our affliction and distress by your faith: 8 For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord.

If ye stand fast in the Lord: When you are suffering it helps to know that others you have helped are making it through their struggles.

Paul drew strength from the Thessalonians’ stand for the Lord. See verse 3 above about not being moved. This has nothing to do with losing one’s salvation in the dispensation of grace, but it is about standing /defending what you believe.

9 For what thanks can we render to God again for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God; 10 Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith?

Perfect that which is lacking in your faith: To perfect something means to complete something, to make it a finished product. What were the Thessalonians lacking in their faith?

They obviously didn’t understand everything about the rapture as Paul had to educate them further on it in the fifth chapter.

11 Now God himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you. 12 And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you: 13 To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.

To the end he may stablish your hearts: To stablish someone is to finish establishing them in the truth all believers need.

Most Christians today are not stablished in the mysteries revealed to Paul because there are too few people able to establish them in that truth.

Unblameable in holiness before God: We are only unblameable today if we are in Christ, because he alone is holy and unblameable.

Notice that we appear unblameable before God only after Jesus Christ comes for all his saints and he brings us with him.

At the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints: How can the Lord Jesus Christ come with all his saints if they are not with him? He cannot!

He will come for his body and call us to meet him in the clouds one day soon, and we shall return with him to heavenly places and be presented by Christ before God the Father at his throne as holy and unblameable.

Jesus will then return to the earth seven years later when every eye shall see him, and once he has made his enemies his footstool his kingdom shall begin.

Those kingdom saints that were martyred during the time of Jacob’s trouble will return with him along with all those held in the Paradise of God. Revelation 2:7.

Chapter Four

Caught up Together

1 Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more. 2 For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus.

We beseech you: We beg you.

What commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus: God gave Paul commandments as to how we ought to walk/live as a believer to please God.

3 For this is the will of God, even your sanctification that ye should abstain from fornication: 4 That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; 5 Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God:

This is the will of God, even your sanctification: To be set apart fit for the Master’s use.

Abstain from fornication: Sexual immorality outside of marriage.

Know how to possess his vessel: Our vessel is our body. We are to learn from God’s words (commandments mentioned above) how to control the flesh and its desires.

In sanctification and honour: Set apart from the worldly lusts and honoring to God by not being a bad testimony to others by our actions.

Not in the lust of concupiscence: Our fleshly desires.

6 That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified. 7 For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness. 8 He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit.

No man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: Going beyond the boundaries of what is right.

The Lord is the avenger of all such: He will recompense what was done by one believer to another believer at the judgment seat of Christ by the giving and taking away of rewards.

He therefor that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God: Paul speaking under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit testifies that when we are unclean and disobedient to God's word, we actually are despising him.

Who hath given us his holy Spirit: We should not look upon or do unclean things because he has given us believers his holy Spirit.

9 But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another. 10 And indeed ye do it toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia: but we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more;

Increase more and more: Keep on doing what you’re doing and do more as you mature in your Christian life.

11 And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you; 12 That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing.

Study to be quiet: The scriptures will teach you humility, and the honor of an honest day’s work for an honest day’s pay.

Walk honestly towards them that are without: We are to be a witness with our lives and not just our mouths. Some people, however, are neither a witness with their life nor their mouth.

That ye may have lack of nothing: This is speaking about spiritual things, not worldly possessions.

13 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

I would not have you to be ignorant brethren: This phrase is used by God through Paul five other times. Romans 1:13, 11:25, 1st Corinthians 10:1, 12:1 & 2nd Corinthians 1:8.

Sadly, the body of Christ, for the most part are still very ignorant of many of these truths.

Them which are asleep: Death is often spoken about in scripture as being asleep. 1st Corinthians 15:6, 18, 53 & 2nd Peter 3:4.

Those who have died in Christ are awaiting the union of their body, soul, and spirit in heaven, when this corruptible will put on incorruption. 1st Corinthians 15:51.

All who are asleep in Jesus are immediately present with the Lord at the moment of their death, but they are not complete until that day when the Lord returns. 2nd Corinthians 5:6-8.

Very soon after the Thessalonians heard the gospel they were taught about the rapture of the church.

This is where Christ as its head would come back to get His body, the church just before the wrath of God would be poured out on the world.

While this was welcomed news to these believers, it would also produce some questions concerning the whereabouts of those who had passed on prior to the rapture.

That was probably because Paul had not told them everything concerning the rapture when he first came because he spent only a few weeks with them.

Remember this letter is being written very soon after Paul had left them on his second missionary journey, sometime after he had arrived in Corinth, most likely around six months after leaving them.

