

Notes on the Greek New Testament Week 71 — 2 Thessalonians 2:5-3:18

Day 351: 2 Thessalonians 2:5-12

Verse 5

Οὐ μνημονεύετε ὅτι ἔτι ὦν πρὸς ὑμᾶς ταῦτα ἔλεγον ὑμῖν;

μνημονεῦω remember, keep in mind
ἔτι still, yet, moreover

ἐλεγον – the imperfect suggests repeated teaching on this subject.

Verse 6

καὶ νῦν τὸ κατέχον οἴδατε, εἰς τὸ ἀποκαλυφθῆναι αὐτὸν ἐν τῷ ἑαυτοῦ καιρῷ.

κατέχον Verb, pres act ptc, n nom/acc s
κατεχω hold fast, keep, restrain

Conventionally thought here to mean 'hold back' or 'restrain,' though the verb can also mean 'hold fast.' It is difficult for us to be certain of Paul's meaning.

οἶδα know, understand

At present there is something that restrains the manifestation of the Man of Lawlessness. It is difficult for us to know what Paul was referring to here though clearly he had told the Thessalonians. It is wise for us to avoid dogmatic assertions since they can only be speculative.

ἀποκαλυφθῆναι Verb, aor pass infin
ἀποκαλυπτω see v.3

ἑαυτος, ἑαυτη, ἑαυτον him/her/itself
καιρος, ου m time, appointed time

What is clear is that God is in control. The Man of Lawlessness will only be revealed at the time of God's appointment.

Verse 7

τὸ γὰρ μυστήριον ἤδη ἐνεργεῖται τῆς ἀνομίας· μόνον ὁ κατέχων ἄρτι ἕως ἐκ μέσου γένηται.

μυστηριον, ου n secret, mystery

"The use of the term here reminds us that there are secrets as well as sin. We can never, by our own reasoning, plumb the depths of iniquity, the reason for its existence, or the manner of its working. Paul points out that even as he writes there is a secret activity of lawlessness at work. The explanation of it all is not open to us, but the fact of its being in operation is clear enough." Morris

ἤδη adv now, already

ἐνεργεω work, be at work (in)
ἀνομια, ας f see v.3

The forces of Satan are clearly already at work in opposition to the work of God, though they are restrained.

μονος, η, ον i) adj only, alone; ii) adv
μονον only, alone

κατεχω see v.6

ἄρτι now, at the present

ἕως until

μεσος, η, ον middle

γένηται Verb, aor subj, 3 s γινομαι

Verse 8

καὶ τότε ἀποκαλυφθήσεται ὁ ἄνομος, ὃν ὁ κύριος [Ἰησοῦς] ἀνελεῖ τῷ πνεύματι τοῦ στόματος αὐτοῦ καὶ καταργήσει τῇ ἐπιφραεῖα τῆς παρουσίας αὐτοῦ,

τοτε then, at that time

ἀποκαλυφθήσεται Verb, fut pass indic, 3 s
ἀποκαλυπτω see v.3

ἄνομος, ον lawless, outside the law

ἀνελεῖ Verb, fut act indic, 3 s ἀναιρεω do
away with, kill, destroy

στομα, τος n mouth, utterance

Emphasises the ease with which Christ destroys the final rebellion – with a word.

καταργεω render ineffective, do away
with

ἐπιφραεια, ας f appearing, appearance
παρουσια, ας see 1 Tess 2:19

What is clear from this passage is the outcome of this final unrestrained rebellion.

Verse 9

οὗ ἐστιν ἡ παρουσία κατ' ἐνέργειαν τοῦ Σατανᾶ ἐν πάσῃ δυνάμει καὶ σημείοις καὶ τέρασιν ψεύδους

οὗ refers to the lawless one who, in many ways, counterfeits Christ.

παρουσια, ας f coming, arrival, presence
ἐνεργεια, ας f (supernatural) working,
power

δυνάμει Noun, dat s δυναμις

σημειον, ου n miraculous sign, sign

τερας, ατος n wonder, object of wonder

ψευδος, ους n lie, untruth, that which is
false/imitation

The signs and miracles will be real enough but they are part of a plan of deception, a show designed to lead people astray.

