THE FIRST EPISTLE TO THE THESSALONIANS.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE EPISTLE AS A WHOLE.

(Introduction and Amendment.)

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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; 23. 44; 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 emphasized (1. 16; 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 App. 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 FIRST EPISODE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO THE

THESSALONIANS.

To Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, the church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

2 We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers;
3 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 our Father;
4 Knowing, brethren, beloved, your election of God.

5 For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost: and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake.
6 And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word only, but also also in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake.

7 So that ye were ensamples 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 also in every place your faith to Godward is spread abroad; so that we need no not to speak any thing.
9 For they themselves shew of us what

1. 2 Paul. In all his other Epistles, save Philippians, Thessalonians, and Philemon, apostolos is added. He was held in terms of tender regard and affection by the converts at Philippi and Thessalonica, and there was no need to assert his authority.

Silvanus. Same as Silas. A leader of the church at Jerusalem (Acts 15, 22), and a prophet (ix. 29), he accompanied Paul on his second missionary journey, and took part in the founding of the churches of Macedonia. Acts 16. 18.

Timothy. See 2 Cor. 1. 1.

NT 1. 1. unto. to church. Ap. 186. Thessalonians. This and the Second Epistle are the only ones addressed in this form. Romans, Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians are addressed to "saints". The two Epistles to the Corinthians to "the church of God at Corinth", and Galatians to the "churches of Galatia".

1. 2-3. 10 [For Structure see below].


2 For yourselves, brethren, know our entrance in unto you, that it was not in vain: but God, Which trieth our hearts,

3 For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloke of covetousness, 1 God is witness:

4 But as we were allowed of 2 God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but 3 God, Which trieth our hearts.

5 For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloke of covetousness, 1 God is witness:

6 Nor of men sought we glory, 5 neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ.

7 But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children:

8 So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of 3 God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us.

9 For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail: for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of 2 God.

10 Are witnesses, and 2 God also, how boily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe;

11 As ye know how we exhorted and comforted every one of you, as a father doth his children.

12 That ye would walk worthy of 2 God, Who hath called you 9 unto His kingdom and glory.

13 For this cause we also thank God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God, which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is the word of God, which worketh also in you that believe.
For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because,

when ye received the word of God which ye heard not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that ye believe.

For ye became followers of the churches of God which are in Judæa, for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews;

Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and of their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men;

Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins always.

For the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.

But we, brethren, being taken from you for a short time, in presence, not in heart, endeavoured the more abundantly to see your face with great desire.

Wherefore we would have come unto you, even Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us.

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

For ye are our glory and joy.

Wherefore when we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to be left at Athens alone;

And sent Timotheus, our brother, and our fellowlabourer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith:

That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto.

For verily, when we were with you, we told you beforehand that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know.

For this cause I, when I could no longer forbear, sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labour be vain in vain.

For this cause = On account of (Ap. 104. v. 2) this. you, even Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us.

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

14 For ye became followers of the churches of God which are in Judæa, for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews;

15 Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and of their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men;

16 Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins always.

17 But we, brethren, being taken from you for a short time, in presence, not in heart, endeavoured the more abundantly to see your face with great desire.

18 Wherefore we would have come unto you, even 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 Christ at His coming?

20 For ye are our glory and joy.

Wherefore when we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to be left at Athens alone;

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I. THESSELONIANS.

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

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14 For ye became followers of the churches of God which are in Judæa, for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews;

15 Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and of their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men;

16 Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins always.

17 But we, brethren, being taken from you for a short time, in presence, not in heart, endeavoured the more abundantly to see your face with great desire.

18 Wherefore we would have come unto you, even 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 Christ at His coming?

20 For ye are our glory and joy.

For the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.

But we, brethren, being taken from you for a short time, in presence, not in heart, endeavoured the more abundantly to see your face with great desire.

Wherefore we would have come unto you, even Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us.

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

For ye are our glory and joy.

Wherefore when we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to be left at Athens alone;

And sent Timotheus, our brother, and our fellowlabourer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith:

That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto.

