

Notes on the Greek New Testament Day 286 – October 13th – 2 Thessalonians 1:1-12

Introduction to 2 Thessalonians

Paul's second letter to the Thessalonians seems to have been written shortly after the first (see introduction to 1 Thessalonians).

It would seem that Paul's first letter was mistakenly understood by some to imply that the second coming of Christ had already occurred. Hence Paul writes to correct this misunderstanding. Most of the letter is taken up with instruction concerning the Second Coming and with how to deal with those who remain idle.

Works frequently referenced in these notes on Thessalonians

John Eadie *A Commentary on the Greek Text of the Epistles of Paul to the Thessalonians*, MacMillan, London, 1877

Leon Morris *The First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1991

Verse 1

Παῦλος καὶ Σιλουανὸς καὶ Τιμόθεος τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ Θεσσαλονικέων ἐν θεῷ πατρὶ ἡμῶν καὶ κυρίῳ Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ·

The opening address is practically identical with that of 1 Thessalonians.

ἐκκλησια, ας f congregation, church
πατηρ, πατρος m father

Verse 2

χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.

χαρις, ιτος see 1 Thess 5:28
εἰρηνη, ης see 1 Thess 5:23

On the close conjunction of the Father and the Lord Jesus as the source of grace and peace Wilson comments, "That such a construction could be used without comment not only implies the writer's belief in the deity of Christ, but also takes the reader's acknowledgment of it for granted."

Verse 3

Εὐχαριστεῖν ὀφείλομεν τῷ θεῷ πάντοτε περὶ ὑμῶν, ἀδελφοί, καθὼς ἄξιόν ἐστιν, ὅτι ὑπεραυξάνει ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν καὶ πλεονάζει ἡ ἀγάπη ἐνὸς ἐκάστου πάντων ὑμῶν εἰς ἀλλήλους,

Verses 3-10 are one sentence in the Greek – they are the complex expression of a single thought.

εὐχαριστεω thank, give thanks
ὀφειλω owe, ought, be bound or obligated
παντοτε always
ἀξιος, α, ον worthy, fitting

ὑπεραυξανω grow abundantly

Implies vigorous growth.

πλεοναζω intrans increase, grow

Compare 1 Thess 3:10 & 12. Paul's concerns had been answered.

ἐκαστος, η, ον each, every
ἀλλήλων, ος, ους see 1 Thess 5:15

Verse 4

ὥστε αὐτοὺς ἡμᾶς ἐν ὑμῖν ἐγκαυχᾶσθαι ἐν ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις τοῦ θεοῦ ὑπὲρ τῆς ὑπομονῆς ὑμῶν καὶ πίστεως ἐν πᾶσιν τοῖς διωγμοῖς ὑμῶν καὶ ταῖς θλίψεσιν αἷς ἀνέχεσθε,

ὥστε so that, with the result that
ἐγκαυχᾶσθαι Verb, pres midd/pass dep infin
ἐγκαυχαομαι boast
ὑπομονη, ης f patience, endurance

Cf. 1 Thess 1:3.

διωγμος, ου m persecution
θλιψις, εως f trouble, suffering
ἀνεχομαι endure, be patient with

The present tense here highlights the continuing nature of the persecution.

Verse 5

ἐνδειγμα τῆς δικαίας κρίσεως τοῦ θεοῦ, εἰς τὸ καταξιοθῆναι ὑμᾶς τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ θεοῦ, ὑπὲρ ἧς καὶ πάσχετε,

ἐνδειγμα, τος n evidence, proof

Morris argues that it is not their suffering of persecution but rather their faith in the face of such persecution which is the demonstration of the righteous judgment of God by which they will attain to eternal life – though suffering is also a means by which God prepares his people for glory.

It may, however, be better to understand the righteous judgment of God as that judgment by which he accounts these Thessalonians to be among his people – worthy of his kingdom not by some act of theirs (worthiness) but by God's own judicial act. The fact that they are included among the children of God is made evident also in that they are facing suffering for the sake of the kingdom. The judgment of God by which they are accounted his people will also be manifest in the punishment of those who persecute them (cf. v6f, also Phil 1:28).

δικαιος, α, ον righteous, just
 κρισις, εως f judgement, act of judgement
 καταξιωθῆναι Verb, aor pass infin καταξιωω
 count worthy, make worthy
 πασχω suffer, experience

Verse 6

εἴπερ δίκαιον παρὰ θεῶ ἀνταποδοῦναι τοῖς θλιβουσιν ὑμᾶς θλίψιν

εἴπερ since, if it is true that, seeing that
 παρα preposition with dat with, in the presence of

ἀνταποδοῦναι Verb, aor act infin
 ἀνταποδίδωμι repay, return
 θλίβουσιν Verb, pres act ptc, m & n dat pl
 θλιβω press hard, crush
 θλιψις, εως f trouble, suffering

Verse 7

καὶ ὑμῖν τοῖς θλιβομένοις ἄνεσιν μεθ' ἡμῶν ἐν τῇ ἀποκαλύψει τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ μετ' ἀγγέλων δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ

ἀνεσις, εως f relief
 ἀποκαλυψις, εως f revelation

Emphasises that the Lord is currently hidden from the world but that he will, on that day, be revealed in glory.

