

2 Thessalonians

God's Righteous Judgment

At Second Coming of Christ

5-10

2 Thess. 1:5 This is a plain indication [evidence] of God's righteous [just] judgment so that you will be considered [counted] worthy of the kingdom of God, for which indeed you are suffering.

1. "This is a plain indication of God's righteous judgment"
 - a. The Greek has "endeigma" [**ehn** dayg mah] meaning "a plain token, indication."
 - b. NIV has "All this is evidence that God's judgment is right"
 - c. God's judgment is always right - always just.
 - d. The Almighty and Omniscient God of heaven makes no mistakes because He knows all the facts, and He judges impartially without regard to wealth, race, prestige, education, social standing, etc.
 - e. God was fully aware of their faithfulness even when persecuted, and would not ignore or overlook their trusting obedience.
 - f. God overlooks absolutely nothing. (Prov. 15:3). He knows all about the righteous and the wicked.
 - g. God would one day, at the judgment, bless His saints and punish evil doers.
2. "so that you will be considered worthy of the kingdom of God" - "The kingdom of God" was present. (1 Thess. 2:12).

1 Thess. 2:12 so that you would walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.
3. "for which indeed you are suffering" - God's kingdom was present and they were a part of the kingdom.
 - a. Like those at Colossae they had become a part of the kingdom. (Col. 1:13).
 - b. Paul spoke of some brethren who were "fellow workers for the kingdom of God." (Col. 4:11).
 - c. The readers of the book of Hebrews were receiving the kingdom. (Heb. 12:28).
 - d. John spoke of himself as being "in the kingdom." (Rev. 1:5).
 - e. It was not a matter of shame to suffer (1 Pet. 4:16), but of joy to have the privilege of suffering for Christ and His kingdom. (Acts 5:41; Jas. 1:2,3).

Acts 5:41 So they went on their way from the presence of the Council, rejoicing that they had been considered worthy to suffer shame for His name

Jas. 1:2 Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials,

Jas. 1:3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.

- f. The present tense “you are suffering” means their suffering was still going on.
- g. The present tense in Greek denotes continuous action.
- h. This suffering would result in the development of godly character. (Rom. 5:3,4; Jas. 1:2,3; 1 Pet. 1:6,7; 4:12,13).
- i. The development of godly character is the most important thing in the world with God.
- j. They were being prepared to be richly blessed.

2 Thess. 1:6 For after all it is only just [right] for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you,

- 1. “For after all it is only just for God to repay” - Justice demands evil be punished.
 - a. God is a God of mercy, but He is also a God of justice. (Job 8:3; 34:12; Psa. 37:28; 89:14; 101:1; 111:7; Isa. 33:51).
 - b. Evil men do not escape God’s notice, but He will repay them at the final judgment of mankind. (Rom. 2:5; 14:12; 2 Cor. 5:10).
 - c. God is to be feared by those disobeying Him. (Heb. 10:26-31).

Heb. 10:26 For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,

Heb. 10:27 but a terrifying expectation of judgment and the fury of a fire which will consume the adversaries.

Heb. 10:28 Anyone who has set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses.

Heb. 10:29 How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace?

Heb. 10:30 For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay." And again, "The Lord will judge His people."

Heb. 10:31 It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

- 2. “with affliction those who afflict you” - Just as they had afflicted the Christians at Thessalonica, they would be afflicted. (Hos. 8:7; Gal. 6:7,8).

2 Thess. 1:7 and to give relief [rest] to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire,

- Lit. “mighty angels” is “with angels of power”
- “in flaming fire” is literally “in the fire of flame”

- 1. “and to give relief to you who are afflicted”
 - a. Paul prayed that God would “give relief” to them from their afflictions.
 - b. This relief might occur in this life, but the “rest” would come for sure at the end of time.
 - c. Many saints have died without this rest, but at Christ’s coming will be blessed forever.

- d. Heaven is a place of rest. (Heb. 4:9; Rev. 14:13).
2. “and to us as well when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven” - The day of Christ’s coming and the judgment to immediately follow would be the time God’s righteous judgment would be revealed. (Rom. 2:5).
- a. The Lord is now in heaven, but He will not always remain there.
 - b. He is coming again. (Jn. 14:3; Acts 1:11; 17:30-31).
 - c. These Christians were serving the Lord and waiting His return. (1 Thess. 1:9,10).

1 Thess. 1:9 For they themselves report about us what kind of a reception we had with you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God,
 1 Thess. 1:10 and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, *that is* Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath to come.

