THE FIRST EPISTLE TO THE THESSALONIANS.

INTRODUCTORY NOTES.

1. The Church of the Thessalonians was planted by Paul, in association with Silas and Timothy (Acts 17:1—9). Although some of the Jews believed, it was composed mainly of Gentiles, and their joyful reception of the message as the word of God was the prelude to active missionary operations in all Achaia and Macedonia (1:8), a territory about as large as Great Britain. In this respect especially they were a model church. From them sounded forth “the word of the Lord”, and they became examples to believers, showing the power of that word in their lives. The apostle writes in a joyful spirit, for he had just received from Timothy glad tidings of their faith and love (3:6).

2. A large part of the Epistle is occupied with the doctrine of the Lord’s coming, that coming which He Himself announced, Matt. 24:36; 25:31; 26:64; et al., the same coming of which He spoke in Acts 1:7, “it is not for you to know the times and the seasons which the Father hath put in His own power”. The similarity of Paul’s language, concerning “the times and the seasons” (5:1), bears instruction for us. Indeed throughout the Epistle the nearness of that coming is emphasizes (1:10; 2:12, 19; 3:13; 4:13—18; 5:1—11, 23). But, as has been well observed, that which draws near may withdraw also, and such we know to be the case, for owing to His people’s rejection of the King and kingdom, the latter is in abeyance till the “times of the Gentiles” are ended. 1 and 2 Thessalonians are unique in many respects; e.g. chronologically, as well as canonically (see Ap. 180, 192); the use of special terms in relation to the coming (parousia and epiphaneia) of our Lord; for these see Notes. And they are the only Epistles addressed to a church specifically.

3. This Epistle is the earliest of the writings of Paul, having been sent out from Corinth about the end of 52 or the beginning of 53 A.D. Some hold that, of all the books of the New Testament, it was the first written.

4. Thessalonica, now Salonica, on the bay of the same name, has always been one of the busiest ports of the Aegean. It was the chief city of a division of Macedonia, and is said to have had a population of 200,000 at the beginning of our era. Much smaller now, the city has always had a large proportion of Jews among its inhabitants.

The Companion Bible (Condensed) : I Thessalonians: page: 1787 (1)
1 Paul, and Silas, and Timothy, to the church of Macedonia and Achaia.

2 We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers;

3 Remembering without ceasing your work proceeding from faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope of our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God our Father;

4 Knowing, brethren beloved, your a vessel of election of God.

5 For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but in power also, and in the Divine power, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we became among you on account of you.

6 And ye became imitators of us, and of the Lord, having received the word within much tribulations, with joy of the Divine power:

7 So that ye became examples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia.

8 For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but ... in every place your faith towards God is spread has gone forth; so that we need not to speak any thing.

9 For they themselves report of us what

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1: 2-4. Thanksgiving.
1: 5. Reason. The Gospel received not in word but power.
1: 10-. Believers wait for God's Son. Their teaching while present.
2: 13-. Thanksgiving.
2: 15, 16-. Unbelieving Jews killed God's Son. Delivered to the wrath to come.
2: 17-. Their feelings while absent.


character. Ap. 17. 1. and would read "faithful work, loving labour, and hopeful patience".


word. Ap. 121. 10.


also, &c. = in power also.

assurance. Gr. pereoephoria. See Col. 2. 2.


for your sake = on account of (Ap. 104. v. 2) you.


also. The texts omit.

9 shew = report.
1.9. I. THESALONIANS.†

manner of "entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned unto God from idols to serve a living and true God; 10 And to wait for His Son from the heavens, Whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus, Which rescueth us from the coming wrath.

2 For yourselves, brethren, understand our entrance in [upon public life] unto you, that it was not in vain:
2 But even having suffered before, and having been treated with contumely, as ye know, at Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God with much conflict.
3 For our exhortation was not of deceit, nor of uncleaness, nor meant to decay:
4 But as we were tested, and so approved of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God. Which trieth our hearts.
5 For neither at any time used we a word of flattery, as ye know, nor a pretence of covetousness; God is witness:
6 Nor of men seeking glory, neither of you, nor yet of others, though we were able to be a burden, as the apostles of Christ.
7 But we were gentle in the midst of you, even as a nurse cherisheth her own children:
8 So being affections desireous of you, we were well pleased to have imparted to you, not the gospel of God only, but our own lives also, because ye were dear unto us.
9 For ye remember, brethren, our labour and toil for labouring night and day, with a view to our not being chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God.
10 Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holy and justly and unblameably we became towards you that believe:
11 As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and testified to each one of you, as a father doth his children, with a view to your walking worthy of God, Who called you unto His own kingdom and glory.

used. Lit. were (became) we in (Gr. en).
prophasis. See Acts 27. 30.
gentle. Gr. epios. Only here and 2 Tim. 2. 24.
will. = well pleased. unto. = to.
travail. = toil. Gr. mebhothos. See 2 Cor. 11. 27.
Gr. epibareo. See 2 Cor. 2. 5. any. Ap. 123. 3.
many. = towards. No prep.
paramuthoeimai. See John 11. 19.
His. = His own.

