

2 Thessalonians

Salutation

1:1 From Paul¹ and Silvanus and Timothy, to the church of the Thessalonians² in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. **1:2** Grace and peace to you³ from God the⁴ Father and the Lord Jesus Christ!

Thanksgiving

1:3 We ought to thank God always for you, brothers and sisters,⁵ and rightly so,⁶ because your faith flourishes more and more and the love of each one of you all for one another is ever greater. **1:4** As a result we ourselves boast about you in the churches of God for your perseverance and faith in all the persecutions and afflictions you are enduring.

Encouragement in Persecution

1:5 This is evidence of God's righteous judgment, to make you worthy⁷ of the kingdom of God, for which in fact you are suffering. **1:6** For it is right⁸ for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you, **1:7** and to you who are being afflicted to give rest together with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed⁹ from heaven with his mighty angels.¹⁰ **1:8** *With flaming fire he will*

*mete out*¹¹ punishment on those who do not know God¹² and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. **1:9** They¹³ will undergo the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his strength,¹⁴ **1:10** when he comes to be glorified among his saints and admired¹⁵ on that day among all who have believed – and you did in fact believe our testimony.¹⁶ **1:11** And in this regard we pray for you always, that our God will make you worthy of his calling¹⁷ and fulfill by his power your every desire for goodness and every work of faith, **1:12** that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to¹⁸ the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Day of the Lord

2:1 Now regarding the arrival¹⁹ of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered to be with him,²⁰ we ask you, brothers and sisters,²¹ **2:2** not to be easily²² shaken from your composure or disturbed by any kind of spirit or message or letter allegedly from us,²³ to the effect that the day of the Lord is already here. **2:3** Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not arrive until the rebellion comes²⁴ and the man of

¹ **tn** Grk "Paul." The word "from" is not in the Greek text, but has been supplied to indicate the sender of the letter.

² **map** For the location of Thessalonica see JP1-C1; JP2-C1; JP3-C1; JP4-C1.

³ **tn** Grk "Grace to you and peace."

⁴ **tc** † Most witnesses (N A F G I 0278 M lat sy sa) have ἡμῶν (*hēmōn*) after πατρός (*patros*), reading "God our Father," in apparent emulation of Paul's almost universal style. The omission of the pronoun (the reading of B D P 0111^{vid} 33 1739 1881 pc) seems to be the original wording of this salutation. As well, the intrinsic evidence also supports the shorter reading: If 2 Thessalonians is authentic, it was one of Paul's earliest letters, and, if so, his stereotyped salutation was still in embryonic form (see discussion at 1 Thess 1:1). NA²⁷ places the word in brackets, indicating some doubts as to its authenticity.

⁵ **tn** Grk "brothers," but the Greek word may be used for "brothers and sisters" or "fellow Christians" as here (cf. BDAG 18 s.v. ἀδελφός 1, where considerable nonbiblical evidence for the plural ἀδελφοί [*adelphoi*] meaning "brothers and sisters" is cited).

⁶ **tn** Grk "as is worthy."

⁷ **tn** Grk "so that you may be made worthy." The passive infinitive καταξιωθῆναι (*kataxiōthēnai*) has been translated as an active construction in English for stylistic reasons.

⁸ **tn** Grk "if in fact/since," as a continuation of the preceding.

⁹ **tn** Grk "at the revelation of the Lord Jesus."

¹⁰ **tn** Grk "angels of power," translated as an attributive genitive.

¹¹ **tn** Grk "meting out," as a description of Jesus Christ in v. 7. Because of the length and complexity of the Greek sentence, a new sentence was started at the beginning of v. 8 in the translation.

¹² **sn** An allusion to Jer 10:25, possibly also to Ps 79:6 and Isa 66:15.

¹³ **tn** Grk "who," describing the people mentioned in v. 8. A new sentence was started here in the translation by replacing the relative pronoun with a personal pronoun.

¹⁴ **tn** Or "power," or "might." The construction can also be translated as an attributed genitive: "from his glorious strength" (cf. TEV "glorious might"; CEV "glorious strength"; NLT "glorious power").

sn An allusion to Isa 2:10, 19, 21.