For verily, when we were with you, we told you beforehand that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know.
But now when Timotheus came from you unto us, and brought us good tidings of your faith and charity, and that ye have good remembrance of us always, desiring greatly to see us, as we also to see you:

Therefore, brethren, we were comforted over you in all our affliction and distress by your faith:

For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord.

For what thanks can we render to God again for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God:

Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might be perfect in your faith?

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

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

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

Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us the receiving of the Lord Jesus Christ, with all His saints.

For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus.

For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication:

That every one of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honour;

Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God:

That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any manner: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified.

Exhortation and Instruction. (Introversion.)

Walk, as before God.

Commandments.

Walk, as regards men.


in. Gr. eis.

The R.V renders it “passion”, concupiscence = lust, or desire. Gentiles = Gentiles also.

and. Gr. de.

the. Gr. hoti.

concerning. See 2 Cor. 2. 11.

any. Gr. kai.

such. Gr. eido.

The only place, save Luke 1. 19, where euangetizó does not refer to the gospel.

The same as “For this cause”, v. 6.

to. Gr. eis.

same. Gr. homoi.

desire. Gr. epipotho. See Rom. 1. 11.

see. Gr. ekdikos. See Phil. 4. 1.

Lord. Ap. 98. VI. i. B. 2. B.


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


that we might. Lit. for (Ap. 104. vi) the seeing (Ap. 133. i. 1).


increase. Gr. pleonazó. See Rom. 5. 26.

love. Same as “charity”, v. 6.


To the end. Ap. 104. vi.

stabilize. Gr. stheicó. See Rom. 1. 11.

unblameable. Gr. anagwousos. See Phil. 2. 15.

holiness. Gr. hagios. See Rom. 1. 4.

before. See John 12. 37.


1. 1-5. 22 [For Structures see below].

beseech. Ap. 103. i. 3.


Lord. Ap. 98. VI. i. B. 2. B.

Jesus. Ap. 98. X.

that = in order that. Gr. hina.


more and more = the more.

know. Ap. 102. i. i.

I. THESSALONIANS.

4. 18.

holliness. Same as "sanctification", v. 2.
8 depiseth. Gr. atheteo. See John 12. 18.

4. 17. 3. THESSALONIANS. 4. 18.

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

18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

holliness. Same as "sanctification", v. 2.
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4. 17. 3. THESSALONIANS. 4. 18.

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18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

have you, &c. See Rom. 1. 13.

sleep. Ap. 171. 2. others=the rest. Ap. 124. 3. Add "also". no=not, as v. 5. 14 For. Gr. gar. if. Ap. 118. 2 a. believe. Ap. 150. i. 1. iii. rose again. Ap. 175. i. 1. even so them also. Read "so (we believe) also that them". sleep=sleep are fallen asleep. in Jesus=through (Ap. 104. v. 1) Jesus. This stands in the Gr. between the words "sleep" and "bring". To which does it belong? "Sleep in Jesus" is an expression not found elsewhere. In v. 16 the "dead in Christ" are spoken of, with which may be compared 1 Cor. 15. 18. And the proper meaning of dia with the Genitive is "through", though it is wrongly translated "in" in Matt. 26. 61. Mark 14. 52. 1 Tim. 2. 2. Eph. 7. 9; 13. 22, and "among" 2 Tim. 2. 2. The context will show that "through" is the meaning, as the R.V. renders it in margin. "Through" the Lord Jesus Christ we have peace, reconciliation, sonship, the Holy Spirit's gifts, victory, and many other blessings: Rom. 5. 1, 10; Rom. 8. 37. 1 Cor. 15. 55. 2 Cor. 5. 18. Eph. 1. 5. Col. 1. 20. Tit. 3. 6. Death is not a blessing, but an enemy. Inflicted by the Lord (Rev. 2. 23; 19. 21), and permitted by Him, it is the work of the devil (Heb. 2. 14. Rev. 2. 10), whose works He came to destroy. It is better, therefore, to take the words "through Jesus" with "bring", and read, "God will through Jesus bring with Him", with Ap. 104. xvi. 18 of. Omit. word. Ap. 121. 10. remain. Gr. periunomai. Only here and v. 17. Is this subsequent to Phil. 3. 11? coming. Cp. 2. 19. not. Ap. 106. III. prevent=anticipate. Gr. phthano. See Rom. 9. 31. "Prevent" meant "go or come before". Now it only means "stand in the way of". asleep=falling asleep. 16 For=Because. Gr. hoti. heaven. Sing. See Matt. 6. 8, 10. with. Ap. 104. viii. shout=word of command. Gr. akeia. Only here in N.T. In the Sept. in Prov. 80. 7, the rendering of v. 7. In the Sept. v. 7. the king of kings, yet it marches orderly at one word of command. archangel. Only here and in Jude 9, where he is called Michael, who connects this event with Dan. 12. 1. trump. Cp. Matt. 24. 31 and 1 Cor. 15. 52. the dead. Ap. 159. 1. Christ. Ap. 98. IX. 17 Then. Gr. epeita, thereupon, thereafter. caught up. Gr. haparrou. See Acts 3. 8, 2. Cor. 12. 4. Rev. 12. 1. 18 Wherefore=So then. comfort. Same as "beseech", v. 10.