2:1-12. PAUL AND THE BRETHREN.
THEIR TEACHING WHILE PRESENT.
1 3. Their exhortation; not of deceit.
4. Their preaching.
4-6. God their witness.
7. Comparison; as a nursing mother.
9-10. Their labor; not to be chargeable.
11. Their preaching.
10. God their witness.
11, 12. Comparison; as a father.

1.9. entrance in. See 1. 9.
unto. Ap. 104. xv. 3. in vain. See 3. 5.
2 after that we had = having.
suffered before. Gr. proпасhao. Only here.
were, &c. = having been treated with contumely. Gr. hubrizo. See Acts 14. 5. Referring to their being scourged, though Romans (Acts 16. 37, 38).
were bold. Gr. parrhesiazomai. See Acts 9. 27.
with. Ap. 108. viii. In this verse the preposition en is transl. "at", "in", "with".
contention. Gr. agora. See Phil. 1. 30.
nor. Gr. oude.
4 allowed = tested, and so approved. Gr. dokimazo. Same as "trieth", and as "prove" (§ 21).
5 neither. nor. Gr. oue.

used we. Lit. were (became) we in (Gr. en).
flattering words. Lit. a word (Ap. 121. 10) of flattery. cloak. = pretence. Gr.

6 Nor. Gr. oue. sought we = seeking. glory. See p. 1511.
burdensome. Lit. in (Gr. en) a burden, i.e. for a burden. Gr. baros.
apostles. Ap. 189. among = in (Gr. en) the midst of.
nurse. Gr. trophos. Only here.
her = her own. This shows that a mother is meant. The image expresses the intensity of the affection.
8 affectionately desirous. Gr. himeiroimai, or himeiroimai. Only also, &c. = our own lives (Ap. 110. III. 2) also.
because, &c. = with a view to (Ap. 104. xv. 3) our not (Ap. 105. II) being chargeable unto.
justly. Gr. dikaios. See 1 Cor. 15. 34, and cp. Ap. 191. 1.
behaved ourselves. Lit. became.

every = each.

used we. Lit. were (became) we in (Gr. en).
2. 13.

I. THESSALONIANS. ♠

13 On account of this we also thank God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard from us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is truly, the word of God, which is made energetic also in you that believe.

14 For ye, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also ... suffered the same of your own countrymen, even as they also have of the Jews:

15 Who both killed the Lord even Jesus, and the prophets, and chased us out; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men:

16 Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles in order that they might be saved, with a view to their filling up their sins alway: for the appointed wrath is come upon them to the end.

17 But we, brethren, having been bereaved from you for a short time in your presence, not in heart, were diligent the more abundantly to see your face with great desire.

18 Wherefore we wished to come unto you, even I Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us.

19 For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus ... at His coming?

20 For ye are our glory and joy.

3 Wherefore when we were not longer able to bear it, we were willing to be left at Athens alone;

2 And sent Timotheus, our brother, and pastor and teacher of God, and our fellowlabourer in the gospel of Christ, with a view to establishing you, and to exhort you concerning your faith:

3 That no one should be agitated by these persecutions: for yourselves know that we are appointed unto this.

4 For verily, when we were with you, we foretold that we were about to be afflicted; even as it came to pass also, and ye know.

5 On account of this, when I was no longer able to bear it, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter ... tempted you, and our labour be in vain.

Athens. See Acts 17. 15, 16. When Silas and Timothy joined Paul, he and Silas must have agreed to dispatch Timothy to Thessalonica, and then Silas must have departed on some other mission. See in v. 5 the change from "we" to "I".


fellowlabourer. Gr. sunergos. See 1 Cor. 3. 9. The texts vary here.

Christ. Ap. 98. IX.


3 no man. Gr. medeita. moved or, agitated. Gr. saino. Only here.


should = were about to.

came to pass. Add "also".

