

Wednesday in the Word
Digging Deeper
July 21, 2021
2 Thessalonians 1:6-12
Jesus' Revelation

Today we break down the details of Paul's second recorded letter to his saved loved ones in Thessalonica. It is understood that this second letter was written about six months after the first one. He writes to encourage and exhort the believers as they were still under the pressure of persecution. Here in these next lessons we are privileged to listen in as Paul clarifies some teachings on the Lord's return. We don't know how many letters he wrote and can only wonder at how much more wisdom and information we could have enjoyed. We do know though, that God in His perfection has included in His Word all that we need to know and our faith trains us to trust this fact.

Paul begins to address his issue in verse 6 with the comfort of the knowledge that God will "recompense tribulation" to persecutors. The Greek tells us this expression means to 'repay the pressure' that was first directed against His people. Interesting thought. Is it eye for eye or insult for insult? Either way it will be pay back time. Fortunately, we here in America do not yet suffer too greatly for our faith but it is beginning and it will increase. A street preacher in California was recently arrested for preaching Christ in public. In verse 7 Paul identifies with his fellows as being among them in their troubles and begins his teaching on the Day of the Lord which will continue through 2:12. Remember how he ended every chapter in 1 Thessalonians with a reminder of the Lord's coming and now he digs a little deeper.

Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels. "Revealed" here is apokalupsis; disclosure, appearing, coming, lighten, manifestation, be revealed. This is our word, apocalypse. Modern movie makers and videographers misuse this term to describe the catastrophic end of the world without ever admitting it truly means the revealing or unveiling of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ! It is clear they are avoiding and redirecting what to them is a very uncomfortable thought. By the way, psychologists will confess there is an underlying dread of the end of the world that pervades the psyche. It's all through popular film and literature and manifests upon the office couch. The mighty angels mentioned here may refer to a special class of angels who will perform some of the most powerful and frightful works of God.

We can understand verse 8 as describing two attitudes in mankind. One is of a willful ignorance of God Himself, a vain hope that He will just go away and the second is worse being a full rejection of the work of Christ in His providing our universal salvation. Imagine the gravity of that slap in the face. Much like the pulling of His beard. No one will suffer undeservedly. Each chooses his own fate. Verse 9 uses accurately descriptive language to clearly define the coming judgment. "Everlasting destruction" here in the Greek is 'perpetual ruinous death' and added to that it is 'out or away from the face of God'. Please pray for boldness to warn those you love!

Verses 7-9 are detailed elsewhere in God's Word. Here are just a few. Isaiah spoke of this 700 years prior to Paul in 66:15-18. Let's also compare the following; Matthew 25:30-32, 41, 46, Jude 7, 14-15, 2 Peter 2:6, 3:7, 10, Revelation 21:8,

Moving on to verse 10 we see a different side to the scene. The focus of this devastating event is not the destruction of the ungodly but the glorification of Jesus Christ. The previous verses inform us of the punishment of those who would not glorify the Lord. Now we see what

God was seeking all along. The praise and worship due His Son. Imagine the horror coming upon those who would not simply stop to praise the Father through the Son. Notice the phrase, "glorified IN His saints". Not merely BY His saints. He indwells us. His glory exudes from within us. Our lives not only reflect Him, we manifest Him and display Him. On this great and coming wonderful day we will finally accompany our Savior and will be able to fully rejoice in His fellowship. Further this word "admire" is to wonder or to marvel. Imagine our overwhelming reaction to Christ when we join Him in glory. We will finally cease in our imagination and be blessed in reality.

As Paul, in verse 11, exhorts us to fill the role chosen for us by God, he moves on in verse 12 to open one more point of interest. As the name of Christ is rightfully glorified in us, it seems we too will be glorified in Him! If that doesn't humble us then nothing else will. The Sacrificial Love of the Servant/Lord causes Him to share this glory with us. We can't fully understand that yet and perhaps we never will. Either way let's choose to start praising Him right now!