It was Paul that first preached that to be absent from the body was to be present with the Lord, not the twelve apostles to the nation of Israel. 2nd Corinthians 5:6-8

They were talking about going to paradise when they died, and about one generation having to endure to the end of the seventieth week of Daniel (the time of Jacob’s Trouble). Daniel 9:24-27 & Jeremiah 30:7.

And then of an earthly kingdom where all the old testament saints would be raised to rule and reign in with the Messiah.

This passage of scripture has also been used by Satan to deceive many over the years by believing false teaching of the doctrine of soul sleep.

The body sleeps, but the soul is what and who we are. It is in one of two places upon death, heaven or hell, paradise, or punishment.

There is no in-between place where the soul is napping. When the rich man breathed his last breath in this life, he lifted up his head being in the torment of hell. Luke 16:20-25.

14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again: This is the gospel of the grace of God.1st Corinthians 15:1-4 & Acts 20:24.

Them also which sleep in Jesus: The requirement for those who have died (are asleep) to be caught up in the rapture was that they had to believe in Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection.

They didn’t have to endure unto the end of the church age to be raptured. Matthew 24:13.

Christ had done everything for them that needed to be done, and by faith in his death and resurrection they received the gift of eternal life and were guaranteed a place in the rapture. In fact, they get a head start.

15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

We which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lor: Those believers that are living when Jesus returns in the clouds and the rapture occurs.

Them which are asleep: Paul was told by the Lord himself that he would rapture the dead (them which are asleep) along with the living.

The alive in the body of Christ at the time of the rapture will not prevent the dead (asleep) from participating the blessed hope.

It could be that God told this to Paul in a later revelation, or that Paul just didn’t emphasize the dead in Christ when he told them initially about the rapture.

He may have only focused on what would happen to those who were alive when Christ would return. Death did not, and could not separate them from the body of Christ.

*Romans 8:38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, 39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

  This was a natural thing for them to ponder about, because when two people were married, they became one body, and at the death of one of them the other was free from the first to marry another.

So, some may have assumed that since they were a part of Christ’s body, that death may have separated them from that body, and when Christ came back, he would only be coming for those who were still alive in the body of Christ.

All of the bodies of the saints that have gone on before us since the dispensation of grace began God will raise from the dead.

Then immediately afterwards the believers that are alive during that last generation will be caught up together to be with the Lord in the clouds as well.

God will not leave the body of even one believer behind. God will empty every grave wherever it may be and change those decayed pieces of flesh into glorious bodies.

Every saint from every corner of the world will all be extracted from this world, leaving behind a godless world and a new dispensation where the kingdom will once again be at hand. Matthew 3:2.

How is God able physically able to remove two in one house that are believers, and leave the one unbeliever behind, without making one mistake anywhere? Easy, God is simply receiving back, and what came from him.

His holy Spirit is in each believer, and his Spirit will be returning with us in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.

The Spirit will once again minister to believers during the tribulation period in a way that is identical to what it was with the little flock at Pentecost, because the focus will be back on Israel at that time, not the body of Christ.

16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout: What is it that will be shouted by the archangel? A great noise perhaps.

In Joshua 6:5-20 we have the children of Israel outside the walls of Jericho shouting at the sound of trumpets being blown by Israel’s priests, but this does not concern Israel.

The voice of the archangel: It is not the Lord that will shout, but the archangel, his identity is unclear. He will not be alone, by his side he will most likely have Gabriel blowing the trump of God.

The trump of God: A trumpet used only for God.

The dead in Christ shall rise first: These are those that are mentioned earlier as they who were asleep. Those who are raptured from this earth (the body of Christ) will escape the wrath that God is going to pour out on this world.

The bodies of the dead will rise so they can be reunited with their spirits in the clouds, and these bodies will be changed as it says in 1st Corinthians 15:51-58.

17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

We which are alive and remain: Those who have believed in Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection. Jesus went up and a cloud received him the first time. He is coming back in a cloud for those who are in Christ at his return.

So shall we ever be with the Lord: This scripture tells us we will spend eternity with the Lord. Not in the air but in heavenly places. 2nd Corinthians 5:8.

18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

This should excite, comfort, and give hope for the future, and motivate us to reach others so that they too can join us and all other believers in the rapture and miss the tribulation period.

The saints in Thessalonica understood the teaching of the rapture, and Paul just elaborates more on the full extent of it by explaining that those who were waiting for it and died will not miss out on it because they died prior to it.