5 For this cause = On account of (Ap. 104. v. 2) this.

have. Omit.
6 But now when Timotheus came from you unto us, and 
6 brought us good tidings of your faith and love, and that ye have good
6 remembrance of us always, desiring greatly to see us, as we also to see you:

7 For this cause, brethren, we were comforted over you in all
7 our persecutions and necessity by your faith:

8 For now we have life in all of its manifestations, if ye stand fast in the Lord.

9 For what thanks can we render to God again for you, for all the
9 joy wherewith we joy in order that we might see us, as we
9 also have forewarned you also (Ap. 104. vii. 5)

10 Night and day praying exceedingly for the seeing of your face, and might perfect the shortcomings of your faith?

11 Now God Himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus ...
11 direct our way unto you.

12 And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we also do toward you:

13 To the end he may strengthen your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints.

4 Furthermore then we request of you, brethren, and appeal to you by the Lord Jesus, in order that ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound the more.

2 For ye know what charges we gave you by the Lord Jesus.
3 For this is the desire of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication:

4 That each one of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honour;
5 Not in the lust of desire, even as the Gentiles also which know not God:

6 That he should not go beyond and get advantage on his brother in the matter: because that the Lord is the avenger concerning all such sins, as we forewarned you also and testified.

6 brought ... good tidings. Ap. 121. 4 The only place, save Luke 1. 19, where euangelizo does not refer to the gospel.
6 desiring greatly. Gr. epipotheo. See Rom. 1. 11.
6 Therefore. Same as "For this cause", v. 5.
6 over. Ap. 104. ix. 2. In same as "over".
6 distress = necessity, as 1 Cor. 7. 26.
6 live. See Ap. 170. 1. If. 1 Cor. 11. 1. b.
6 stand fast. Gr. steko. See Phil. 4. 1.
6 Lord. Ap. 98. VI. i. B. 2. A.
6 for your sakes = on account of (Ap. 104. vii. 2).
6 that we might. Lit. for (Ap. 104. vi) the seeing (Ap. 133. I. 1).
6 that, &c. = the shortcomings. Gr. husterema. See 1 Cor. 16. 17.
6 in = of.
6 Father. Ap. 98. III.
6 Lord. Ap. 98. VI. i. B. 2. A.
6 direct. Gr. kateuthuno. Here; 2 Thess. 3. 5. Luke 1. 79. Cp euthuno in John 1. 23 and Jas. 3. 4.
6 increase. Gr. pleonazo. See Rom. 5. 20.
6 love. Same as "charity", v. 6.
6 we = we also.
6 To the end. Ap. 104. vi.
6 establish. Gr. sterizo. See Rom. 1. 11.
6 unblameable. Gr. amemptos. See Phil. 2. 15.
6 holiness. Gr. hagiosune. See Rom. 1. 4.
6 before. See John 12. 37.

4. 1—5. 22 [For Structures see below].

4. 3—5. 22 Exhortation and Instruction.

4. 1—12. Exhortation.
4. 13—15. 11 Instruction.
4. 16—22 Exhortation.

4. 1—12. Exhortation.

1. Walk, as before God.
2. Commandments.
3. God's will: sanctification (positive and negative).
4. Brethren: not to be defrauded (negative).
5. God's call: sanctification (negative and positive).
6. Brethren: to be loved (positive).
7. Brethren.
8. Commandments.
9. Brethren, as regards men.

3 will. Ap. 102. 2.
3 sanctification. Gr. hagiasmos. See Rom. 6. 19.
5 lust. Gr. pathos. See Rom. 1. 26. The R.V renders it "passion".
6 no man = that he (should) not (Ap. 105. II).
6 go beyond. Gr. huperbaino. Only here. defraud. Gr. pleonektos. See 2 Cor. 2. 11.
6 more = the avenger. Gr. ekdikos. Only here and Rom. 13. 4.
6 such = such (sins).
6 also have forewarned = forewarned also. Gr. proiopo. Only here; Acts 1. 16. Gal. 5. 21.

The Companion Bible (Condensed): I Thessalonians: page 1791 (5)
For 'God' hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto sanctification.

He therefore that despiseth despiseth not himself, but 'God, Who giveth unto you His Holy Spirit.

But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write to you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.

And indeed ye do it toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia: but we appeal to you, brethren, that ye abound more and more;

And that ye strive to be quiet, and to attend to your own affairs, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you;

In order that ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing.

