

2Thessalonians 12-08-17b

We continue our study now in 2 Thessalonians chapter 1 verse 6, which says Since it is a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you On the surface we think well, that's great. People are giving me a hard time This would be the persecution side of affliction or tribulation. This is People induced suffering right? God's gonna get them.

All right, let's move on Go to verse 7 Well, my question is why is this here? He has just spent these The run-up to this section talking about how important it is for us to be balanced To recognize why we suffer and to keep our eyes on God's kingdom on God's righteousness on God's justice on our destination In the eternal future and not to be sidetracked and start thinking all kinds of malicious thoughts about people that might be doing wrong Then he turns right around and puts this in and I think well, how am I supposed to be objective and holy and Abstract when you're telling me to remember how these people are going to get their comeuppance This is actually a really fascinating Concept that the Apostle Paul introduces here and as with so many other things There is a right and balanced way to think about What is going to happen to people who make the opposite choice? Why are these people mentioned those who trouble you remember we talked about there is a thing that happens and then there is a Reaction to it, which is sort of a I'm gonna repay you evil for this thing that you're doing Think about the Jewish community in Thessalonica, in fact turn keep your finger in first second Thessalonians It's the end of first Thessalonians and turn back to Acts chapter 17. I want to point something out real quick Just by way of review. We saw this Back when we did first Thessalonians, but it's worth taking another look Acts chapter 17 Every time I get here I can't hardly get past the first part of the chapter because I keep thinking about When they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia and why Paul didn't slow down and stop there But I will not digress.

I will manfully trudge forward and get to what I'm looking for so Came to Thessalonica where there was a synagogue of what? of the Jews Paul did not go to the Agora. He didn't go to the Temple of Athena or Apollo or somebody he went to the synagogue, right? Why if anybody is interested in the God of Abraham Isaac and Jacob, where will they be? They're not gonna be at the Temple of Diana. Why waste your time? He didn't go to the airport and try to hand out tracts He didn't stand outside the abortion clinic and Thessalonica and try to hand out tracts.

Where did he go? He went to where it would be most likely for people to be found who are interested in the true God Because the closest place to getting information on the true God is the synagogue is the synagogue of the Jews as his custom was Paul went in to them and On the Sabbath on not only the the place where they assemble but the time that they assemble Looking for interested people not a costing disinterested people very important to observe Three Sabbaths reason to them explaining and demonstrating that the Christ had to suffer and rise from the dead saying this Jesus whom I preached to You is the Messiah Tying in the New Testament truth to their Old Testament understanding this Jesus I'm preaching to you is the Messiah. He is

the anointed one. He is the suffering servant of Isaiah He is the coming King.

He is the Son of David. He is the fulfillment of all of the old covenant promises So you can see how carefully and diligently Paul selected his audience Some of them were persuaded Kind of makes sense, doesn't it? It's a natural Development and concomitant and follow on to someone who has gotten as far as the Old Testament can take them and here's the advance Here's the the fresh revelation as it was for Paul himself When Jesus appeared to him and said look you're messing up there man, take a look at your Old Testament knowledge Paul said wow, I just had the wrong end of this thing and he becomes the Apostle to the Gentiles Multitude of devout Greeks and not a few of the leading women joined Paul and Silas who believed some of the Jews and Devout Greeks. These are Greeks who were searching for and had found the right God and just needed to get more information and Not a few of the leading women joined Paul and Silas But the Jews Acts 17 5 but the Jews who were not persuaded becoming envious Stirred up evil men in the marketplace gathered a mob This is always the way, you know, let's not have a debate let's Abuse your person whether it's verbally or here physically.

This is the response of people that don't have a good argument Well, I'll attack your person some way shape or form so the Jews stirred up a mob and When they couldn't find Paul and the rest of them, they they found their host and abused him next best thing find somebody associated with So the brethren in verse 10 sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea When they arrived, what did they do? They went into the synagogue of the Jews These Jews verse 11 in Berea were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica In that they received the word with all readiness and searched the scriptures daily whether these things were so and The answer they arrived at was yes, these things are so an Open heart and open mind a willingness to examine the facts and the truth of Scripture Ask and it shall be given seek and you will find and they were more fair-minded. They were more open-minded They were actual truth seekers. They were actual God seekers So many of them believed in verse 12 also not a few of the Greeks Prominent women as well as men notice how the gospel of Jesus Christ is Indiscriminate.