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E. W. Bullinger
5 1. The Thessalonians

5.  1. But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.
5.  2. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.
5.  3. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then shall sudden destruction come upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.
5.  4. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.
5.  5. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.
5.  6. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.

6.  1. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.
6.  2. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.
6.  3. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,
6.  4. Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him.
6.  5. Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.

7.  1. And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you;
7.  2. And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And ye be at peace among yourselves.
7.  3. Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men.
7.  4. See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men.
7.  5. Rejoice evermore;
7.  6. Pray without ceasing;
7.  7. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.
7.  8. Quench not the Spirit;
7.  9. Despise not prophecies;
7. 10. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.
7. 11. Abstain from all appearance of evil.
7. 12. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit

8.  2. For. Gr. gar.
8.  3. know. Ap. 132. i. i.
8.  5. Lord. Ap. 98. vi. i. b. 2. b.
8.  7. 3. For. The texts omit. shall. Omit.
8.  9. destruction. Gr. olethros. See 1 Cor. 5. 6.
8. 12. that= in order that. Gr. hina.
8. 16. nor. Gr. oude.
8. 20. watch. See Matt. 24. 42.
8. 21. be sober. Gr. nepio. Here, v. 8. 2 Tim. 4. 5. 1 Pet. 1. 13; 4. 7; 5. 8.
8. 27. God. Ap. 98. i. i. i.
8. 28. hath. Omit.
8. 36. wake= watch.
8. 37. together. Gr. hama, as in 4. 17.
8. 40. also ye do= ye are doing also.
8. 43. are over. Gr. proiskomeni. See Rom. 12. 8.
8. 44. esteem= reckon highly. Gr. huperparistao. See 3. 10 and Eph. 3. 20.
8. 45. for their work's sake= on account of (Ap. 104. v. 2) their work.
8. 46. be at peace. Gr. eirenes. See Rom. 12. 18.
8. 48. warn. Same as " admonish", v. 12.
8. 49. unrightly. Gr. atakos. Only here. Cp. 2 Thess. 3. 4, 11 (the adv. transl. " disorderly")
8. 50. comfort. Gr. paraounomai. See 2. 11.
8. 59. evor. Ap. 151. ii. g. ii.
8. 60. among yourselves= towards (eis) one another.

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THE SECOND EPISTLE TO THE
THESALONIANS.
THE STRUCTURE OF THE EPISTLE AS A WHOLE.

(Introversion and Extended Alternation.)

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H | 1. 12-. THAT THE NAME OF THE LORD MAY BE GLORIFIED.

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C | 2. 1-12. ADMONITION.

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J | 3. 5. AND THEIR HEARTS MAY BE DIRECTED INTO GOD'S LOVE

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