Verse 10

καὶ ἐν πάσῃ ἀπάτῃ ἀδικίας τοῖς ἀπολλυμένοις, ἀνθ' ὧν τὴν ἀγάπην τῆς ἀληθείας οὐκ ἔδέξαντο εἰς τὸ σωθῆναι αὐτούς.

ἀπατη, ης f deception
ἀδικια, ας f wrongdoing, evil, sin
ἀπολλυμι destroy, kill, lose; midd be lost,
perish, die
ἀνθ ὧν because, therefore
ἀληθεια, ας f truth, reality; ἐν ἀ. truly

The truth of the Gospel is not an abstract philosophy but a revelation of the purposes of God to be embraced in love.

σωζω save, rescue, heal

Verse 11

καὶ διὰ τοῦτο πέμπει αὐτοῖς ὁ θεὸς ἐνεργειαν πλάνης εἰς τὸ πιστεῦσαι αὐτοὺς τῷ ψεύδει,

πεμπω send

The present tense may express the certainty of the future event or it "may also carry a hint that what will take place on the grand scale when the Man of Lawlessness comes is even now at work in principle in the case of lesser people. Whenever people refuse the truth, God sends the working of error." Morris

ἐνεργεια, ας see v.9
πλανη, ης f error, deceit, deception
ψευδος, ους see v.9

Even in the deception suffered by many, God remains sovereign, yet (v.12) man remains responsible and answerable. "Men start by rejecting the Gospel voluntarily; they then reach the stage when they are unable to tell what is gospel and what is fallacy. This is the powerful 'delusion' which Paul rightly regards as an Act of God." Neil

Verse 12

ἵνα κριθῶσιν πάντες οἱ μὴ πιστεύσαντες τῇ ἀληθείᾳ ἀλλὰ εὐδοκῆσαντες τῇ ἀδικίᾳ.

κριθῶσιν Verb, aor pass subj, 3 pl κρινω
judge, pass judgement on, condemn
πάντες Adjective, m nom pl πας
ἀληθεια, ας f truth, reality
εὐδοκῆσαντες Verb, aor act ptc, m nom pl
εὐδοκεω be pleased, take pleasure in

They are not passive agents in the rebellion against God.

ἀδικια, ας f wrongdoing, evil, sin

"The stark contrast reminds us that ultimately we must belong to one or other of two classes, namely, those who love God's truth and those who take their pleasure in wickedness. Those who begin by failing to accept God's good gift end by setting forward unrighteousness. Notice the way in which they become perverted. These people are not described as sinning through force of circumstance or any form of compulsion. They now find their pleasure in sin. They delight in wrong. For them evil has become good." Morris

Day 352: 2 Thessalonians 2:13-17**Verse 13**

Ἡμεῖς δὲ ὀφείλομεν εὐχαριστεῖν τῷ θεῷ πάντοτε περὶ ὑμῶν, ἀδελφοὶ ἠγαπημένοι ὑπὸ κυρίου, ὅτι εἴλατο ὑμᾶς ὁ θεὸς ἀπαρχὴν εἰς σωτηρίαν ἐν ἀγιασμῷ πνεύματος καὶ πίστει ἀληθείας,

ὀφειλω owe, ought, must
εὐχαριστεω thank, give thanks
παντοτε always
ἠγαπημένοι Verb, perf pass ptc, m nom pl
ἀγαπαω
εἴλατο Verb, aor midd indic, 3 s αἰρεομαι
choose
ἀπαρχη, ης f firstfruit, first portion

The variant readings ἀπ ἀρχης and ἀπαρχην are both well supported in MSS, versions and patristic citations. The UBS committee favoured ἀπαρχην on the grounds that ἀπ ἀρχης occurs nowhere else in Paul who generally uses ἀρχη in the sense of 'power.' Bruce also favours this reading, understanding it as a title for the church of God. Morris, however, believes that transcriptional probabilities favour ἀπ ἀρχης for the very reason that it is not a typical Pauline expression. He adds, "Moreover, while Paul employs the concept of firstfruits on a number of occasions, he never elsewhere connects it with election. On the other hand, he often associates election with some expression rooting it in the beginning. A further point militating against ἀπαρχην is the absence of a qualifying genitive, which, as Frame points out, is usual in Paul's use of that noun."