There's neither Jew nor Greek either male or female You can Grasp for yourself. You can be firstborn even if you're not a Jew you can be firstborn even if you're not a man but verse 13 Kind of reminds you of verse 5 but when the Jews from Thessalonica Found out that the Word of God was preached by Paul at Berea. They came there also and stirred up the crowds now was it the city officials at Thessalonica was it the priests of any Greek or Roman God that came down there? No, it was the Jews.

This is important Read this chapter in the entire experience who is Persecuting who is creating tribulation and affliction for Christians in Thessalonica who? Jews now are they believers or unbelievers? Kind of a kind of a close question most commentaries to say well these these were these are all hell-bound unbelievers They're in the synagogue, right? What is the synagogue place where you worship God? Oh, well, they weren't really didn't really believe in God sure They did they are Old Testament Saints Not advanced They are of the same type of Old Testament

Saint as those that dropped in the wilderness the same type of Old Testament Saint that tried to approach God with strange fire and got Incinerated the same kind that joined Korah, Dathan and Abiram and the earth opened and swallowed them up The the ones who grumbled and complained and were bitten by serpents believers but wrong-headed Rejecting the righteousness of God seeking to establish their own They are not Grasping the gospel. They're clinging to their idea of Old Testament faith, but they are believers They believe that God is and they believe that he will reward those who diligently seek him They just have their own way of diligently seeking. They think it's by their Works of righteousness that they have done and not according to God's mercy.

They're completely wrong-headed on spirituality But they are believers Is there any question in your mind that these Jews are believers? There's lots of Jews that are apathetic and indifferent. They're not at the synagogue They're not opening the the scrolls and reading Isaiah and Ezekiel and the other the books of the law They're not trying to impose in a misguided way think about Saul the Pharisee persecuting the church in his righteous zeal for God Paul said I I Testify that these Jews have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. They're ignorant and in being ignorant they Do more harm than good it would be better for them to be Unbelieving enemies than to be believing enemies fallen from grace cut off from Christ enemy of the cross all of these things apply But they are believers So that is important to what we're about to see back in 2nd Thessalonians chapter 1 Because it says it is a Righteous thing with God to Auntie Apo did a me aunt up a did a me Now this means that something was done There was a payment made and now God is going to repay those who are repaying These who are the people that are repaying the believers in Paul's gospel They're the Jews Believers are unbelievers.

They are misguided Old Testament Drop in the wilderness believers. This is my view It's important because look what comes up With tribulation those who are Tribulating you it's two different. It's a verb in a noun from Philipsis look at verse 7 and To give you who are troubled rest so God is going to give in verse 7 and There's you notice give is in italics.

What does that mean? It's not a Greek word behind it So guess what the same word the same verb applies to both God is going to aunt up a did a me those who trouble you with trouble and he is going to aunt apo did a me You who are troubled rest this word actually a good translation of it is Relief. This is on Asus a any SIS and it's not Gonna be troubled anymore No more Philipsis. God is going to grant respite cessation relief Now here's the thing Did a me up a did a me aunt up a did a me all have in view? Recompense a thing is done There is a response to that thing and possibly a response to that response, but it is caused by what you do People say oh, we're all going to glory because Jesus died for our sins on the cross Everybody will be happy over there Golden Streets mansions clouds angels harps wings Halos, it's all white robes.

It's all coming because of the work of Christ Not from this verb, it's the same verb see where it says give in italics It's not there because it's the same verb. God is going to Repay you who have

suffered and have been faithful There is recompense. This is a credit based on what you have done You labor in the field God says come in Green pastures cool water because you have been faithful This is not Grace in the sense of unmerited favor.