Chapter Five

The Day of the Lord

The first word of chapter five is the conjunction linking chapter four with chapter five. Chapter four taught us something that had never before been revealed to man because it had been kept secret from before the foundation of the world.

While chapter five’s opening verses simply reiterated words of the prophets that had been open knowledge for a very long time to any Jew that knew their scriptures.

The close of the previous chapter concerned the mystery program for the body of Christ, while the beginning of this chapter deals with Israel’s prophecy program which will run its course in the tribulation period.

1 But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.

The times and the seasons: The Thessalonians have no need for Paul to write unto them concerning times and seasons because of the mystery program, and the prophecy program.

Us in the mystery program have no signs to look for that need to occur before the Lord returns. He can return at any moment.

Israel, however, seeks after a sign and they will have plenty of signs during the tribulation period, then they are to look up after all of those signs appear for their redemption draweth nigh.

They are a part of the prophecy program. All of the prophecies that were not fulfilled at Christ's first coming will be fulfilled at his second.

All of the things that he said would happen in Matthew 24 will take place after the rapture, during the tribulation period, not prior to then.

2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.

The day of the Lord: This is the return of Christ after the tribulation period to judge the world and set up his kingdom on earth. It is more often referred to as the Lord’s day in scripture.

Jews knew the prophecies of the old testament and didn’t need Paul writing on those very familiar prophecies.

What they did need however was any new information concerning the mystery program that was revealed to the world through the apostle Paul.

A thief in the night: Christ taught that the day of the Lord would come as a thief in the night to Israel, who has to go through the time of Jacobs trouble (Israel’s) before entering into its kingdom.

It is all a part of the prophecy program for the nation of Israel, but the church is a part of the mystery program of which Christ did not speak one word about.

Paul revealed the dispensation of grace to us in his epistles. The twelve were still looking for Christ to set up his kingdom in early Acts.

When Paul tells them that the day of the Lord comes as a thief in the night he does not say in the twinkling of an eye because that statement deals with a time factor.

The thief in the night illustrations speak about the un-expectancy of the ones being assaulted by a thief. They did not know what hour he was coming.

3 For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

They shall say, Peace and safety: Here we see the second group of people mentioned by Paul as “they and them”.

These are those lost people who are alive at Christ's physical return (the day of the Lord) to set up his kingdom.

Travail upon a woman with child: No woman has ever had a child in the twinkling of an eye. They carried their child for nine months, and then for many hours they suffered travail before delivering their child.

There will be sudden destruction when the antichrist breaks his covenant with Israel at the mid-point of the tribulation period and there will be great tribulation. Jeremiah 30:4-9.

4 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. 5 Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.

That day: The tribulation period. God uses darkness, and night to represent non-believers as those that are clueless because of the darkness that they are in and the even darker time that is to come upon the earth following the rapture.

The children of the light: God also uses light and the day to represent the saved in this age. Believers today are in the light during the dispensation of grace.

Verse four is addressed to brethren, he is not talking about fellow Jews, and he not writing to his siblings living in Thessalonica, he is writing to the saints (believers) there.

Those of us who are in Christ (the children of the light) will not be overtaken because we have already made our house safe. Our house is Christ, and we are safe in him.

6 Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. 7 For they that sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.

The children of the light are not to be asleep spiritually speaking in this age of light. We are to be working to bring as many as possible out of the darkness and into the light.

A drunk usually gets that way in the night. They are unable to think properly because their mind has been weakened by an outside source that they have willingly injected into their body.

Those who walk in darkness today are spiritually drunk and are unable to think clearly because of the intoxication that they are under from the devil and from this world. 2nd Corinthians 4:3-4.

8 But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. 9 For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,

Us, who are of the day: The children of light.

Faith, Love and Hope: We are to have faith in God that he will one day call his ambassadors home before he pours out his wrath and declares war on a world that has rejected his Son.

For God hath not appointed us to wrath: The wrath of the tribulation period, and the wrath of Hell. We have that hope because we are the children of the light. God has not appointed the body of Christ to suffer the wrath of God.

10 Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.

Whether we wake or sleep: We will be raptured whether we are awake (alive) or asleep (dead). 1st Thessalonians 4:15-17.

We will live together with Christ in heaven, not on earth, if we believe today in the age of grace, but we are to let him live through us today in everything we say or do.

11 Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.

Anyone who believes they are going through the tribulation period cannot obey this scripture to comfort people by telling them they will have to endure the greatest tribulation the world has ever known.

They may be a child of the light as far as salvation goes but they are still walking around in darkness in this area.

We can bring comfort one another who believe with the hope of the rapture of the body of Christ. If you believe you are going through the tribulation period, then you are identifying yourself with Israel under the law.