¹⁵ **tn** Or "marveled at."

¹⁶ **tn** Grk "because our testimony to you was believed."

¹⁷ **tn** Or "your calling."

¹⁸ **tn** Or "by means of."

¹⁹ **tn** Or perhaps "return" (cf. CEV).

²⁰ **tn** Grk "our gathering with him."

²¹ **tn** Grk "brothers." See note on the phrase "brothers and sisters" in 1:3.

²² **tn** Or "quickly, soon."

²³ **tn** Grk "as through us."

²⁴ **tn** Grk "for unless the rebellion comes first." The clause about "the day" is understood from v. 2.

2:15 Therefore, brothers and sisters,¹ stand firm and hold on to the traditions that we taught you, whether by speech or by letter.² 2:16 Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by grace gave us eternal comfort and good hope, 2:17 encourage your hearts and strengthen you³ in every good thing you do or say.⁴

Request for Prayer

3:1 Finally, pray for us, brothers and sisters,⁵ that the Lord's message⁶ may spread quickly and be honored⁷ as in fact it was among you, 3:2 and that we may be delivered from perverse and evil people. For not all have faith. 3:3 But the Lord is faithful, and he⁸ will strengthen you and protect you from the evil one. 3:4 And we are confident about you in the Lord that you are both doing – and will do – what we are commanding. 3:5 Now may the Lord direct your hearts toward the love of God⁹ and the endurance of Christ.¹⁰

Response to the Undisciplined

3:6 But we command you, brothers and sisters,¹¹ in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to keep away from any brother who lives an undisciplined¹² life¹³ and not according to the tradition they¹⁴ received from us. 3:7 For you know yourselves how you must imitate us, because we did not behave without discipline¹⁵ among you, 3:8 and we did not eat anyone's food without paying.¹⁶ Instead, in toil and drudgery we worked¹⁷ night and day in order not to burden any of you. 3:9 It was not because we do not have that right, but to give ourselves as an example for you to imitate.¹⁸ 3:10 For even when we were with you, we used to give you this command: "If anyone is not willing to work, neither should he eat." 3:11 For we hear that some among you are living an undisciplined life,¹⁹ not doing their own work but meddling in the work of others.²⁰ 3:12 Now such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to work quietly and so provide their own food to eat.²¹ 3:13 But you, brothers and sisters,²² do not grow weary in doing what is

¹ tn Grk "brothers." See note on the phrase "brothers and sisters" in 1:3.

² tn Grk "that you were taught whether by word or by letter of ours."

³ tn Grk simply "strengthen," with the object understood from the preceding.

⁴ tn Grk "every good work and word."

⁵ tn Grk "brothers." See note on the phrase "brothers and sisters" in 1:3.

⁶ tn Or "the word of the Lord."

sn "The word of the Lord" is a technical expression in OT literature, often referring to a divine prophetic utterance (e.g., Gen 15:1, Isa 1:10, Jonah 1:1). In the NT it occurs 15 times: 3 times as ῥῆμα τοῦ κυρίου (*rhēma tou kuriou*; Luke 22:61, Acts 11:16, 1 Pet 1:25) and 12 times as λόγος τοῦ κυρίου (*logos tou kuriou*; here and in Acts 8:25; 13:44, 48, 49; 15:35, 36; 16:32; 19:10, 20; 1 Thess 1:8, 4:15). As in the OT, this phrase focuses on the prophetic nature and divine origin of what has been said. Here the phrase has been translated "the Lord's message" because of the focus upon the spread of the gospel evident in the passage.

⁷ tn Grk "may run and be glorified."

⁸ tn Grk "who."

⁹ tn The genitive in the phrase τὴν ἀγάπην τοῦ θεοῦ (*tēn agapēn tou theou*, "the love of God") could be translated as either a subjective genitive ("God's love") or an objective genitive ("your love for God"). Either is grammatically possible. This is possibly an instance of a plenary genitive (see ExSyn 119-21; M. Zerwick, *Biblical Greek*, §§36-39). If so, the emphasis would be on believers being directed toward the love God gives which in turn produces increased love in them for him.