This is merited favor No way around it. That's what the verb means You have done something to qualify for this benefit. It doesn't just rain from the inscrutable Desires of God, I'm just gonna pick a handful of you and just bless your socks off.

No You perform to a certain standard and this blessing of rest comes Think about Caleb and Joshua Why did they enter the land of rest remember Hebrews? The whole discussion they could not enter in that rest there remaineth a rest for the people of God They could not enter into that rest why? Unbelieve who did enter into the rest Caleb and Joshua why? Not because God said I'm gonna sovereignly select two Israelites out of two million and give them rest They did something they believed something they said something They were faithful. They were patient. They had to wait 40 years for the payoff, but they were patient They never doubted the promise of God.

They never doubted that they could go in It doesn't matter for grasshoppers in their sight. It doesn't matter If if they outnumber us God has promised and they took that promise to the bank and because of that God gave them rest the generation that followed the drop in the wilderness generation had the faith to cross the Jordan to March around Jericho to pursue the enemies under General Joshua and with Fire and brimstone and hail falling from the sky. They fought the battles.

They took the land by faith They conquered. Well, this is an action, isn't it? So We sometimes think well, you know as long as I'm just not a bad person all these things will be added unto me No, we lay hold of them by an active obedience and active faith and God repays that faith God compensates reimburses our Obedience and faithfulness and patience. He recognizes it.

It is in the books He says you have attained to this level of reward. We get a little willy and uncomfortable about that I'm sorry, that's what it says That's what oppa did to me means to reimburse to repay God will repay wrath and tribulation and anguish on all those who do evil and he will repay Blessing and reward an opportunity on those who by faith and patience qualify to inherit Did Joseph do something to obtain the double portion? Did Judah do something to obtain the rulership in the family of Jacob? Yes It wasn't arbitrary. It wasn't whimsical.

It wasn't inscrutable You can go to the very chapter in Genesis and see why Judah got the rulership you can see the career of Joseph and understand why God gave him the double portion and made him a type of Christ he Qualified he was patient and he was faithful. We need to keep this in mind. This is an active thing.

We're not just kind of Floating like a helium balloon waiting for God to bless and to reward We act we have initiative we address we march we move we do what we can to stay off of byways and

sidetracks we Tread the narrow way through the straight gate that leads to life and we move our own feet. We walk we advance We establish our direction we do it and we are accountable and we are responsible You think about those Jews they heard the same gospel that these people believed that the women and the Greeks and and and many of The Jews believed these people had a different reaction they are going to read be repaid for that reaction of abuse and persecution God is going to repay them and God is going to repay the Greeks and the women and those Jews who believed with rest and with blessing and with reward that goes to the Overcomers Whoever heard of an overcomer that's just passive. Well, I was just kind of standing there and I suddenly found myself Having defeated the enemy.

I don't really know how it happened All of a sudden I just looked around and and the victory was won. I just found myself at the top of the mountain I don't really remember climbing it. I just here I am I just and apparently the Spirit of God grabbed me by the hair of the head and here I am on the on the top No Overcomers to him that overcomes I will grant I will give I will Oppa did to me.

I will aunt oppa did to me Give against the recognition of what has happened previously now this is where it gets really interesting turn to Psalm 137 Psalm 137 this Psalm is interesting for a couple of reasons it is one of the most frequently cited passages by unbelievers and atheists who hate Christianity hate God hate all things biblical and They love to throw this in the face of believers who typically don't have a good answer in the Septuagint You remember that LXX the Greek? Translation of the Old Testament that was current and had providence in Jesus day and in the times of the Apostles verse 8 of this psalm uses aunt oppa did to me a couple of times so this is during the Babylonian captivity God has used the Babylonians who was the king of the Babylonians Nebuchadnezzar Remember what happened to Daniel and his three friends Remember Ezekiel by the river K bar. Those are the Babylonians the hasty Babylonian Came in what happened to the temple? Why did they have to rebuild the temple because Nebuchadnezzar destroyed it? destroyed Jerusalem just just rapaciously Ruined the land and took the people of Judah captive, right? 586 So this is about that. This psalm was written after that by the rivers of Babylon We sat down and we wept when we remembered Zion, etc.

