

II Thessalonians 1:1–12

II Thessalonians 1:1 Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

(Pulpit Comm., *II Thess. 1:1*) *Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus.* This Epistle, like the former, is written in their conjoint names, as all three were engaged in the planting of the Church in Thessalonica. *Unto the Church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: grace unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*¹

II Thessalonians 1:2 Grace unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

PAUL's second epistle to the Thessalonians begins much like his first one, reminding these early believers of the *grace and peace* sent to them by *God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ*. God calls sinners to Himself through the redemptive work of Christ so His grace and peace might be given to men where previously they deserved only wrath and judgment.²

¹ Pulpit Commentary, *II Thess. 1:1*

² Rom. 1:32 *Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.*

Rom. 3:23 *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;*

³ Rom. 5:20&21 *Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: ²¹That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Eph. 2:5 *Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)*

⁴ II Chrn. 7:14 *If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.* Isa. 55:7 *Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.*

Ezek. 18:21 *But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die.*

Acts 2:38 *Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.*

Acts 3:19 *Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.*

Acts 8:22 *Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.*

⁵ John 3:5–7 *Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. ⁶That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.*

⁶ Rom. 5:8 *But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*

⁷ Strong's Concordance

Grace is the disposition of God that desires good for the sinner, not evil.³ *Strong's Concordance* defines #5485 *charis* as “grace, kindness.” *HELPS Word-studies* reveals the word as “preeminently used of the Lord's favor – freely extended to give Himself away to people (because He is ‘always leaning toward them’).” Because of God's grace—His kind disposition toward man—when men sin against Him they can be forgiven if they sincerely repent of their sins.⁴ This tells us that it is God's will that no man should die for the sinful nature he was born into.⁵ Divine grace is meant to prevent this. God is willing and able to forgive the penitent, as seen in His sending His Son to die for their sin.⁶ It is also solely through the Lord's grace that any are saved. If there were no grace, there could be no true salvation.

The Greek word for *peace* is #1515 *eiréné*, meaning “one, peace, quietness, rest.”⁷ *HELPS Word-studies* defines the word as “1515 *eirénē* (from *eirō*, ‘to join, tie together into a whole’) – properly, wholeness, i.e. when all essential parts are joined together; peace (God's gift of wholeness).” Thayer's Greek Lexicon defines *eiréné* as “a state of national tranquil-

ity; exemption from the rage and havoc of war.” It is also defined as “peace between individuals, i.e. harmony, concord.” For those who believe that God raised Jesus from the dead, and subsequently make Jesus Christ their Lord, there exists a state of harmony, tranquility, and peace with God.⁸ Christ’s ministry to die for sin was purposed to establish peace between God and man, so when men surrender their lives to Christ and His Lordship, an armistice with God begins. Ultimately, by believing in and submitting to God’s Son, men display their willingness to come under God’s government. Because of this peace is gained with God.

II Thessalonians 1:3 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;

In Paul’s first letter he referenced the work of faith and labor of love of the Thessalonians.⁹ In his second epistle he writes about how the Thessalonians’ *faith* had grown and their *charity* toward each other abounded. Faith and love sprouting in people’s lives prove true spiritual growth and genuine godly advancement. Possessing *faith* and *love* likewise exhibits that men are walking in God’s will for their lives. There is also no such thing as true spiritual development without the increase of these two divine fruits of the Spirit.¹⁰ Hence, whereas knowledge, even if it is biblical, is not an accurate measure of God’s salvation or spiritual growth, manifesting the fruits of the Holy Spirit given by Christ to the saved surely is. *And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.*¹¹ The possession of the Spirit of God’s Son proves heavenly sonship. Yet if a man has not the Spirit of Christ and the fruits of the Spirit associated with Him, he should not think

himself as saved. *But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.*¹² Understandably, those whom God makes His children will always manifest the divine qualities of their Father, and this is most visibly seen by their possessing *faith* and *love*.