σωτηρια, ας f salvation
ἀγιασμος, ου m sanctification, holiness
πίστει Noun, dat s πιστις
ἀληθεια, ας f truth, reality

Morris suggests that the final expression may be intended to highlight the divine and human aspects of salvation.

Verse 14

εἰς ὃ [καί] ἐκάλεσεν ὑμᾶς διὰ τοῦ
εὐαγγελίου ἡμῶν, εἰς περιποίησιν δόξης
τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.

εὐαγγέλιον, ου η good news, gospel
περιποιησις, εως f obtaining, gaining

Verse 15

ἄρα οὖν, ἀδελφοί, στήκετε, καὶ κρατεῖτε
τὰς παραδόσεις ἅς ἐδιδάχθητε εἴτε διὰ
λόγου εἴτε δι' ἐπιστολῆς ἡμῶν.

στήκετε Verb, perf act imperat, 2 pl ἴστημι
intrans (in 2 aor, pf & pluperf; all midd &
pass) stand, stop, stand firm

κρατεω hold, hold fast, sieze, hold back
παραδοσις, εως f tradition

διδασκω teach

εἴτε if, whether

ἐπιστολη, ης f letter

What Paul had delivered to them, whether in
preaching or by letter, had been the word of
God.

Verse 16

Αὐτὸς δὲ ὁ κύριος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς
καὶ [ὁ] θεὸς ὁ πατὴρ ἡμῶν, ὁ ἀγαπήσας
ἡμᾶς καὶ δούς παράκλησιν αἰώνιαν καὶ
ἐλπίδα ἀγαθὴν ἐν χάριτι,

Cf. 1 Thess 3:11-13. The highest possible
position is given to the Lord Jesus Christ.

ἀγαπήσας Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s
ἀγαπαω

It is not clear whether Paul is speaking of both
persons or of the Father only. Morris thinks
probably the latter.

δούς Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s διδωμι
give

παρακλησις, εως f encouragement,
comfort

ἐλπις, ιδος f hope, ground of hope

χάριτι Noun, dat s χαρις, ιτος f grace,
unmeritted favour

Verse 17

παρακαλέσαι ὑμῶν τὰς καρδίας καὶ
στηρίξαι ἐν παντὶ ἔργῳ καὶ λόγῳ ἀγαθῷ.

παρακαλεω exhort, encourage, urge

I.e. strengthen the whole inner life.

στηριζω strengthen, establish

"The prayer is for inner strengthening ... with a
view to faithful Christian service." Morris

Day 353: 2 Thessalonians 3:1-5**Verse 1**

Τὸ λοιπὸν προσεύχεσθε, ἀδελφοί, περὶ
ἡμῶν, ἵνα ὁ λόγος τοῦ κυρίου τρέχη καὶ
δοξάζεται καθὼς καὶ πρὸς ὑμᾶς,

λοιπος, η, ον rest, remaining, other: (το)
λοιπον adv. finally

προσευχομαι pray

The verb is in an emphatic position. Cf. 1
Thess 5:25.

τρέχω run, exert oneself

For the imagery, cf. Ps 147:15.

δοξαζω praise, honour, glorify, exalt

Paul is writing from Corinth where there was
opposition and difficulty.

Verse 2

καὶ ἵνα ῥυσθῶμεν ἀπὸ τῶν ἀτόπων καὶ
πονηρῶν ἀνθρώπων· οὐ γὰρ πάντων ἡ
πίστις.

ῥυσθῶμεν Verb, aor pass subj, 1 pl ῥυομαι
save, rescue

ἀτοπος, ον improper, evil, harmful

πονηρος, α, ον evil, bad, wicked

"Both the use of the aorist tense in the verb
'delivered' and the article with 'wicked and evil
men' point to a definite situation. Paul is not
asking for prayer that he might be kept safe in
his constant journeys and preachings. He
writes in the light of his particular situation.
He writes knowing that his friends are aware
of his difficulty. He looks to them to join him
in prayer that he may be delivered out of it. It
seems most natural to understand his enemies
as those Jews who opposed his preaching...
We know that they dogged his steps at Corinth
as they did in other places (Acts 18:5; 12ff.).
His request reminds us of similar words
elsewhere (Rom 15:31)." Morris

οὐ γὰρ πάντων ἡ πίστις either 'not all
people believe' or 'not all have embraced the
faith.' The former leads perhaps more
naturally to the contrast of the following verse.