Etc. Go down to verse 7 remember Oh Lord against the sons of Edom the day of Jerusalem those sons of Edom who said Tear it down tear it down Knock it to the ground to its very foundation. Oh Daughter of Babylon pay attention for seven verse eight Oh daughter of Babylon who are to be destroyed happy the one who Antipodes you as you have on top of did a meet us Okay You put retribution on us now did Judah go abuse the Babylonians No Whole different thing there there they failed God They didn't do anything to the Babylonians, but the Babylonians came in and destroyed them, right? But they were recompensed for their resistance with this awful destruction and retribution and so the psalmist says happy is the one who repays you Oh daughter of Babylon as As You have repaid us What did the Babylonians do Not only did they tear down the temple to its very foundations Not only did they tear down Zion to its very foundations, but they raped they pillaged they plundered they slaughtered infants and children

much the same way if you recall that God commanded the Israelites to go in and destroy the Evil people of Canaan Those seven different people groups remember that Well, God said if you are obedient if you keep the covenant, I will bless you if you are disobedient You will suffer all of the plagues that I have pronounced upon Canaan and you are the instrument of bringing some of those plagues on these Morbidly Malignantly evil people child Sacrificing passing through the fire to Molech and all the rest of it.

God sent Israel in to destroy them. Well when Israel became apostate and Godless God sent the Babylonians to do the very same thing to them. Well, the psalmist says It's kind of like Jesus said about Judas these things must come but woe to him by whom they come It's not an excuse the fact that God is going to use Judas to put Jesus on the cross It is not an excuse for the Babylonians just because God is using them to chastise Judah it's still an inexcusable evil to abuse women and children and and maliciously gratuitously Tear everything down and destroy it So the psalmist says happy is the one who repays you as you have served us Happy is the one verse 9 who takes and dashes your little ones against the rock This is aunt.

Oppo did to me Why is the psalmist saying happy is the one who takes your babies and dashes them against a rock? Because this is what they did to Israel and it is Recompensed this is an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth and a life for a life You the Babylonians came in and they didn't just subjugate they didn't just defeat and bring into submission they Overdid it they were abusive. They were evil. They wrought carnage and destruction on the defenseless on Non-military, you know much trouble we get into if one stray round goes into a populated area in some foreign country Well, these guys did it on purpose and and with malice of forethought Slaughter slaughter slaughter taking the children in widespread manner and slaughtering them and With this vivid picture in his mind.

The psalmist says happy is the one who aunt oppa did amaze you So that you can experience what we have experienced. It's an eye for an eye You're so happy, you know, this is the reverse of doing to others as you would have others doing to you What you have done to us I hope someone does to you that's the sentiment and what why would he pray that prayer Verse 9 because this is what you all did to us Does this make sense now why this would be The the expressed desire of this psalmist You have this coming You have brought this on yourself By what you have done the people in Thessalonica the Jews of the synagogue who have Brought tribulation and anguish and destruction on people trying to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and walk in his way Have brought this on themselves. Would it be at all wrong for someone to pray in line with God's will? May tribulation come upon you in proportion to the tribulation that you have given God's people Believers in the Lord Jesus Christ.

It's perfectly legitimate. God is right to judge These who persevere and endure and are faithful To grant to them reward and he is equally just and right To see what these others have done and bring on their heads the very kind of tribulation they have perpetrated on others That's what's happening in Psalm 137. That's what's happening in 2nd 2nd Thessalonians chapter 1 and It is

right and proper the scale balances God's justice is just as proper in rewarding those who are faithful and patient as he is in bringing retribution on those who maliciously and Wantonly Persecute and afflict others They bring it on themselves.

