

Question – Does 1Th 4.13-18 refer to 2nd coming or the judgment day?

Act 17:1 Now when they had traveled through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. (about AD 51-52)

Unlike all subsequent Pauline epistles, 1 Thessalonians does not focus on justification or questions of Jewish–Gentile relations, themes that are covered in all other letters.

The date of the writing – AD 51. How do we know?

Paul had to leave Thessalonica as well as Berea soon after his arrival.

Act 17:10 As soon as it was night, the believers sent Paul and Silas away to Berea. On arriving there, they went to the Jewish synagogue.

Act 17:13-15 But when the Jews in Thessalonica learned that Paul was preaching the word of God at Berea, some of them went there too, agitating the crowds and stirring them up. (14) The believers immediately sent Paul to the coast, but Silas and Timothy stayed at Berea. (15) Those who escorted Paul brought him to Athens and then left with instructions for Silas and Timothy to join him as soon as possible.

1Th 2:1-2 You know, brothers and sisters, that our visit to you was not without results. (2) We had previously suffered and been treated outrageously in Philippi, as you know, but with the help of our God we dared to tell you his gospel in the face of strong opposition.

1Th 3:6 But Timothy has just now come to us from you and has brought good news about your faith and love. He has told us that you always have pleasant memories of us and that you long to see us, just as we also long to see you.

Timothy and Silas had been left in Berea Acts 17.14 and now Timothy comes to Athens with news.

This would make this the first of Paul's epistles, written soon after arriving in Greece – as he gets to Corinth where he stays for 1 ½ years – About AD 51

This would indicate that Paul had not had time to answer many of their questions.

There was a new teaching in the Gospel which the brethren had not heard before. Paul is speaking on this very subject as he reaches Athens.

Act 17:16-20 While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was greatly distressed to see that the city was full of idols. (17) So he reasoned in the synagogue with both Jews and God-fearing Greeks, as well as in the marketplace day by day with those who happened to be there.

(18) A group of Epicurean and Stoic philosophers began to debate with him. Some of them asked, "What is this babbler trying to say?" Others remarked, "He seems to be advocating foreign gods." They said this because Paul was preaching the good news about Jesus and the resurrection.

(19) Then they took him and brought him to a meeting of the Areopagus, where they said to him, "May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting? (20) You are bringing some strange ideas to our ears, and we would like to know what they mean."

Act 17:30-32 In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. (31) For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead." (32)

When they heard about the resurrection of the dead, some of them sneered, but others said, "We want to hear you again on this subject."

Paul has the same questions later in Corinth.

1Co 15:1-3 Now, brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. (2) By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. (3) For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,

Jesus taught about this in parables.

Mat 13:40-43 "So just as the tares are gathered up and burned with fire, so shall it be at the end of the age. (41) "The Son of Man will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness, (42) and will throw them into the furnace of fire; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. (43) "Then THE RIGHTEOUS WILL SHINE FORTH AS THE SUN in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.

At the end of the age? Will this be then end of the world or the end of the Jewish age (70 AD)?

Luk 20:34-35 Jesus said to them, "The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage, (35) but those who are considered worthy to attain to that age and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage;

The Greek word used is the same. Jesus contrasts this age where people marry and that age where they do not! He equates it with the resurrection of the dead – the end of time!

Paul assures the Thessalonians there will be a resurrection.

1Th 4:13-18 But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. (14) For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. (15) For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep.

(16) For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. (17) Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. (18) Therefore comfort one another with these words.

Eph 2:12 *remember* that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

1Co 15:12-18 But if it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? (13) If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. (14) And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith. (15) More than that, we are then found to be false witnesses about God, for we have testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead. But he did not raise him if in fact the dead are not raised. (16) For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either. (17) And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. (18) Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost.

The Lord will return!

The faithful dead rise first to meet the Lord and receive a new body

1Co 15:37-38 and that which you sow, you do not sow the body which is to be, but a bare grain, perhaps of wheat or of something else. (38) But God gives it a body just as He wished, and to each of the seeds a body of its own.

The faithful living meet the dead and their Lord in
the air.

1Co 15:50 Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and
blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor
does the perishable inherit the imperishable. (51)
Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep,
but we will all be changed, (52) in a moment, in
the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for
the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be
raised imperishable, and we will be changed. (53)
For this perishable must put on the imperishable,
and this mortal must put on immortality.

2Th is written shortly after 1Th as questions remain.

The unbelieving and disobedient are destroyed in
flaming fire

2Th 1:7-9 and *to give* relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, (8) dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. (9) These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,

The question for each of us is where will we be on that day when the Lord returns?

In the air or left behind?

For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep.

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then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air