Verse 3

πιστὸς δέ ἐστιν ὁ κύριος, ὃς στηρίζει
ὑμᾶς καὶ φυλάξει ἀπὸ τοῦ πονηροῦ.

πιστος, η, ον faithful, reliable

The inclusion of ἐστιν is emphatic.

στηριζω see v.17

Cf. 1 Thess 3:2.

φυλασσω keep, guard, defend

πονηρος, α, ον evil, bad, wicked

Could be either 'from the evil one' or 'from evil.'

Verse 4

πεποιθήαμεν δὲ ἐν κυρίῳ ἐφ' ὑμᾶς, ὅτι ἂ παραγγέλλομεν [καὶ] ποιεῖτε καὶ ποιήσετε.

πεποιθήαμεν Verb, perf act indic, 1 pl
πειθω persuade, convince perf act & pass have confidence, be confident
παραγγελλω command, instruct

"Paul is putting his trust basically in the Lord. But he is expecting the Lord so to work in the lives of his friends that they will respond to the commands laid on them." Morris

Verse 5

Ὁ δὲ κύριος κατευθύνει ὑμῶν τὰς καρδίας εἰς τὴν ἀγάπην τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ εἰς τὴν ὑπομονὴν τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

κατευθύνει Verb, aor act opt, 3 s
κατευθυνω direct, guide

"Paul is about to deal with certain people who are idle and insubordinate. He never shirks an issue, and his directions when he comes to them are blunt enough. But it is not part of his plan to give needless offense, and the reference to the love of God is timely. It reminds them that Paul speaks of one who himself owed everything to the love of God and who loved God himself, and also that they are in the same position. There should be no resentment among people whose thoughts are fixed on God's love. Similarly the reference to 'Christ's perseverance' is in point when people's idleness is about to be rebuked." Morris

ὑπομονη, ης f patience, endurance

"There is some difficulty in knowing exactly what the following expressions signify. An expression like 'the love of God' might mean in Greek either God's love for us (which NIV chooses) or our love for God... [It is probable that] the primary idea will be that of God's love to us, but there will also be the secondary idea of our love for him. Paul's prayer, then, will be that the inner life of his friends be so concentrated on God's love for them that that this will evoke an answering love for him. Conformably to this, 'the perseverance of Christ'... will denote first the attitude of Christ, and then the answering attitude on the part of the Thessalonians." Morris

Day 354: 2 Thessalonians 3:6-10

Verses 6-13

"In the First Epistle Paul had mentioned that some people would not work but were disorderly (4:11-12; 5:14), but it is evident that his brief exhortations had not produced the desired effect. He felt strongly on the matter, as we see from the fact that in this letter he devotes so much space to this problem." Morris

Verse 6

Παραγγέλλομεν δὲ ὑμῖν, ἀδελφοί, ἐν ὀνόματι τοῦ κυρίου [ἡμῶν] Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, στέλλεσθαι ὑμᾶς ἀπὸ παντὸς ἀδελφοῦ ἀτάκτως περιπατοῦντος καὶ μὴ κατὰ τὴν παράδοσιν ἣν παρελάβοσαν παρ' ἡμῶν.

παραγγελλω see v.4
ὄνομα, τος n name, person, authority
στελλομαι try to guard against, avoid; σ. ἀπο keep away from, shun

"In view of verse 15 this does not mean 'abstain from all interaction,' but it stands for the withholding of intimate fellowship." Morris
ἀτακτως in idleness, in laziness

Compare 1 Thess 5:14

περιπατεω walk, walk about, live
παραδοσις, εως see 2:15
παραλάβοσαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s
παραλαμβάνω take, receive, accept

The weight of textual evidence is fairly evenly divided between παρελαβοσαν and παρελαβετε. UBS prefers the former as the 'harder' reading and the one more likely to explain the origin of the other. Morris prefers the latter saying that it is possible that the former "arose by what Westcott and Hort call 'an ocular confusion' with the ending παραδοσιν in the corresponding place in the line above." He adds, "Moulton thinks it 'more than doubtful' that παρελαβοσαν can be accepted, since the termination is so very rare at this period."