God's not just saying I'm just gonna pick a few flies and pull their wings off I'm just gonna find a few ants and burn them with a magnifying glass just because it's fun It is earned it is in the books People by their choices bring this on their own heads Babylonians did it the Jews in Thessalonica did it and God says Through Paul to the Thessalonians. Listen before you start getting too big-headed that God is gonna reward you This is a function of the justice of God which is just as impartial and objective in Blessing and rewarding those who are obedient and faithful as it is in punishing and pushing away those who are not now How far does this extend look back at 2nd Thessalonians chapter 1 he will give you who are troubled rest with us with us you remember how Paul and Silas got run out of town With us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels That Jesus has been revealed from heaven in his first advent. When is he going to be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels? We know this from what Jesus said In the parable of the wheat and the tares He will send his his angels to remove all things that offend out of his kingdom This is at the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom This is at the end of the tribulation period the Lord Jesus is going why is he bringing the mighty angels? Because we are the spotless Bride without wrinkle or any such thing holy and without blemish The mighty angels are going to come down and there's going to be massive slaughter here.

That'll take more than seven months to clean up To prepare the kingdom. He's going to you know, two will be at the mill one will be taken in that left We'll be sleeping in a bed won't be taken in the other left Why because Jesus Christ appearing with his mighty angels is going to purge the earth The Old Testament Saints will be raised and there is going to be a sorting there is going to be a judgment where they pass under the rod and some are sent to the other side of the planet others are allowed into the kingdom of David's greater son, right? So we know the time of this judgment when Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire taking vengeance On those who do not know God and on those who do not obey The good news of our Lord Jesus Christ now if these Thessalonian persecutors were unbelievers How is the Lord Jesus going to take vengeance on them with flaming fire at the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom They're not around they're dead. The rest of the dead live not till the thousand years are over you say well Maybe it's proleptic and it's telescoped and it's just skipping the thousand-year millennia He says when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels That doesn't happen at the end of the tribulation period that doesn't happen at the Great White Throne that happens at the beginning One of the reasons you get the voice of the archangel is he's telling the rest of the angels forward march In flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ Can you be a believer and not know God? What did Jesus say in the reverse When when the Lord comes in glory and sits down to eat with the faithful Somebody's gonna knock on the door and say Lord Lord in your name Did we not do this that in the other and he will rise and say I never knew you and shut the door How

can he have this conversation if they're unbelievers and aren't raised? Many will come northeast south and west sit down with Abraham Isaac you yourselves thrust out How can they be thrust out if they're unbelievers? They're not even alive You have to really start spiritualizing and allegorizing to make those passages work They're talking about believers.

Who is it to cause the problem in Acts 17 Old Testament? Saints who do not know God who do not Respond to the good news of Jesus Christ. They could have leaped into the new dispensation They could have been body and bride of Christ like Paul like the other disciples Like so many that were there on the day of Pentecost These Jews that were all together in one place and here comes the Holy Spirit now their New Testament. They're the first Fruits of the body and bride of Christ these people could have been a part of that.

But no, they don't know God they don't obey the gospel and There is going to be flaming vengeance. This is the fire of destruction where The wood hay and stubble all go up in smoke and there's nothing they think they're righteous They think they are priests and brokers of righteousness and in relationship with God and they're gonna find themselves destituted and look at the final Phrases here in verse 9 These people shall be punished with everlasting Destruction now, this is not Apollia. This is not Thanatos It's not death This is ole thras a really interesting word.

I don't have time. We'll look at it next week But trust me when I tell you this is a really interesting word It doesn't mean that they're cast into the lake of fire and then worm dieth not the fire is not quenched this is devastation and loss These people will have nothing and that status is Permanent we've speculated. Well, is there possible as somebody way up weeds can make progress? not according to this passage these who have actively persecuted the Saints and have tried to keep them from coming to Christ and tried to To harm them for doing so will be everlastingly Separated look what it's from It isn't from life or from existence it's from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power the glow of The majesty of God the Father and God the Son the kingdom where the Lamb is the light is going to be a distant Gleam to these people.

That's how far away they're going to be. They will be banished from the presence of God These are people who felt like they were the closest and nearest to the presence of God That's why they're persecuting the believers in Thessalonica They think they're sort of like the the new age of priests. Well, we'll tell you how you can get to God They're gonna get the exact opposite.