You are not Israel under the law. Israel is not eve under the law today. Today there is no difference between Jew or Gentile today, but one new man. Ephesians 2:15 & Colossians 3:11.

Paul reminds us that we (both Jew and Gentile) are not under the law, but under grace. Gentiles were never under the law.

Millions of Gentile churches today are placing themselves under the law of the old testament and Satan is loving it because they do not know how to rightly divide the word of truth.

12 And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; 13 And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves.

To know them which labour among you: This means you are to invest yourselves in them, personally, spiritually, and financially.

If a pastor or husband is submitted properly to God, he will not have to intimidate those placed under him. He is not to have dominion over you, but to be a helper of your joy.

Those that are over you in the Lord are your equals, just as my wife and I are equal, but we each have different roles, just like an employer and an employee are both equal, but one is over the other at their place of employment.

14 Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men.

To be unruly means a believer that simply won’t place themselves under the authority of God’s word or those who are placed over them to help guide their life.

These are the very same people who constantly use a church vote to get their carnal way in the church.

Remember what happened when the twelve spies went into the promised land to spy it out. The ten carnal ones out voted the two spiritual ones.

The masses will almost always choose to vote for something more acceptable to the world than what God had intended.

Believers are to be patient towards all newer believers and allow them some grace to grow. They do not become a mature saint overnight. They need time and proper discipleship.

16 See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men.

Because someone wronged you does not give you the right to wrong them. To seek justice is another thing all together. Believers are to first practice this in the church with their brothers who may offend them.

If someone gossips about you, you are not to do the same to them. Not in the church, and not anywhere.

16 Rejoice evermore. 17 Pray without ceasing. 18 In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

How do you rejoice evermore? Simply by doing those things that brought you joy before while serving the Lord, which could be as simple as reading your bible again after not having read it in a while.

It is your responsibility to re-establish your joy that you once had in serving Christ by getting back to those things that brought you joy in the Lord. It is not just a song to be sung it is a command to be obeyed, and if so, it will restore your joy.

Pray without ceasing: This means to not give up on prayer. The prayer will get answered one way or another and by your consistent prayer life you are disciplining yourself to be able to handle whatever answer God chooses to give you.

19 Quench not the Spirit. 20 Despise not prophesyings. 21 Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

Quench not the Spirit: Don’t give the devil a foothold in your life through sin. We quench the Spirit when we give place to the flesh.

You cannot quench electricity or gravity which are forces by sinning. They are impersonal forces incapable of caring what you do.

The holy Spirit of God is not a force, but rather a member of the Godhead, and God's Spirit can be quenched when we resist his leading to abstain from sin.

Despise not prophesyings: Much can be said about the gift of prophecy that was prevalent when Paul wrote Thessalonians, but that gift ceased according to Paul by the end of his Acts ministry when Israel was blinded in part.

It was Israel that required a sign, but when they were in blindness no sign could help them anymore. If someone did come along with a prophecy, they were first to be proven.

The prophecies were not to be accepted by total strangers that pop in one week and are gone the next. If a prophecy is sure, they were to hold on to it.

Those prophecies that prophesied that there would be great dearth throughout the whole earth in the book of Acts, were real prophets, and it happened just as it was prophesied.

22 Abstain from all appearance of evil. 23 And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Spirit and soul and body: Most people will say body, soul and spirit which is the opposite way that God's word says it. We are a soul, and we have a body.

We focus so much on the body today, and so little on the spirit that we are physical Samson’s, and spiritual Lots. Turn that around by getting on our knees more often, and in your bibles more often.

24 Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.

There has never been a question as to God’s faithfulness. He has called us into the light, and he will preserve our whole spirit, soul, and body blameless until the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

25 Brethren, pray for us. 26 Greet all the brethren with an holy kiss.

We can no longer pray for the apostle Paul and his co-laborers in the gospel of the grace of God, but we can pray for the messengers today that are proclaiming it.

An holy kiss: Kissing another believer today that is not accustomed to such an action would make many very uncomfortable, but such was not the case in many Middle Eastern countries in Paul’s day.

27 I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren.

God expects all believers to read every epistle he has written us so that we may not walk in darkness. There are too many children of the light today walking around in darkness because they have failed to read the whole message God has given us.

They will not have to go through the time of God’s wrath because of it, but they could operate more effectively in this age if they walked in more light, which can only be found in God’s word.

28 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

There are no quotations whatsoever from the old testament in either of Paul's epistles to the Thessalonians. The Thessalonian Jews did not search the scriptures daily to see if the things Paul was proclaiming were true.