II Thessalonians 1:4 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:

The Greek word for *patience* is #5281 *hupomoné*. *Strong’s Concordance* defines it as “a remaining behind, a patient enduring.” Its usage is “endurance, steadfastness, patient waiting for.” *HELPS Word-studies* states, “5281 *hupomoné* (from 5259 /*hypó*, ‘under’ and 3306 /*ménō*, ‘remain, endure’) – properly, remaining under, endurance; steadfastness, especially as God enables the believer to ‘remain (endure) under’ the challenges He allots in life.” These definitions reveal that patience is needed to endure until the divine time arrives when deliverance comes. Every trial has an end, and through sufficient faith and trust in the Lord, all trials for the Christian can be both endured and eventually overcome. He who endures unto the end shall be saved,¹³ and he who trusts God fully with his life will not be disappointed. The Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptation.¹⁴

Faith is the Greek word #4102 *pistis*, which *Strong’s Concordance* defines as “faith, belief, trust, confidence; fidelity, faithfulness.” The gift of faith strengthens men not to lose confidence in the Lord regardless of the tribulations they are experiencing. No doubt, life is hard even without religious persecution, yet a firm and unyielding trust in the Lord makes

⁸ Rom. 5:1 *Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:*

⁹ I Thess. 1:3&4 *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;* ⁴*Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.*

¹⁰ Gal. 5:22&23 *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,* ²³*Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.*

¹¹ Gal. 4:6

¹² Rom. 8:9

¹³ Matt. 24:13 *But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.*

¹⁴ II Pet. 2:9 *The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:*

something bearable that without God's personal presence in the heart would prove unbearable. *Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.*¹⁵ Ultimately, at the base of any true walk with God is a sincere and honest trust in Him. Hence, if a man does not trust the Lord when suffering trials, we know that very little true faith in God exists in him. Practically, faith can do so much more for the human heart than a room full of biblical knowledge ever could—since it is not merely head knowledge that allows men to endure religious persecution and worldly trial but rather only a sincere trust in God's sovereignty over all things.

II Thessalonians 1:5 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:

That the righteous will be persecuted in this world¹⁶ is spiritual proof of their worthiness to enter the kingdom of God's Son.¹⁷ The servant is not above his Master; therefore, elements of what Christ endured must also be experienced by His people.¹⁸ Yet though tribulation will come, this same tribulation proves true Christians worthy of inheriting the kingdom of God prepared for them.

II Thessalonians 1:6 Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you;

Whenever God's people are troubled, the Lord finds it just to recompense tribulation to those troubling them. Hence, God counts it as a *righteous thing* to recompense tribulation to any who seek

to emotionally or physically harm His children. All fathers maintain a right to defend their own, and our heavenly Father is no different. What men sow they shall also reap;¹⁹ therefore, any who incite trouble and bring consternation to the saved will have tribulations recompensed to them by God.

(Barnes, *II Thess. 1:6*) *Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you* - The sense is: "There will be a future judgment, because it is proper that God should punish those who now persecute you. It is not right that they should go unpunished, and triumph forever. It is not an arbitrary thing, a thing which is indifferent, a thing which may or may not be done; it is a just and proper thing that the wicked should be punished."²⁰

It is a common false assumption of sinners that God has no right to punish the wicked. Yet is not divine law higher than human law? And cannot heaven do what the earth regularly engages in, by punishing criminals? Should then the Lord not be afforded the right to execute heavenly justice, just as civil authorities routinely punish those who commit earthly crimes? It is thus unreasonable to believe that God should not be allowed the same right as men in order to maintain a civil society where sin and crime must be punished, lest evil completely overtakes good.