¹⁰ tn The genitive in the phrase τὴν ὑπομονὴν τοῦ Χριστοῦ (*tēn hypomonēn tou Christou*, "the endurance of Christ") could be translated as either a subjective genitive ("Christ's endurance") or an objective genitive ("endurance for Christ"). Either is grammatically possible. This is possibly an instance of a plenary genitive (see ExSyn 119-21; M. Zerwick, *Biblical Greek*, §§36-39). If so, the emphasis would be on believers being directed toward the endurance Christ showed which in turn produces endurance in them for him.

¹¹ tn Grk "brothers." See note on the phrase "brothers and sisters" in 1:3.

¹² tn Or "unruly, out of line." The particular violation Paul has in mind is idleness (as described in vv. 8-11), so this could be translated to reflect that.

¹³ tn Grk "walking in an undisciplined way" ("walking" is a common NT idiom for one's way of life or conduct).

¹⁴ tc The reading "you received" (παρέλαβετε, *parelabete*) is found predominately in Western witnesses (F G 1505 2464 pc), although the support of B and the Sahidic version strengthens the reading considerably. The reading "they received" is found in two different forms: παρέλαβσαν (*parelabosan*; in N* A [D*] 0278 33 pc) and παρέλαβον (*parelabon*; in N² D² Ψ 1739 1881 ℣). (παρέλαβον is evidently a correction of παρέλαβσαν to the more common spelling for the third person aorist form). The external evidence is divided fairly evenly, with παρέλαβετε and παρέλαβσαν each having adequate support. Internal evidence leans toward "they received": Given the second person reading, there is little reason why scribes would intentionally change it to a third person plural, and especially an archaic form at that. There is ample reason, however, for scribes to change the third person form to the second person form given that in the prior context παράδοσις (*paradosis*, "tradition") is used with a relative clause (as here) with a second person verb (see 2:15). The third person form should be regarded as original.

¹⁵ tn This is the verbal form of the words occurring in vv. 6 and 11, meaning "to act out of line, in an unruly way."

¹⁶ tn Grk "we did not eat bread freely from anyone."

¹⁷ tn Grk "but working," as a continuation of the previous sentence. Because of the length and complexity of the Greek sentence, a new sentence was started with the word "Instead" in the translation.

¹⁸ tn Grk "an example for you to imitate us."

¹⁹ tn Grk "walking in an undisciplined way" ("walking" is a common NT idiom for one's way of life or conduct).

²⁰ tn There is a play on words in the Greek: "working at nothing, but working around," "not keeping busy but being busybodies."

²¹ tn Grk "that by working quietly they may eat their own bread."

²² tn Grk "brothers." See note on the phrase "brothers and sisters" in 1:3.

right. **3:14** But if anyone does not obey our message through this letter, take note of him and do not associate closely with him, so that he may be ashamed. **3:15** Yet do not regard him as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.¹

Conclusion

3:16 Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times and in every way. The Lord be with you all. **3:17** I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand, which is how I write in every letter.² **3:18** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.³

¹ **tn** That is, as a fellow believer.

² **tn** *Grk* "The greeting in my hand, Paul, which is a sign in every letter, thus I write."

sn Up to 3:17 the letter was dictated by Paul but written down by a secretary or amanuensis. But Paul took up the pen and wrote vv. 17-18 personally to authenticate that it was his (*how I write in every letter*). See similar indications in 1 Cor 16:21; Gal 6:11; and Col 4:18.

³ **tc** Most witnesses, including some early and important ones (**N**² A D F G **P** **ℓ**^{at sy}), conclude this letter with **ἀμήν** (*amēn*, "amen"). Such a conclusion is routinely added by scribes to NT books because a few of these books originally had such an ending (cf. Rom 16:27; Gal 6:18; Jude 25). A majority of Greek witnesses have the concluding **ἀμήν** in every NT book except Acts, James, and 3 John (and even in these books, **ἀμήν** is found in some witnesses). It is thus a predictable variant. Further, the witnesses for the omission are among the best MSS (**N*** B 0278 6 33 1739 1881* 2464 sa), giving sufficient base to prefer the shorter reading.