They simply rejected them based on their allegiance to their Jewish traditions where the teachings of men took precedence over the word of God.

While these two epistles have no old testament quotes in them that does not mean Paul did not quote the old testament to them. We know that he reasoned with them from those scriptures for three weeks in the beginning. Acts 17:2.

Another very unique thing that we won't find in this epistle is the absence of any words of reproof, or correction for any problems they may be having.

I Thessalonians Tests

1.5 Credit Hours

To submit your test for grading simply copy and paste the questions and your answers in bold font into the body of an email and send it to: tests@dofgbi.org

Introduction Test

1. What cities are on either side of Thessalonica?

2. Where would Paul find Jews assembled in each city of Macedonia?

3. What scriptures was Paul using to reason out of?

4. What did Paul allege concerning who Jesus was and what he did?

5. Were there more Jews saved than Gentiles in Thessalonica?

6. Why did the unbelieving Jews assault Jason's house?

7. What did the unbelieving Jews claim Paul and his friends had done?

8. What troubled the leaders concerning Paul's message and Caesar?

9. What happened to Paul and Silas after Jason was arrested?

10. Which of Paul's epistles were written first?

Chapter One Test

1. Why did Paul not have to mention that he was an apostle in this epistle?

2. What is meant by grace and peace being from God?

3. What 3 attributes does Paul mentions seeing concerning the Thessalonians?

4. What 3 things were they elected to do?

5. What did Paul mean by "our gospel"?

6. What accompanied the preaching of the word?

7. How are we to follow Paul?

8. What did the Thessalonians become to believers in Macedonia and Achaia?

9. What happened to the word of the Lord with the Thessalonians?

10. What does it mean to be delivered from the wrath to come?

Chapter Two Test

1. What happened to Paul in Philippi?

2. Who opposed Paul's preaching in Thessalonica?

3. Which gospel was put in the apostle Paul's trust?

4. What did Ephesians 3:1 & 2 call that message that Paul preached?

5. How was the Thessalonian church similiar to the church in Jerusalem?

6. What were the Jews forbidding Paul to do?

7. How did Paul describe the Jews punishment from God?

8. Who prevented Paul from visiting the Thessalonians?

9. What was Paul's crown of rejoicing?

Chapter Three Test

1. Who did Paul send to Thessalonica to establish them in the faith?

2. What was Paul appointed to suffer?

3. What was Paul's concern regarding the Thessalonians and his labour there?

4. What is another reason that Paul lists for wanting to see the Thessalonians?

Chapter Four Test

1. Name 5 things that Paul says regarding a Christian's walk in verses 1-12:

2. What does Paul mean when he uses the word "asleep" in verse 13?

3. What must a person believe to be taken up in the rapture?

4. What 2 noises will be heard by his saints at the rapture?

5. Who will meet us and Jesus in the air on that day?

6. What should this doctrine provide to those who are not ignorant of it?

Chapter Five Test

1. Why would Paul be wasting time writing about the time of Christ's return?

2. When is verse three to take place? At the rapture, after it, or before it?

3. Will the day of the Lord overtake (surprise) believers?

4. How did God not appoint us to the wrath of the tribulation period?

5. How should people esteem those that are over them in the Lord?

6. What happened to the gift of prophecy according to Paul in 1 Cor 13:8-10?

7. How do you "prove all things"?

Second Thessalonians

Chapter One

Revealed from Heaven

1 Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: 2 Grace unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul: This is always the first word you see in an epistle written by the apostle Paul. Hebrews cannot be written by Paul according to Hebrews 2:3.

You will understand what that means when you learn how to rightly divide the word of truth. 2nd Timothy 2:15.

Silvanus: He served with Paul in Greece. 2nd Corinthians 1:19.

Timotheus: Timothy.

Grace: God is dispensing grace to us in this present dispensation, not the law that was dispensed to Israel by Moses at Mt. Sinai.

Peace: God is at peace with us today because of what his Son did for us on the cross. Grace and peace are from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, not Paul.

This is not a greeting to the Philippians, but a statement of what we have in Christ today.

*Colossians 1:20 And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.*

3 We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth;

Meet: Fit.

4 So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure: 5 *Which is* a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer:

The churches of God: Other grace assembly’s that Paul had started.

A manifest token: The word manifest means to make known, and a token is a sign. When the righteous suffer persecution, they make known the righteous judgment of God.

The kingdom of God: This is not the kingdom of heaven spoken of in Matthew’s gospel. That is the literal, physical, visible earthly kingdom that will come upon the earth immediately following the tribulation period

The kingdom of God is the all-encompassing kingdom of God that the kingdom of heaven is just a small part of.