(Barnes, *II Thess. 1:6*) people themselves believe that it is just that the wicked should be punished. They are constantly making laws, and affixing penalties to them, and executing them, under the belief that it is right. Can they regard it as wrong in God to do the same thing? Can that be wrong in him which is right in themselves?²¹

¹⁵ Prov. 3:5

¹⁶ John 15:20 *Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.*

Acts 14:22 *Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.*

II Tim. 3:12 *Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.*

¹⁷ Matt. 5:10 *Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

¹⁸ Matt. 10:24 *The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord.*

John 13:16 *Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.*

¹⁹ Gal. 6:7-8 *Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. ⁸For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.*

²⁰ Barnes' Notes on the Bible, II Thess. 1:6

²¹ Barnes' Notes on the Bible, II Thess. 1:6

Who could consider anyone truly loving who turned a blind eye to sin or did not bring justice to the victim? Is not justice a part of love? *Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished: but the seed of the righteous shall be delivered.*²² All sin is against God and shall not be tolerated by Him,²³ though many who now regularly engage in sin vainly hope it will be. *And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.*²⁴ Ultimately, it also makes no difference if the sinner is a priest, prophet, or pastor; all breaking of divine law will receive the same punishment. *And there shall be, like people, like priest: and I will punish them for their ways, and reward them their doings.*²⁵

(Barnes, *Hos. 4:9*) The bad priest copies the sins which he should reprove, and excuses himself by the frailty of our common nature. The people, acutely enough, detect the worldliness or self-indulgence of the priest, and shelter themselves under his example. Their defense stands good before people; but what before God? Alike in sin, priest and people should be alike in punishment.²⁶

II Thessalonians 1:7 And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels,

(Poole, *II Thess. 1:7*) Rest with us. Us, the apostles and ministers of Christ, we and you shall rest together; as we have partaken of troubles together, so we shall of rest. And you shall enjoy the same felicity with the apostles themselves, in the same state of rest. And though now place doth separate us, yet we and you shall rest together, which will the more sweeten this rest to you and us.²⁷

²² Prov. 11:21

²³ Gen. 39:9 *There is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?*

²⁴ Josh. 7:20 *And Achan answered Joshua, and said, Indeed I have sinned against the LORD God of Israel, and thus and thus have I done:*

²⁵ Judg. 10:10 *And the children of Israel cried unto the LORD, saying, We have sinned against thee, both because we have forsaken our God, and also served Baalim.*

²⁶ Ps. 51:4 *Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest.*

²⁷ Isa. 13:11

²⁸ Hos. 4:9

²⁹ Barnes' Notes on the Bible, Hos. 4:9

³⁰ Matthew Poole's Commentary, II Thess. 1:7

³¹ Heb. 4:9-11

³² Matthew Poole's Commentary, II Thess. 1:7

³³ Matt. 16:27

The rest that Paul speaks of that both he and the other apostles possessed is that rest produced when one remains confident in Jesus Christ's return to bring both salvation and justice to the earth. Believing that God is ultimately in control and Jesus will soon be revealed from heaven is what produces rest in His people.

One of the divine ways that believers can gain and maintain spiritual rest when under trial is through the labor of faith. *There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his. Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.*²⁸

(Poole, *II Thess. 1:7*) And as Christ himself is already entered into his rest, Hebrews 4:10, so he will come again to take his people into the same rest with him.²⁹

*When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels. Accompanying Jesus's return in glory will be angels of might, or mighty angels. This accompaniment reveals Jesus's heavenly authority over the earth. The presence of these mighty angels is not needed to raise the dead but to assist the Son of God in rendering punishment on those who have rejected God and disobeyed the gospel of His Son. At this time Christ will repay every man for his deeds, whether religious or evil. For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.*³⁰

(Barnes, *Matt. 16:27*) He will come in glory the glory of his Father the majesty with

which God is accustomed to appear, and which befits God. He will be attended by angels. He will judge all people.³¹

The brilliant display of Christ's authority, made visible by His coming in the *glory of his Father*, with flashes of lightning³² and heaven's host accompanying Him, is an exhibition of how God has made Jesus fit and worthy to judge all things. There is a certain glory, brilliance, and radiance that God alone has, and this glory, brilliance, and radiance will be made astonishingly visible when it accompanies the Son of God at His return.³³ It shall therefore be as God that the Son of God will judge the world.³⁴ By openly displaying His glory to the earth's inhabitants, Christ will communicate to all men His divinely appointed authority to represent the Father and execute His judgment in the world.³⁵ No doubt, this celestial display of heavenly might will cause all those

who have rejected Christ's rule to tremble. *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.*³⁶