They're gonna be so far away from God. They will be banished. They will be separated they will be Destroyed in the sense of utter and complete removal from the presence of God and from the glory of his power It'll be a glow on the horizon for them nowhere near the New Jerusalem nowhere near the gates Nowhere near the River of Life nowhere near the trees that grow on each side of it far far far away That's what it says If you want to say that this everlasting destruction is the lake of fire for unbelievers Try to work that backward through everything that Paul has just said.

What sense does it make? It's not unbelievers that are giving the Thessalonians a hard time It's not the Diana worshipers. They're they're better off hanging around with the Greeks than they are with the Jews It's the Jews It's these men who claim to know God and don't Who claim to know righteousness and don't who claim to know the way to God and they've rejected Jesus Christ Who is the way the truth and the life? Well, this ought to sober us radically Look how far it is possible to fall Look how badly you can mess up as a believer by failing the grace of God by ignoring the truth of God by persecuting the actual people of God Korah, Dathan and Abiram are going to be raised on day one of the Millennial Kingdom so with every Israelite who left the land of Egypt and dropped in the wilderness short of the promised land. They will all be raised Their firstborn sons were preserved under the blood of the Passover lamb they stood at Sinai and made a covenant with God in whom they believed and None of them but Caleb and Joshua made it to the land But they will be raised But did they grumble did they complain did they not know God? did they reject their prophet Moses their leader Moses in the same way that these people have rejected the Lord Jesus Christ and Paul the Apostle giving his message.

Absolutely. So I Would suggest to you Don't have to believe it if you don't want to it's not ironclad, but from every clue I can find These people who are punished with everlasting destruction this word destruction We'll see it next time Olatheros actually has the idea of corruption What did you do with something that was corrupt in Israel these people claim to be righteous they're the unleavened bread They're the the white robed. They're the the baptized in the mikvah.

They're the ones who know all about righteousness But like corruption they are going to be cast out. They're going to be separate They can't get anywhere near the holiness of God From the presence of the Lord from the glory of his power when he comes in that day to be glorified in his Sanctified ones the ones who genuinely got hold of righteousness and to be admired among all those who trust What day is that? That's the return Kind of combines not only the rapture, but specifically the second coming Because he comes to be admired by all who believe and these are the ones who believed in prospect as well as in retrospect Well, it's powerful. It's Mind-boggling what is on the line in our day-to-day reaction and response to the things that go on around us to Hardship to difficulty to adversity to persecution.

What's our response? Do we see it as the opportunity that it is? To gain the kingdom or do we get subjective like these Jews they saw it as a threat Well, this is gonna mess up my world. I've got to push this away. I've got to get this Out of sight and out of mind.

I've got to drive these seed pickers and rabble-rousers out of here and with that wrong reaction Instead of driving Paul and Silas and the Christians out of Thessalonica. They are going to be driven Out from the presence of God and from the glory of his power their Their retribution is going to be paid back Exponentially remember that Judge not lest you be judged for with the judgment that you judge others with that judgment. You will be judged right What have they done to the Thessalonian believers? That's going to be their judgment and it is everlasting.

It is Ionos What a price to pay but Why would Paul bring this up? Because it is symmetrical the rewards and blessings and inheritance are also Ionos everlasting once you obtain those once you Grasp and lay hold of those through faith and through the work of the Lord Jesus Christ here. They're irrevocable The gifts and the calling of God aren't taken back so it it's a symmetry and it Forces us to examine. Well, what is my response? Am I the Jews or? Am I those who by faith and patience inherit we don't fall back unto loss perdition.

Well fascinating passage We'll pick up here and do a little bit of a word study you'll be surprised to see where a Lathros shows up in Scripture not too many places, but those few passages are really Interesting to look at that's what we'll pick up next time Father, thank you for the truth of your word. Thank you for the clear Opportunities that you reveal to us the clear warnings that you express to us your Holy Spirit to Keep us ever mindful and impress these things on us. We pray that as we meditate as we pray as we consider our Decisions and our options that these things will remain with us and be Memorable enough to change our priorities and our goals so that we can exploit all of the wonderful Opportunities that are ours through the Lord Jesus Christ.

We pray these things in his name. Amen