ἀγγέλων δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ "Possibly the expression implies that they are to be the agents of the divine will. But the main idea is that they are angels that belong to his power." Morris

Verse 8

ἐν φλογὶ πυρός, διδόντος ἐκδίκησιν τοῖς μὴ εἰδόσι θεὸν καὶ τοῖς μὴ ὑπακούουσιν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ,

πυρ, ος n fire
 φλοξ, φλογος f flame

The phrase 'in flaming fire' probably belongs with the words that precede it, i.e. v.7, rather than with v.8. It is part of the picture of the Lord's glory cf. Ex 3:2; Is 66:15; Rev 1:13,14.

δίδωμι give
 ἐκδικησις, εως f retribution, rendering of justice, punishment

Cf. Rom 12:19 where Dt 32:35 is quoted but applied to Christ. "It is yet another example of the ease with which the church, from the very first, assigned to Christ the functions that the Old Testament reserved for Yahweh." Morris

εἶδοδιν ptc οἶδα (verb perf in form but with present meaning) know, understand
 ὑπακούω obey, be subject to
 εὐαγγελιον, ου n good news, gospel

The use of two definite articles could suggest that two different groups may be in mind. Some think that Paul refers separately to Gentiles and Jews. Morris thinks that Paul is using poetic parallelism and that there is no clear distinction between two groups.

Verse 9

οἵτινες δίκην τίσουσιν ὄλεθρον αἰώνιον ἀπὸ προσώπου τοῦ κυρίου καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς δόξης τῆς ἰσχύος αὐτοῦ,

οἵτινες Pronoun, m nom pl ὅστις, ἥτις, ὅτι who, which, whoever, whichever
 δικη, ης f punishment, divine justice
 τίσουσιν Verb, fut act indic, 3 pl τινω undergo, suffer

ὄλεθρος, ου m destruction, ruin

ὄλεθρον αἰώνιον "Does not signify so much annihilation as the loss of all that is worthwhile, utter ruin... It indicates that separation from the Lord which is the final disaster." Morris

ἰσχυς, υος f strength

Verse 10

ὅταν ἔλθῃ ἐνδοξασθῆναι ἐν τοῖς ἀγίοις αὐτοῦ καὶ θαυμασθῆναι ἐν πᾶσιν τοῖς πιστεύουσιν, ὅτι ἐπιστεύθη τὸ μαρτύριον ἡμῶν ἐφ' ὑμᾶς, ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ.

ὅταν when, whenever, as often as
 ἐνδοξασθῆναι Verb, aor pass infin
 ἐνδοξαζομαι receive glory, be honoured

An infinitive of purpose.

ἅγιος, α, ον holy, consecrated, set apart to/by God

"It seems that he is saying that those who are in Christ and in whom Christ dwells will by virtue of that fact share in his glory. On the great day it is not only the Lord himself who will be glorious, but his glory will also be seen in the saints." Morris

θαυμασθῆναι Verb, aor pass infin **wonder, be amazed**
 ἐπιστεύθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s **πιστευω μαρτυριον, ου n testimony, witness**
 ἐκεινος, η, ο demonstrative adj. **that, he, she, it**

Morris suggests that prefixing the words ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ with such words as 'you will be among them' brings out Paul's sense.

Verse 11

εἰς ὃ καὶ προσευχόμεθα πάντοτε περὶ ὑμῶν, ἵνα ὑμᾶς ἀξιώσῃ τῆς κλήσεως ὃ θεὸς ἡμῶν καὶ πληρώσῃ πᾶσαν εὐδοκίαν ἀγαθωσύνης καὶ ἔργον πίστεως ἐν δυνάμει,

εἰς ὃ 'with this in mind.' Morris thinks loosely attached to the whole of the previous section.

προσευχομαι pray
 παντοτε always
 ἀξιοω consider worthy
 κλησις, εως f call, calling

"We must bear in mind that when people are called they are completely unworthy of this call (Gal 1:13-15 is perhaps a classic instance of this). But God does not intend that they should continue in such a state. They are to walk worthily of the calling wherewith he calls them (Eph 4:1). It is this that Paul has in mind here." Morris

πληρωω fulfill, bring about, accomplish
 εὐδοκια, ας f good will, pleasure, desire
 ἀγαθωσυνη, ης f goodness

καὶ πληρωσῃ πᾶσαν εὐδοκίαν ἀγαθωσύνης 'and fulfilling every good purpose.' Morris thinks "Paul is praying that God will produce a goodness of will in his friends. The parallelism with 'work of faith' indicates that the meaning is 'resolve proceeding from goodness,' rather than 'a resolve after goodness' or 'a resolve to do good.' Parallel is 'act prompted by your faith.' 'Every,' which precedes 'desire of goodness,' is rightly taken with this phrase also... Faith is always busy. A true faith will clothe itself in works."

δυνάμει Noun, dat s δυναμις

Verse 12

ὅπως ἐνδοξασθῇ τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ ἐν ὑμῖν, καὶ ὑμεῖς ἐν αὐτῷ, κατὰ τὴν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ

ὅπως (or ὅπως ἄν) that, in order that
 ἐνδοξαζομαι see v.10
 ὄνομα, τος n name, title, reputation

'Name' stands for the whole person. The intent is that "The Thessalonians will be such a bright and shining testimony to the reality of their salvation that the Saviour will be seen to be the wonderful Being he is." Morris

καὶ ὑμεῖς ἐν αὐτῷ "On that day, just as he will be glorified in them on account of what they have become, so they will be glorified in him on account of what he is... The language is that of Isa 66:5 (LXX), but there 'the Lord' is Yahweh. This is another example of the tendency of the New Testament writers to speak of the Lord Jesus in language used of Yahweh in the Old Testament." Morris

χαρις, ιτος f grace, unmerited favour