6 Seeing *it is* a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; 7 And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, 8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:

When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven: We will rest with Paul and the Thessalonian believers, as the world is experiencing God’s wrath during the tribulation period.

The context here, however, is at Christ’s return from heaven with his mighty angels to set up his kingdom, not at the rapture.

In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God: God is at peace with us (the body of Christ today) because of Christ’s work for us on the cross.

When this dispensation ends at the rapture however, he will be taking vengeance on them that know not God during the time of Jacob’s trouble. Isaiah 63: 4 & Jeremiah 46:10.

*Isaiah 61:2 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn;*

And that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: This is speaking about the gospel of the kingdom, which is the same gospel that Jesus and the twelve preached. Matthew 4:17-23.

It will be preached again during the tribulation period. Matthew 24:14. This was not the gospel that Paul preached.

9 Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;

Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord: The unbeliever will never be allowed to stand in God’s presence again, and their access to God will be eternally destroyed.

We, however, shall enjoy the eternal presence of the Lord, and the glory of his power in heavenly places.

*Revelation 20:10 And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.*

10 When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.

When he shall come to be gloried in his saints: The long-awaited exiled Saviour will then be recognized by all for what he has done for them.

11 Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of *this* calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of *his* goodness, and the work of faith with power:

This calling: Believers are called to suffer for his name’s sake. What did the apostles say after their arrest in Jerusalem?

*Acts 5:41 And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name.*

Fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness: God allows some to suffer, who will do so with the right heart of service and love, and not for any selfish ambitions.

Paul knew this better than anyone since him unto this day. Notice his words to the Philippians:

*Philippians 3:10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;*

Any suffering we endure is but a light affliction that serves to help us know Christ better by having a common experience with him.

The work of faith: The work of establishing a church in their area to edify believers and to see the lost saved. 1st Thessalonians 1:3.

12 That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you: The reason for allowing some of us to go through suffering is so that we will bring glory to God, and bring others to God when they see us go through our trials, still praising God.

Chapter Two

The Day of Christ

1 Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and *by* our gathering together unto him, 2 That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.

We beseech you: Paul and his fellowlabourers were begging the Thessalonians to not be troubled in any way that the rapture had already occurred.

The coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: He descends from heaven into the clouds:

*1st Thessalonians 4:17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.*

Our gathering together unto him: Paul speaks about the rapture of the body of Christ when we meet him in the clouds. Then he uses that teaching which was revealed to him to teach about the return of Christ.

Shaken in mind: People just thought they were living in the tribulation period because of their persecution.

By spirit: An angel.

By word: People were saying they were living in the tribulation period.

By letter as from us: People had even forged Paul’s name on letters teaching that they were living in the tribulation period at that time.

The day of Christ is at hand: The return of Christ to the earth after the seven-year tribulation period.

This is similar to what John the Baptist began preaching when he began his ministry, and what Jesus preached to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand). Matthew 3:1-2 & 4:17-23.

3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for *that day shall not come,* except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;

By any means: The ways (means) mentioned in verse 2 above.

That day: Is the day of Christ is addressed in verse 2 above concerning his return to set up his kingdom.

A falling away: The word that is translated falling away is the Greek word apostasia, which is where we get our English word apostasy.

This word is found only twice in the Greek; the other occurrence is found in the book of Acts, and it is translated as the English word meaning forsake. It simply means to depart from something in the past. Acts 21:21.

Apostasia is the derived from its root word aphisteemi (to depart), a falling away means a falling away, not a catching up.

When the rapture occurs however, there will be a dramatic falling away from the truth of scripture. There already is a large-scale departure from the truth today.

That man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition: A term used to identify the antichrist, this is only used of one other person in scripture, Judas Iscariot.

*John 17:12 those that Thou gavest Me have I kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the Scripture might be fulfilled.*

Judas is also called a devil by Jesus.

*John 6:70 Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?*

It is for this reason that some think that Satan will re-occupy Judas’ body during the tribulation period and become the antichrist. This is pure speculation.

4 Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

The anti-Christ will stop Israel’s sacrifices, and oblations at the midpoint of the tribulation period and demand them to worship him as God and Christ, thus making the temple of God desolate:

*Daniel 9:26 And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. 27 And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.*

*Daniel 11:31 And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate.*

This is speaking about the image of the beast that the anti-Christ demands all to bow down and worship.

*Daniel 12:11 And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up,*

5 Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? 6 And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time.

When I was yet with you: When Paul first came to Thessalonica in Acts 17:1-10 on his second missionary journey.