(Barnes, *Ps. 2:12*) *Kiss the Son* - Him whom God hath declared to be his Son Psalm 2:7,³⁷ and whom, as such, he has resolved to set as King on his holy hill Psalm 2:6.³⁸ The word "kiss" here is used in accordance with Oriental usages, for it was in this way that respect was indicated for one of superior rank. This was the ancient mode of doing homage or allegiance to a king, 1 Samuel 10:1.³⁹ It was also the mode of rendering homage to an idol, 1 Kings 19:18; Hosea 13:2; Job 31:27.⁴⁰ The mode of rendering homage to a king by a kiss was sometimes to kiss his hand, or his dress, or his feet, as among the Persians. DeWette. The practice of kissing the hand of a monarch is not uncommon in European courts as a token of allegiance. The meaning here is that they should express their allegiance to the Son of God, or recognize him as the au-

³¹ Barnes' Notes on the Bible, Matt. 16:27

³² Matt. 24:27–31 For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. ²⁸For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together. ²⁹Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: ³⁰And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. ³¹And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

³³ Rev. 1:7 Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.

Rev. 19:11–16 And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. ¹²His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. ¹³And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. ¹⁴And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. ¹⁵And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. ¹⁶And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

³⁴ John 5:22 For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son:

John 5:26&27 For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; ²⁷And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.

Acts 10:42 And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead.

Acts 17:31 Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

³⁵ John 17:1&2 These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

³⁶ Ps. 2:12

³⁷ Ps. 2:7 I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.

³⁸ Ps. 2:6 Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.

³⁹ I Sam. 10:1 Then Samuel took a vial of oil, and poured it upon his head, and kissed him, and said, Is it not because the LORD hath anointed thee to be captain over his inheritance?

⁴⁰ I Kgs. 19:18 Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him.

Hos. 13:2 And now they sin more and more, and have made them molten images of their silver, and idols according to their own understanding, all of it the work of the craftsmen: they say of them, Let the men that sacrifice kiss the calves.

Job 31:27 And my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth hath kissed my hand:

thorized King, with suitable expressions of submission and allegiance; that they should receive him as King, and submit to his reign. Applied to others, it means that they should embrace him as their Saviour.

Lest he be angry - If you do not acknowledge his claims, and receive him as the Messiah.

And ye perish from the way - The word *from* in this place is supplied by the translators. It is literally, "And ye perish the way." See the notes at Psalm 1:6.⁴¹ The meaning here seems to be either "lest ye are lost in respect to the way," that is, the way to happiness and salvation; or "lest ye fail to find the way" to life; or "lest ye perish by the way," to wit, before you reach your destination, and accomplish the object you have in view. The design seems to be to represent them as pursuing a certain journey or path - as life is often represented (compare Psalm 1:1⁴²) - and as being cut down before they reached the end of their journey.

41 Ps. 1:6 *For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.*

42 Ps. 1:1 *Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.*

43 Barnes' Notes on the Bible, Ps. 2:12

44 Acts 17:31 *Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.*

45 Matt. 16:27&28 *For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works. ²⁸Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.*

Matt. 19:28 *And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*

Matt. 20:28 *Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.*

Matt. 25:31 *When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:*

Mark 14:62 *And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.*

Luke 22:69 *Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God.*

John 5:27 *And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.*

John 8:28 *Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.*

John 13:31 *Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him.*

Rev. 14:14 *And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.*

46 Luke 1:35 *And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.*

John 1:32-34 *And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. ³³And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. ³⁴And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.*

John 3:17&18 *For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. ¹⁸He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.*

I John 3:8 *He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.*

I John 5:20 *And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.*

47 Acts 2:23&24 *Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: ²⁴Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because*