- d. The words “revealed from heaven” has reference to the visible descent of Christ at His second coming. (Acts 1:11; 1 Thess. 4:16; Rev. 1:7).
3. “with His mighty [powerful] angels in flaming fire”
- a. The Lord is coming one day with “all” His angels. (Matt.16:27; 13:49, 50; 25:31).

Matt. 13:49 "So it will be at the end of the age; the angels will come forth and take out the wicked from among the righteous,
 Matt. 13:50 and will throw them into the furnace of fire; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Matt. 16:27 "For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and will then repay every man according to his deeds.

Matt. 25:31 "But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and **all the angels** with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne.

- b. “Flaming fire” shows His glory and consumes His enemies. (Heb. 10:27-29).

Heb. 10:27 but a terrifying expectation of judgment and the fury of a fire which will consume the adversaries.
 Heb. 10:28 Anyone who has set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses.
 Heb. 10:29 How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace?

2 Thess. 1:8 dealing out [afflicting] retribution [punishment, full vengeance] to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.

- “ekdikesis” [ehk dee kay sis] - “retribution, a revenging, vengeance, punishment.”
- The word can have the sense of requittal. (Rom. 12:19; 2 Thess. 1:8). Vengeance is the prerogative of God.
- “do not obey” speaks of those who ignore and refuse to obey the gospel.
- Many then and now turn a deaf ear to the gospel and refuse to submit to it.

1. “dealing out retribution to those who do not know God” - These words “dealing out retribution” mean “inflicting punishment, vengeance”
 - a. Literally the words “dealing out” are from “didomi” [**d**ee doh mee] meaning “giving.”
 - b. Marshall translates “giving full vengeance to the [ones] not knowing God.”
 - c. This referred to the pagan world and to any who do not obey the gospel. (Rom. 1:18, 19-32; Eph. 4:18, 19).
 - 1) The words “know not God” may primarily refer to Gentiles.
 - 2) There were also Jews who did not know God.
2. “and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus” - Only the obedient are saved. (Matt. 7:21; Jn. 3:36; 14:15; 15:14; Heb. 5:9).
 - The word “and” come from the Greek word “kai” and means “and, even, also.”
 - It may be used here in the sense of “even to those who.” This translation defines the ones not knowing God as the ones not obeying “the gospel of our Lord Jesus.”
 - a. Some believe it is a trivial matter to reject “the gospel of our Lord Jesus,” but this is far from the truth!
 - b. Those [Jews or Gentiles] who do not obey the gospel will be severely punished.
 - c. This punishment referred to both Gentiles and Jews. (1 Thess. 4:3; Gal. 4:8; Rom. 1:28; Eph. 2:12; Rom. 2:14).
 - d. Both Jews and Gentiles were involved in persecuting these brethren. (Acts 17:5-9).
 - e. Men are saved by hearing and obeying the gospel. (Mk. 16:15; Rom. 1:16; 1 Cor. 4:15; Jas. 1:18, 21).

2 Thess. 1:9 These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away [shut out] from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power [strength],

1. “These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction [ruin]”
 - a. The word “eternal destruction [ruin]” do not mean annihilation, but a state of everlasting and conscious suffering.
 - 1) “Destruction” is from “olethron” [**ah** leh thrahn] meaning “destruction.”
 - 2) “Destruction” here denotes banishment from God into a state of everlasting punishment.
 - 3) Annihilation is not to be feared, but a state of everlasting punishment should create terror in unbelievers.
 - b. Hell is a conscious place of everlasting suffering. (Matt. 25:41,46).
 - 1) Jesus used “kolasis” [**kah** la sis] means “punishment, correction, penalty.”
 - 2) It is used to denote a place of punishment, torment.
 - 3) It is a place to be feared. (Matt. 10:28).

4) The word “kolasis” occurs only one other time in the New Testament. (1 Jn. 4:18).

1 Jn. 4:18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves [has] **punishment**, and the one who fears is not perfected in love.

2. “away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power”

a. Those who reject the gospel will be excluded from the glorious presence of God and His immense blessings. See Rev. 21:27

Rev. 21:27 and nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying, **shall ever come into it**, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

b. They will be in hell. (Rev. 21:8).

Rev. 21:8 "But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

c. “The second death” is “the lake that burns with fire and brimstone.” (Rev. 21:8).

1) It is everlasting separation from God and endless, conscious suffering in hell.

2) It is a place of “weeping and gnashing of teeth.” (Matt. 8:12; 13:50; 25:30).