What withholdeth: Something, or someone, is withholding, or hindering the antichrist (he) from being revealed to the world. I believe it is the holy Spirit residing in the members of the body of Christ.

That he might be revealed in his time: This is speaking about the anti-christ during the tribulation period.

7 For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.

The mystery of iniquity doth already now work: Is the opposite of the mystery of godliness found in 1st Timothy 3:16.

The mystery of godliness involves the body of Christ, while the mystery of iniquity involves Satan’s spirit that Paul says in Ephesians is working now also in the children of disobedience:

*Ephesians 2:2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:*

It is Satan’s mystery of iniquity program that he uses to deceive people into thinking Jesus is not who the bible says he is.

The mystery of iniquity is to deceive the masses of religious people to oppose God’s mystery program that he dispensed to the Apostle Paul to dispense to us today.

He who now letteth will let: The word “let” is an old English word meaning to hinder.

The holy Spirit will hinder the man of sin from revealing himself to the world until it is time for that to happen. We cannot know who he is today. Only those alive in the tribulation period will be able to determine who he is.

The one event that will lead up to the tribulation period is the rapture in which God calls all his ambassadors’ home with him before declaring war on this Christ rejecting world.

The actual peace treaty that Israel signs will usher in the seven-year tribulation period and the reign of the antichrist, not the rapture.

There is an undetermined amount of time between the rapture and the beginning of the tribulation period. Probably a year, but it could be more or less.

When we (the body of Christ) are out of here, the holy Spirit that resides in every believer will depart with us. The body of Christ must be removed before the anti-Christ can be revealed.

8 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:

And then shall that Wicked be revealed: The anti-Christ will not be revealed to the lost, but to those that put their trust in the Messiah of Israel during those days.

The unbelievers will willfully believe a lie, and they will be damned for eternity for it. Verse 11 below.

Notice the word Wicked is capitalized in the text denoting a title. 1st John 3:12 & 5:18.

9 Even him*,* whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, 10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

Him, whose coming is after the working of Satan: This is referring to the anti-Christ. Satan’s work is to be God’s adversary in everything he is doing. That is even one of his titles. 1st Peter 5:8.

The love of the truth: Those who didn’t believe (receive) the love of the truth (the gospel) were damned! To reject the truth of Jesus dying for them and rising again is to reject God’s love.

11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: 12 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

If the tribulation saints do not receive the love of the truth, then they will receive strong delusion from God, and they will believe a lie (Satan’s lie).

They will have their chance early on and they should take it when it is offered to them, because they will not get another chance after they have taken the mark of the beast.

13 But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:

But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you: Paul, here, jumps back to the age of grace (church Age) and talks to the Thessalonians as those who will not experience the strong delusion from God because they did believe God’s truth.

God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation: Salvation can mean different things at different times in the scriptures, for example, when Moses said, “Stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD.” Exodus 14:13.

He delivered the Israelites from Pharaoh’s army, but they didn’t get saved on that day.

The Thessalonians did get saved when they believed the truth Paul shared with them concerning the gospel, and that belief of the truth delivered them, or saved them from the wrath to come during the tribulation period.

They will be saved from experiencing God’s wrath because they received the love of the truth by belief of the truth (the gospel). See the note on verse 10 above.

*1st Thessalonians 5:9 For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,*

God has appointed all who believe the gospel to obtain salvation. 1st Corinthians 15:1-4.

14 Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

He called you by our gospel: This is a reference to the gospel that Paul delivered unto the Thessalonians back then and us today.

How that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures. 1st Corinthians 15:1-4.

To the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ: This is further defined for us in Paul’s second epistle to the Corinthians:

*2nd Corinthians 3:18 But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.*

16 Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.

Stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught: These were new doctrinal teachings given to the churches when Paul established them.

It was also those things that which were found in his epistles that he had delivered unto them, which were the inspired word of God for the churches to stand fast in.

These were the commandments mentioned in 1st Thessalonians 4:2. All churches today should have a strong tradition of teaching the mystery that was delivered unto the apostle Paul for us.

16 Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given *us*everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, 17 Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.

Everlasting consolation: All that encompasses salvation.

And good hope: Believing in the blessed hope will produce in a believer good hope that can sustain them when they think they cannot go on.

Chapter Three

The word of the Lord

1 Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it iswith you:

Pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course: Not restricted.

Our prayers change things, so we are to pray like the Thessalonians were so that the word of the Lord may have free course to reach individuals that need to hear it. Are you praying for people to see the mystery.

And be glorified: In new believers as it is with the Thessalonians.