But we would not that you should be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are fallen asleep, in order that ye sorrow not, even as the rest also which have not hope.

For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, so we believe also that they which are fallen asleep through Jesus will God bring with Him.

For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not stand in the way of them which are fallen asleep.

Because the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a word of command, with the voice of the archangel, and with the last trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

Thereafter we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

So then comfort one another with these words.

INSTRUCTIONS.

1. Instructions as to those who are asleep.

2. First reason. For (gar) God will bring them from the dead.

3. Second reason. For (gar) those who are alive shall not stand in the way of them.

4. Third reason. Because (hoti) both shall be caught up together (hama).

5. Wherefore comfort one another.

6. Instructions not necessary as to times and seasons.

7. First reason. Because (gar) they know already the character of the day of the Lord.

8. Second reason. Because (gar) they shall sleep sleep in the night.

9. Third reason. Because (hoti) we are appointed to live together (hama) with Him.

10. Wherefore comfort one another.

11. Texts read "we".


15. The. Omit. Remain. Gr. perileipomai. Only here and v. 17. Is this subsequent to Phil. 3. 17?


17. Then. Gr. epeita, thereupon, thereafter.

18. Wherefore = So then.

The Companion Bible (Condensed) : 1 Thessalonians: page: 1792 (6)
5. 1. I. THESSALONIANS. †


But of the "times and the seasons, brethren, ye have not need that I write to you.

For yourselves "know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.

... When they ... say, "Peace and safety;" then "sudden destruction cometh upon them, as birth pangs upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, in order that that day should overtake you as a thief.

Ye are all the "children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.

Therefore let us not "sleep, as do others; but let us "watch and "be sober.

"For they that sleep "sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.

And we "beseech you, brethren, to "know them which labour among you, and "be at peace among yourselves.

And we "beseech you, brethren, to "know them which labour among you, and "be at peace among yourselves.

Now we "appeal to you, brethren, to "holdfast the "faith of Christ Jesus.

For yourselves "know. Ap. 132. i. 3.


3 For. The texts omit.


 Destruction. Gr. olothros. See 1 Cor. 5. 5.


4 that. = in order that. Gr. hina.

Overtake. Gr. kalatambano. See John 1. 5.


Nor. Gr. oude.

Watch. See Matt. 24. 42.

Be sober. Gr. nepho. Here, v. 8. 2 Tim. 4. 5. 1 Pet. 1. 13; 4. 7; 5. 8.


Helmet. Gr. perikephalaiia. See Eph. 6. 17.

9 For. = Because. Gr. hoti.

God. Ap. 98. i. i. 1.

Hath. Omit.


Jesus Christ. Ap. 98. XI.

10 Wake. = Watch. together. Gr. hama, as in 4. 17.


Also ye do. = ye are doing also.


13 Esteem. = reckon.

Very highly. Gr. luperekiposissos. See 3. 10 and Eph. 3. 20.

For their work's sake. = on account of (Ap. 104. v. 2) their work.

Be at peace. Gr. eireneuoi. See Rom. 12. 18.


Warn. = Same as "admonish", v. 12.

Unruly. Gr. ataktos. Only here. Cp. 2 Thess. 3. 6, 11 (the adv. transl. "disorderly").

Comfort. Gr. paramutheomai. See 2. 11.


15 See. Ap. 133. i. 8.


Among yourselves. = towards (eis) one another.


Without ceasing. See 1. 3.

18 Give thanks. Gr. eucharisteo. See 1. 2.


Christ Jesus. Ap. 98. XII.


20 Despise. Gr. exoutheneo. See Acts 4. 11.

Prophesying. Cp. 1 Cor. 12. 10; 13. 2, 8; 14. 6, 22. The reference to these gifts explains v. 19.


Sanctify. See John 17. 17.

Wholly. Gr. holoteles.

Whole. Gr. holokleros. Only here and Jas. 1. 4. The noun in

The Companion Bible (Condensed) : 1 Thessalonians: page: 1793 (7)
5. 23. I. THESSALONIANS. †

at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
24 Faithful is He That calleth you, Who will do it also.
25 Brethren, pray for us.
26 Greet all the brethren with an holy kiss.
27 I charge you by the Lord that the epistle be read unto all the ... brethren.
28 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. 

also, &c. = will do it also.
27 charge. Gr. orkizo. See Acts 19. 13, but the texts read enorkizo, which occ only here. this = the.

The Companion Bible (Condensed) : I Thessalonians: page: 1794- (8)