When his wrath is kindled - When his wrath burns. Applying to anger or wrath a term which is common now, as when we speak of one whose anger is heated, or who is hot with wrath.⁴³

Since all judgment has been committed to the Son, those without a relationship with Him will quickly become aware of their fate at His coming. Men are commanded to repent for their sins because on the Lord's appointed day⁴⁴ Jesus will execute justice on all who have rejected divine rule. Jesus inherits this right because He is both the Son of man⁴⁵ and the Son of God.⁴⁶ As the Son of man, Christ inherits the right to judge Adam's descendants, and as the Son of God, He possesses the divine and inherited right to rule all creation in God's stead. Because Jesus died and was resurrected,⁴⁷ all men, regardless of their current state, whether

living or dead, will be required to stand before Him.⁴⁸ *Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead.*⁴⁹ It is in accordance with God's will that the entirety of mankind must stand before the judgment seat of Christ. No man will escape this future reality, simply because all will receive what they have done in their bodies. Every man will reap as he has sown, and the day of Christ's judgment will prove this. *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.*⁵⁰

(Barnes, *II Cor.* 5:10) Before we receive our eternal allotment it is proper that we should render our account of the manner in which we have lived, and of the manner in which we have improved our talents and privileges.

In the nature of things, it is proper that we should undergo a trial before we receive our reward, or before we are punished; and God has made it necessary and certain, by his direct and positive appointment, that we should stand at the bar of the final judge; see Romans 14:10.^{51, 52}

At the end of every human trial, men must stand before a judge and be pronounced guilty or innocent. Christ's final judgment of man will operate the same way. Once all the evidence has been presented, though it is already known by the one who searches and knows the hearts of all men,⁵³ all that is left for the gallery to hear is the Son of God's final verdict. The solemnity of this occasion should prompt every man to deeply ponder what and who they are living for. Religious sincerity will be tested, and religious hypoc-

it was not possible that he should be holden of it.

Acts 2:31&32 He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. ³²*This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.*

Acts 3:26 Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.

Acts 4:10 Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole.

Acts 5:30 The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree.

Acts 10:39&40 And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: ⁴⁰*Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly;*

Acts 13:28–30 And though they found no cause of death in him, yet desired they Pilate that he should be slain. ²⁹*And when they had fulfilled all that was written of him, they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a sepulchre.* ³⁰*But God raised him from the dead:*

Rom. 6:4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

Rom. 8:11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

II Cor. 4:14 Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you.

I Thess. 1:10 And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.

I Pet. 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

I Pet. 1:21 Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.

⁴⁸ *John 5:22 For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son:*

John 5:27 And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.

Acts 10:42 And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead.

⁴⁹ *I Pet. 4:5*

⁵⁰ *II Cor. 5:10*

⁵¹ *Rom. 14:10 But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.*

⁵² *Barnes' Notes on the Bible, II Cor. 5:10*

⁵³ *I Chrn. 28:9 And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever.*

Ps. 44:21 Shall not God search this out? for he knoweth the secrets of the heart.

Jer. 17:10 I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.

Rev. 2:23 And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.

risy will be revealed. Nothing will remain covered that is not revealed, nor anything hidden that will not be made known. *For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known.*⁵⁴ It is this divine justice that the righteous crave. More than anything, the Lord's people desire justice in the earth, perhaps even equal to the possession of salvation itself.⁵⁵ Jesus's coming in the clouds in His Father's glory will reveal that this time has arrived.⁵⁶

II Thessalonians 1:8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:

The object of Christ's vengeance will be those who have rejected His rule. It is not a small thing to set at naught the good

⁵⁴ Luke 12:2

⁵⁵ Rev. 6:10 *And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?*

⁵⁶ Ps. 96:13 *Before the LORD: for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth.*

Ps. 98:9 *Before the LORD; for he cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity.*

John 5:30 *I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.*

Acts 17:31 *Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.*

Rev. 19:11 *And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.*

⁵⁷ Isa. 9:6&7 *For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.*

⁷*Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.*

Dan. 7:13&14 *I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. ¹⁴And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.*