Verse 7

αὐτοὶ γὰρ οἶδατε πῶς δεῖ μιμεῖσθαι ἡμᾶς, ὅτι οὐκ ἠτακτήσαμεν ἐν ὑμῖν

πως how(?), in what way(?)
δει impersonal verb it is necessary, must, should, ought
μιμεομαι imitate, follow another's example

Cf. 1 Thess 1:5-6.

ἀτακτεω be lazy, idle

Verse 8

οὐδὲ δωρεάν ἄρτον ἐράγομεν παρά τινος, ἀλλ• ἐν κόπῳ καὶ μόχθῳ νυκτὸς καὶ ἡμέρας ἐργαζόμενοι πρὸς τὸ μὴ ἐπιβαρῆσαί τινα ὑμῶν·

οὐδε **neither, nor**

δωρεαν **without cost, freely, for nothing**
 ἄρτος, ου **m bread, a loaf, food**
 ἐράγομεν **Verb, aor act indic, 1 pl ἐσθιω**
 and ἐσθω **eat, consume**

"To eat bread' is evidently a Semitism for 'get a living,' not simply 'get a meal,' or even 'meals' (cf. Gen 3:19; Amos 7:12, etc.). Paul does not mean that he had never accepted a hospitable invitation, but that he had not depended on other people for his means of livelihood." Morris

κοπος, ου **m work, labour trouble**
 μοχθος, ου **m labour, hardship**
 νυξ, νυκτος **f night**
 ἐπιβαρῆσαί **Verb, aor act infin ἐπιβαρεω**
be a financial burden

Cf. 1 Thess 2:9

Verse 9

οὐχ ὅτι οὐκ ἔχομεν ἐξουσίαν, ἀλλ• ἵνα ἑαυτοὺς τύπον δώμεν ὑμῖν εἰς τὸ μιμεῖσθαι ἡμᾶς.

ἐξουσια, ας **f authority, right**

Compare 1 Corinthians 9:3-14 for a fuller statement concerning the rights of an apostle and Paul's attitude toward such rights.

ἑαυτος, ἑαυτη, ἑαυτον **him/her/itself**
 τυπος, ου **m pattern, example, type**

Cf. 1 Thess 1:7; 2:8.

δώμεν **Verb, aor act subj, 1 pl διδομι**
give

μιμεομαι **see v.7**

Verse 10

καὶ γὰρ ὅτε ἦμεν πρὸς ὑμᾶς, τοῦτο παρηγγέλλομεν ὑμῖν, ὅτι εἴ τις οὐ θέλει ἐργάζεσθαι μηδὲ ἐσθιέτω.

ὅτε **conj when, at which time**

παραγγελλω **see v.4**

θελω **wish, will**

The injunction applies to those who *will not* (do not want to) work, not to those who cannot. "Paul is giving the clearest expression to the thought that the Christian cannot be a drone. It is obligatory for him to be a worker." Morris

μηδε **negative particle nor, neither**
 ἐσθιέτω **Verb, pres act imperat, 3 pl ἐσθιω**
 and ἐσθω **eat, consume**

Day 355: 2 Thessalonians 3:11-18**Verse 11**

ἀκούομεν γὰρ τινας περιπατοῦντας ἐν ὑμῖν ἀτάκτως, μηδὲν ἐργαζομένους ἀλλὰ περιεργαζομένους·

ἀκούομεν **It is not clear how Paul heard this news – it may even have been by letter. The present tense could suggest 'we keep hearing' or may simply mean 'we have heard.'**

τινας **Pronoun, m & f acc pl τις**
 ἀτακτως **see v.6**

Cf. 1 Thess 5:14.