2 And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all *men* have not faith.

Verse one does not end with a period, it ends with a semi-colon connecting it to verse two.

That we may be delivered: Our prayers can also deliver others from unreasonable and wicked men. Who are you praying for?

3 But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep *you* from evil.

Stablish you: Stablish and establish are similar words but they have slightly different meanings. To stablish us in grace teachings, just as he stablished his law covenant with the children of Israel.

And keep you from evil: What greater evil can the Lord keep us from than the anti-Christ himself and the tribulation period? The Lord is faithful to keep his word that we are not appointed unto wrath. 1st Thessalonians 5:9.

4 And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command you. 5 And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.

The things which we command you: Our apostle has given us in the body of Christ commands to accomplish his will in this dispensation.

Into the love of God: The Lord through his word and our time in it will direct our hearts towards him.

Into the patient waiting for Christ: The head of the church (Jesus) will return for us, the Church which is his body:

*Colossians 1:18 And he is the head of the body, the church:*

6 Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us. 7 For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you;

Disorderly: God, commands us to withdraw ourselves from those who do not walk disorderly (not in the traditions which Paul gave to us).

The tradition: The doctrinal things that were given to us from Paul’s group we are to do, and they are to become traditions in our service to God. They are not optional.

8 Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you: 9 Not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us.

Not because we have not power: Paul had the right to expect to be taken care of physically (i.e., food, clothing, housing etc..,) by those whom he ministered to spiritually.

Paul wanted these new believers not to think Paul was in it for the money. As they matured Paul told the congregations that they should communicate with his expenses. 1st Corinthians 9:6-14.

10 For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat. 11 For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies. 12 Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread. 13 But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing.

Busybodies: Meddlesome in others affairs. We are not under the kingdom program; we are to work for our own bread (food) and not to expect handouts.

We are being disorderly in this present dispensation if we expect God, or others to do for us what we should be doing for ourselves.

14 And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. 15 Yet count *him* not as an enemy, but admonish *him* as a brother.

Note that man, and have no company with him: Paul informs these believers that Christians are expected to work and provide their own bread.

If they do not, then that assembly has a responsibility to admonish that brother to find a job, so that he too can continue in well doing with the rest of the saints.

16 Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord *be* with you all. 17 The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle: so I write. 18 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all. Amen. The second epistle to the Thessalonians was written from Athens.

The Lord of peace: Jesus will institute of millennium of peace in the kingdom, followed by an eternity of peace after that.

The salutation of Paul: It was written with his own hand as a token (proof) in every epistle that he writes, to prove that he wrote that epistle.

The salutation of Paul in his epistle was written by Paul himself in each of his epistles, and it would stand out from the rest of the epistle written by his penman, who wrote his words for him.

Some say the salutation is the word Paul at the beginning of each of his epistles, while others believe it is his closing remarks in each of his epistles.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen: Some say verse 18 is the token that Paul writes in every epistle, but that would also mean that Paul wrote Revelation. Revelation 22:21. John wrote Revelation, not Paul.

Nowhere in this epistle are the Thessalonians told they will have to endure to the end of the tribulation period to be saved. There are no words of instruction to prepare them for such a time because it is understood by them that they will not be here at that time.

The End

To submit your test for grading simply copy and paste the questions and your answers in bold font into the body of an email and send it to: tests@dofgbi.org

II Thessalonians Tests 0.75 Credit hours

Chapter One Test

1. What are the 2 main subjects that Paul deals with in 1st and 2nd Thessalonians?

2. Why did Paul glory to other churches about those in Thessalonica?

3. What did Paul call the suffering of the Thessalonians in verse 5?

4. What does God recompense to those that trouble his servants?

5. Do verses 7 & 8 have to do with the rapture or the revealing of Christ?

6. What is one of the punishments for the unbeliever?

7. How can Christ be glorified by our suffering?

Chapter Two Test

1. Is the day of Christ the same thing as the rapture?

2. What is meant by a falling away?

3. Who is the son of perdition?

4. What will the son of perdition do in the temple?

5. What is currently restraining the son of perdition?

6. What is the mystery of iniquity?

7. Why do the lost not get saved during those days?

8. What will God send to these Christ rejectors during the tribulation period?

9. Are there traditions in the scriptures that we should keep? If so name one:

Chapter Three Test

1. What things did Paul ask the Thessalonians to pray for?

2. What does Paul command the Thessalonians to do?

3. Did Paul require the Thessalonians to support him financially?

4. What was Paul's command for those who would not work?

5. What is the token in every epistle of Paul's that he writes with his own hand?