I Cor. 15:24&25 *Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. ²⁵For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.*

Rev. 11:15 *And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.*

⁵⁸ Heb. 10:29

⁵⁹ Lev. 18:24–30 *Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things: for in all these the nations are defiled which I cast out before you: ²⁵And the land is defiled: therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants. ²⁶Ye shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments, and shall not commit any of these abominations; neither any of your own nation, nor any stranger that sojourneth among you: ²⁷(For all these abominations have the men of the land done, which were before you, and the land is defiled;) ²⁸That the land spue not you out also, when ye defile it, as it spued out the nations that were before you. ²⁹For whosoever shall commit any of these abominations, even the souls that commit them shall be cut off from among their people. ³⁰Therefore shall ye keep mine ordinance, that ye commit not any one of these abominable customs, which were committed before you, and that ye defile not yourselves therein: I am the LORD your God.*

Lev. 26:14–33 *But if ye will not hearken unto me, and will not do all these commandments; ¹⁵And if ye shall despise my statutes, or if your soul abhor my judgments, so that ye will not do all my commandments, but that ye break my covenant: ¹⁶I also will do this unto you; I will even appoint over you terror, consumption, and the burning ague, that shall consume the eyes, and cause sorrow of heart: and ye shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it. ¹⁷And I will set my face against you, and ye shall be slain before your enemies: they that hate you shall reign over you; and ye shall flee when none pursueth you. ¹⁸And if ye will not yet for all this hearken*

news of the gospel, purposed to save the sinner, nor is it an insignificant act to choose to disobey He whom God has purposed should rule the world.⁵⁷ Undoubtedly, most men do not consider it a great offense to reject the gospel, nor do they deem it as a spiritual crime not to obey Christ's words. Yet the Scripture is clear as to the consequence for any who set at naught Christ's sacrifice. *Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?*⁵⁸ Ultimately there will be greater consequences for refusing the grace brought through Jesus Christ than even when Israel rejected the law of Moses.⁵⁹ This teaches us that rejection of all divine rule, whether revealed

by Moses, God's servant, or Christ, God's Son, will be met with what heaven deems as worthy punishment.

(Ellicott, *Heb. 10:29*) *Shall he be thought worthy.*—Better, shall he be accounted (or, judged) worthy, by God the Judge of all, when “the Day” shall come. In the act of apostasy the sinner trampled under foot the Son of God, treated with contempt and scorn Him to whom belongs this highest Name (Hebrews 1:1–4);⁶⁰ and the principle of this act becomes the principle of the whole succeeding life. That “blood” by which the new covenant was established (Hebrews 9:15–17)⁶¹—the blood in which

he himself had received the sanctification which the law could not give—he has esteemed an unholy thing. There is no medium between highest reverence and utter contumely in such a case: to those who did not receive Jesus as Lord He was a deceiver (Matthew 27:63),⁶² and one who deserved to die.⁶³

That Christ is said to return to the earth *in flaming fire* reveals that through His power, purification of the earth will be accomplished. And just as fire purifies,⁶⁴ so will the Son of God return purity to the world that He will eventually rule.