μηδεις, μηδεμα, μηδεν **no one, nothing**
 περιεργαζομαι **be a busybody**

Perhaps busying themselves in encouraging others also to be idle.

Verse 12

τοῖς δὲ τοιούτοις παραγγέλλομεν καὶ παρακαλοῦμεν ἐν κυρίῳ Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ ἵνα μετὰ ἡσυχίας ἐργαζόμενοι τὸν ἑαυτῶν ἄρτον ἐσθίωσιν.

τοιουτος, αυτη, ουτον **correlative pronoun and adjective such, of such kind**

παραγγελλω **see v.4**

παρακαλεω **exhort, encourage, urge**

Adds a softer note to the command.

ἡσυχια, ας **f silence, quietness**

ἑαυτος, ἑαυτη, ἑαυτον **see v.9**

ἄρτος, ου **see v.8**

Verse 13

Ἔμεῖς δέ, ἀδελφοί, μὴ ἐγκακήσητε καλοποιοῦντες.

Ἔμεῖς δέ **i.e. the majority of the church.**

ἐγκακήσητε **Verb, aor act subj, 2 pl**

ἐγκακεω **become discouraged, tire of**
 καλοποιεω **do what is good**

Part of this doing good is for them to seek to win over the idle.

Verse 14

εἰ δέ τις οὐχ ὑπακούει τῷ λόγῳ ἡμῶν διὰ τῆς ἐπιστολῆς, τοῦτον σημειοῦσθε, μὴ συναναμίγνυσθαι αὐτῷ, ἵνα ἐντραπή·

ὑπακουω **obey, be subject to**

ἐπιστολη, ης **f letter**

σημειοομαι **take note of**

συναναμιγνυμι **associate with**

The injunction is to withdraw from close fellowship but (v.15) not to exclude the brother completely. The same verb is used in 1 Cor 5:9-13.

ἐντραπή Verb, aor pass subj, 3 s ἐντραπεῶ
make ashamed

Verse 15

καὶ μὴ ὡς ἐχθρὸν ἠγείσθε, ἀλλὰ
νουθετεῖτε ὡς ἀδελφόν.

ἐχθρος, α, ον enemy, one hated
ἠγεομαι think, regard, consider

"Throughout this whole section he aims at having the dissident reclaimed in a spirit of love. The actions enjoined in verse 14 are just as kindly intentioned as those in this verse."
Morris

νουθετεῶ instruct, teach, warn

Cf. 1 Thess 5:12,14.

Verse 16

Αὐτὸς δὲ ὁ κύριος τῆς εἰρήνης δῶη ὑμῖν
τὴν εἰρήνην διὰ παντὸς ἐν παντὶ τρόπῳ. ὁ
κύριος μετὰ πάντων ὑμῶν.

εἰρηνη, ης f peace
δῶη Verb, aor act opt, 3 s διδωμι give

διὰ παντὸς 'continually'

τρόπος, ου m way, manner

"Has within it the idea of the manner in which conditions alter. No change in that which is outward can interfere with the Christian's deep-seated peace... The Christian's peace is never independent of the Lord. It is the gift of the Lord, and it is impossible apart from him; indeed, it is the very presence of the Lord. It is only as the Lord is in the heart of the believer day by day that he knows this peace."
Morris

Verse 17

Ὁ ἀσπασμὸς τῆ ἐμῆ χειρὶ Παύλου, ὃ ἐστὶν
σημεῖον ἐν πάσῃ ἐπιστολῇ· οὕτως γράφω.

ἀσπασμος, ου m greeting
ἐμος, η, ον 1st pers possessive adj my,
mine

χειρ, χειρος f hand, power

Paul's practice would seem to have been to dictate his letters to an amanuensis who wrote them down (see particularly Rom 16:22). Paul would add the closing words of greeting in his own hand. This practice seems to have been not uncommon at that time.

σημεῖον, ου n sign
ἐπιστολη, ης see v.14

Paul's words may have been prompted by the uncertainty alluded to in 2:2.

Verse 18

ἡ χάρις τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ
μετὰ πάντων ὑμῶν.

Not the inclusion of 'all.'

χαρις, ιτος f grace