

Bible Overview

More letters - Paul (2)

1 and 2 Thessalonians

Philemon

Hebrews

1 & 2 Thessalonians

Author: Paul

Time: A.D. 51

Summary: Paul had left Thessalonica abruptly after a rather brief stay (see Acts 17:5–10). Recent converts were left with little support in the midst of persecution. Paul's purpose in writing these letters was to encourage the new converts in their trials, to give instruction concerning godly living, to urge some not to neglect the daily work, to give assurance about the future of believers who die before Jesus returns and to explain some events which must take place before Jesus returns.

Key verse:

"May [the Lord] strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones" (1 Thess 3:13).

1 Thessalonians

1. Thanksgiving for the Thessalonians 1:1–10

2. Paul's ministry to the Thessalonians 2:1–3:13

- a) Paul's ministry when in Thessalonica 2:1–16
- b) Paul's longing to see the Thessalonians 2:17–3:13

3. Exhortations 4:1–5:22

- a) Concerning personal life 4:1–12
- b) Concerning the coming of Christ 4:13–5:11
- c) Miscellaneous instructions 5:12–22

4. Concluding prayer, greetings and benediction 5:23–28

2 Thessalonians

1. Introduction 1

2. Instruction 2

- a) Prophecy regarding the day of the Lord 2:1–12
- b) Thanks and prayer for the Thessalonians 2:13–17

3. Exhortations 3

- a) Call to prayer 3:1–3
- b) Warning against idleness 3:4–15

4. Conclusion, greeting and benediction 3:16–18

Philemon

Author: Paul

Time: A.D. 61

Summary: Paul writes to Philemon whose slave, Onesimus, had run away to Rome where he met Paul and became a Christian. Paul sends him back to his rightful owner with his personal letter of recommendation to accept him back with love as a brother.

Key verse:

"I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ" (v 6).

- 1. Greeting and thanksgiving 1–7
 - 2. Paul's plea for Onesimus 8–21
 - 3. Conclusion and final greetings 22–25
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Hebrews

Author: unknown

Time: before A.D. 70

Summary: This letter presents the superiority of the new covenant over the old covenant as seen in the Law of Moses. It is sometimes called the "book of better things" because of the frequent description of the new covenant as better or superior to the law familiar to the Jewish Christians who were to receive the letter. The main goal of the letter was to demonstrate that Jesus was the fulfilment of the symbols in the law and prophecies of the Messiah. With Jesus sacrificed as a sinless man, the need for repeated animal sacrifice was removed and the transient priesthood replaced by the eternal priesthood of Jesus.

Key verse:

"In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son" (1:1).

1. Prologue 1:1–14

- a) The superiority of God's new revelation through Jesus 1:1–4
- b) Old Testament support for this superiority 1:5–14

2. Jesus is superior to the old covenant 2:1 – 7:28

- a) Jesus made like his brothers to make salvation possible 2:1–18
- b) Jesus greater than Moses 3:1–6
- c) Warning about missing out on Sabbath rest 3:7 – 4:13
- d) Jesus of a better priesthood than Aaron 4:14 – 7:28
- e) Jesus in the priestly order of Melchizedek 7:1–28

3. Jesus High Priest of a new covenant 8:1 – 10:39

- a) Christ the High Priest 8:1–13
- b) Examples from the tabernacle 9:1–10
- c) The blood of Christ offered once for all 9:11 – 10:18
- d) A believer's rights and responsibilities arising 10:19–39

4. Faith 11:1 – 12:28

- a) Examples of faith 11:1–40
- b) God's discipline 12:1–13
- c) Warning against refusing God's offer 12:14–29

5. Conclusion 13:1–25