*unto me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins.*¹⁹ *And I will break the pride of your power; and I will make your heaven as iron, and your earth as brass:*²⁰ *And your strength shall be spent in vain: for your land shall not yield her increase, neither shall the trees of the land yield their fruits.*²¹ *And if ye walk contrary unto me, and will not hearken unto me; I will bring seven times more plagues upon you according to your sins.*²² *I will also send wild beasts among you, which shall rob you of your children, and destroy your cattle, and make you few in number; and your high ways shall be desolate.*²³ *And if ye will not be reformed by me by these things, but will walk contrary unto me;*²⁴ *Then will I also walk contrary unto you, and will punish you yet seven times for your sins.*²⁵ *And I will bring a sword upon you, that shall avenge the quarrel of my covenant: and when ye are gathered together within your cities, I will send the pestilence among you; and ye shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy.*²⁶ *And when I have broken the staff of your bread, ten women shall bake your bread in one oven, and they shall deliver you your bread again by weight: and ye shall eat, and not be satisfied.*²⁷ *And if ye will not for all this hearken unto me, but walk contrary unto me;*²⁸ *Then I will walk contrary unto you also in fury; and I, even I, will chastise you seven times for your sins.*²⁹ *And ye shall eat the flesh of your sons, and the flesh of your daughters shall ye eat.*³⁰ *And I will destroy your high places, and cut down your images, and cast your carcasses upon the carcasses of your idols, and my soul shall abhor you.*³¹ *And I will make your cities waste, and bring your sanctuaries unto desolation, and I will not smell the savour of your sweet odours.*³² *And I will bring the land into desolation: and your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished at it.*³³ *And I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you: and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste.*

Ezek. 20:13 But the house of Israel rebelled against me in the wilderness: they walked not in my statutes, and they despised my judgments, which if a man do, he shall even live in them; and my sabbaths they greatly polluted: then I said, I would pour out my fury upon them in the wilderness, to consume them.

Dan. 9:11 Yea, all Israel have transgressed thy law, even by departing, that they might not obey thy voice; therefore the curse is poured upon us, and the oath that is written in the law of Moses the servant of God, because we have sinned against him.

Amos 2:3&4 And I will cut off the judge from the midst thereof, and will slay all the princes thereof with him, saith the LORD. ⁴ Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of Judah, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they have despised the law of the LORD, and have not kept his commandments, and their lies caused them to err, after the which their fathers have walked:

⁶⁰ *Heb. 1:1–4* God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, ² Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; ³ Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high: ⁴ Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

⁶¹ *Heb. 9:15–17* And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. ¹⁶ For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. ¹⁷ For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth.

⁶² *Matt. 27:63* Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again.

⁶³ *Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers, Heb.10:29*

⁶⁴ *Zech. 13:9* And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God.

I Pet. 1:7 That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

Rev. 3:18 I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.

(Barnes, *II Thess. 1:8*) *In flaming fire* - This is a circumstance which is not noticed in the account of his appearing in the parallel place in 1 Thessalonians 4:16.⁶⁵ The object of the apostle here seems to be to represent him as coming amidst vivid flashes of lightning. He is commonly described as coming in clouds, and to that common description there is here added the image of incessant lightnings, as if the whole heavens were illuminated with a continued blaze.⁶⁶

(Jamieson-Fausset-Brown, *II Thess. 1:8*) *In flaming fire*—Greek, “In flame of fire”; or, as other oldest manuscripts read, “in fire of flame.” This flame of fire accompanied His manifestation in the bush (Ex 3:2);⁶⁷ also His giving of the law at Sinai (Ex 19:18).⁶⁸ Also it shall accompany His revelation at His advent (Da 7:9, 10),⁶⁹ symbolizing His own bright glory and His consuming vengeance against His foes (Heb 10:27; 12:29; 2Pe 3:7, 10).⁷⁰

taking—literally, “giving” them, as their portion, “vengeance.”

know not God—the Gentiles primarily (Ps 79:6; Ga 4:8; 1Th 4:5);⁷¹ not of course those

65 *I Thess. 4:16* 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:

66 Barnes' Notes on the Bible, *II Thess. 1:8*

67 *Exod. 3:2* And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed.

68 *Exod. 19:18* And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly.

69 *Dan. 7:9&10* I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. ¹⁰A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened.

70 *Heb. 10:27* But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.

Heb. 12:29 For our God is a consuming fire.

II Pet 3:7 But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

II Pet. 3:10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

71 *Ps. 79:6* Pour out thy wrath upon the heathen that have not known thee, and upon the kingdoms that have not called upon thy name.

Gal. 4:8 Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods.

I Thess. 4:5 Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God:

72 *Exod. 5:2* And Pharaoh said, Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the LORD, neither will I let Israel go.

73 *Titus 1:16* They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.