2 Thess. 1:10 when He comes to be glorified in His saints [holy people] on that day [the day of the second coming], and to be marveled at among all who have believed--for our testimony to you was believed.

1. “when He comes to be glorified [honored, praised] in His saints on that day” - This refers to the second coming of Christ. (1 Thess. 5:4).

- McCord translates “when he comes to be praised among his saints.”
- “endoxazomai” [ehn dah **ksa** zah mi] means “to glorify, adorn with glory.” See 2 Thess. 1:12.

a. Christ is coming for His saints. (1 Thess. 4:13-18).

1) They will rejoice at His coming and the blessings to follow.

2) They will receive new spiritual bodies. (Phil. 3:20, 21).

Phil. 3:20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ;
Phil. 3:21 who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.

3) They will ascend to be with the Lord forever. (1 Thess. 4:18).

b. At Jesus’ coming His saints will be blessed by the Lord, and they will honor the Lord for His greatness and His blessings.

2. “and to be marveled at [admired, revered] among all who have believed--for our testimony to you was believed”

a. “our testimony” is speaking of the gospel message.

- b. They had “believed” the gospel message and had obeyed it.

Paul’s Brief Prayer For Them

2 Thess. 1:11 To this end also we pray for you always, that our God will count [deem, think] you worthy of your calling, and fulfill every desire for goodness and the work of faith with power,

1. “To this end also we pray for you always” - Lit. “for which also [indeed] we pray” —TCNT “with this in view, our constant prayer for you is.”
 - a. These brethren were constantly in their prayers.
 - b. “for which also [indeed] we pray” refers to the words that immediately follow.
2. “that our God will count you worthy of your calling” - “axioo” [ax ee **ah** oh] means “to count or deem worthy.”
 - a. This may refer to their initial reception to the call of God through the gospel. (1 Cor. 1:26).

1 Cor. 1:26 For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble;

- b. It is possible Paul also used this to apply to the call to constantly keep on pressing for perfection (Phil 3:14; Heb. 13:1).

Phi. 3:14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the **upward call** of God in Christ Jesus.

Heb. 3:1 Therefore, holy brethren, **partakers of a heavenly calling**, consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession;

- c. Christians are admonished to “walk” [live] in a way that worthy their calling. (2 Thess. 1:5; 2:12; Eph. 4:1; Phil. 1:27; Col. 1:10).
- d. “Worthy” does not denote merit. (Eph. 2:5, 8, 9; Rom. 3:24; 6:23; 11:6).

Eph. 2:5 even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),

Eph. 2:8 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God;

Eph. 2:9 not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Rom. 3:24 being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus;

Rom. 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Rom. 11:6 But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works, otherwise grace is no longer grace.

- b. “Worthy” has the meaning of faithfulness, trusting obedience. It is following the teachings of the Lord - walking in the light.
 - 1) God’s grace is freely bestowed on faithfulness - not disobedience.
 - 2) God’s grace is not bestowed on those who reject Him. (Heb. 3:12; 5:9; 6:4-6; 10:29-31).

3. “and fulfill every desire for goodness and the work of faith with power”

- “work of faith” (1 Thess. 1:3). TCNT “and the efforts that have resulted from your faith”
- Paul spoke of “the obedience of faith.” (Rom. 1:5; 16:26). Saving faith produces obedience.
 - a. The NIV translates “and that by his power he may fulfill every good purpose of yours and every act prompted by your faith.” TCNT “and by his power make perfect your delight in all goodness”
 - b. Lit. “and may fulfil every good pleasure of goodness and work of faith in power”
 - c. Work springs from faith and is sustained by faith.
 - d. We need to pray “Lord, increase my faith.” (Lk. 17:5).
 - e. “With power” refers to God’s power and the power of Christ.
 - f. It is God and His Son who empower us. (Rom. 8:31; Phil. 4:13).

Rom. 8:31 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us?

Phil. 4:13 I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.

2 Thess. 1:12 so that the name of our Lord Jesus will be glorified [praised and honored] in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

1. “so that the name [Person] of our Lord Jesus will be glorified in you”

a. “Name” represents His Deity, Messiahship and Lordship.

b. God wants His Son to be glorified.

1) “Glorified” comes from “endoxazomai” [ehn dah **ksa** zah mi].

2) It means “glorify, adorn with glory.” See 2 Thess. 1:10.

3) God has glorified His Son by exalting Him on His right side. (Acts 2:32-36; Heb. 1:3).

c. When we honor Jesus we honor the Father. (Jn. 5:23).

Jn. 5:23 so that all will honor the Son even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.

2. “and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

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