74 *Rom. 10:3* For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.

Rom. 10:16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?

75 *Rom. 2:8* But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath,

76 *Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary, II Thess. 1:8*

77 *Rom. 1:4* And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:

involuntarily not knowing God, but those wilfully not knowing Him, as Pharaoh, who might have known God if he would, but who boasted “I know not the Lord” (Ex 5:2);⁷² and as the heathen persecutors who might have known God by the preaching of those whom they persecuted. Secondly, all who “profess to know God but in works deny Him” (Tit 1:16).⁷³

obey not the gospel—primarily the unbelieving Jews (Ro 10:3, 16);⁷⁴ secondarily, all who obey not the truth (Ro 2:8).^{75,76}

As these verses clearly reveal, no man will be given impunity if he has, by willful decision, chosen to reject a knowledge of God, evidenced by disobedience to Christ's words. Since Jesus has been declared the Son of God,⁷⁷ it is paramount that men respond to His authority as God.

II Thessalonians 1:9 Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;

The punishment that will be executed on those who did not obey the gospel of

Jesus Christ is eternal removal from the glory of His presence. This is not simply destruction but also exclusion from all that is holy, glorious, and good. Only those who have received Jesus Christ and been made sons of God through Him will be allowed to remain in and enjoy the glorious future of His reign.⁷⁸

(Henry, *II Thess. 1:9*) The Lord Jesus will in that day appear from heaven. He will come in the glory and power of the upper world. His light will be piercing, and his power consuming, to all who in that day shall be found as chaff. This appearance will be terrible to those that know not God, especially to those who rebel against revelation, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is the great crime of multitudes, the gospel is revealed, and they will not believe it; or if they pretend to believe, they will not obey it. Believing the truths of the gospel, is in order to our obeying the precepts of the gospel. Though sinners may be long spared, they will be punished at last. They did sin's work, and must receive sin's wages.⁷⁹

II Thessalonians 1:10 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.

(Barnes, *II Thess. 1:10*) *When he shall come to be glorified in his saints* - That is, the redeemed in that day will be the means of promoting his glory, or the universe will see his glory manifested in their redemption. His chief glory as seen in that day will be connected with the fact that he has redeemed his people.⁸⁰

Ultimately, the salvation of the chosen will be counted as Christ's most prized triumph. Through their heavenly transformation the world will know the true glory of Christ.

(Barnes, *II Thess. 1:10*) The general idea is, that Christ in that day will be manifested in a glorious manner, and that the source of his highest triumphs will be what is seen in the saints.⁸¹

II Thessalonians 1:11 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:

Paul's prayer is that the Thessalonians' faith would continue to grow so they might be found worthy of their heavenly calling, and through obedience to God's Word receive all the good God had purposed for their lives. In short, Paul prayed that what God had begun by exercising His power to produce faith in the Thessalonians might complete its course, resulting in them receiving all the good God had purposed should be theirs.

II Thessalonians 1:12 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.

In this verse we have what true faith in the Son of God will produce in those who genuinely make Him their Lord. It is that Christ's name will be glorified in and among His people. Whereas the whole world seeks to promote its own name, those saved by the Son of God are purposed to bring people's attention, gaze, and interest to Him who has, through His own sacrifice saved them. Thus, for the saved it is Christ's name, not their own, that will be most exalted in their lives.

Nothing proves true Christian identity more than when Jesus's name is glorified in His people. It is this exaltation of Christ and His glory that also reveals those who have been begotten by Him.

(Cambridge Bible, *II Thess. 1:12*) and ye in him] This glorification will be mutual. It will be the honour of the Head to have such members, and of the members to have such a Head;⁸²

⁷⁸ John 1:12 *But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:*

⁷⁹ Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary, *II Thess. 1:5–10*

⁸⁰ Barnes' Notes on the Bible, *II Thess. 1:10*

⁸¹ Barnes' Notes on the Bible, *II Thess. 1:10*

⁸² Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges, *II Thess. 1:12*

