

Men Assured of Destruction

I Thess 2:14-16

¹⁴ For you, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God which are in Judea in Christ Jesus. For you also suffered the same things from your own countrymen, just as they *did* from the Judeans, ¹⁵ who killed both the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they do not please God and are contrary to all men, ¹⁶ forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved, so as always to fill up *the measure of* their sins; but wrath has come upon them to the uttermost.

INTRODUCTION

Warning of Rejection in the Hebrews

Hebrews

2;1-4

Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. ² For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, ³ how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard *Him*, ⁴ God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with

various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?

Hebrews 3:12 -19

¹² Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; ¹³ but exhort one another daily, while it is called *“Today,”* lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. ¹⁴ For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end, ¹⁵ while it is said:

*“Today, if you will hear His voice,
Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion.”*

Failure of the Wilderness Wanderers

¹⁶ For who, having heard, rebelled? Indeed, *was it* not all who came out of Egypt, *led* by Moses? ¹⁷ Now with whom was He angry forty years? *Was it* not with those who sinned, whose corpses fell in the wilderness? ¹⁸ And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who did not obey? ¹⁹ So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.

6 Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary *principles* of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, ² of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of

hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.
³ And this we will do if God permits.

⁴ For *it is* impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, ⁵ and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, ⁶ if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put *Him* to an open shame.

⁷ For the earth which drinks in the rain that often comes upon it, and bears herbs useful for those by whom it is cultivated, receives blessing from God; ⁸ but if it bears thorns and briars, *it is* rejected and near to being cursed, whose end *is* to be burned.

LESSON

The Church at Thessalonica were just like the churches in Judea in that they had received the Word in the context of Persecution. They were clearly the opposite of the response of the **Jewish nation** who had rejected the messiah,

They had **Rejected the Word**
Hindered the gospel
Assured their destruction

The Thessalonians had
Received the Word
Enabled the Gospel
Assured their Reward

14 For you, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God which are in Judea in Christ Jesus. For you also suffered the same things from your own countrymen, just as they *did* from the Judeans,

1st For

gar: for, indeed (a conjunc. used to express cause, explanation, inference or continuation)

Original Word: γάρ

Part of Speech: Conjunction

Transliteration: gar

Phonetic Spelling: (gar)

Short Definition: for

For (1063)(gar) is a conjunction which introduces an explanation and in the present context explains that the the clear evidence of the Thessalonians' acceptance of the Gospel as the Word of God and that Word performing its supernatural work in their hearts (note [1Thess 2:13](#)) is demonstrated by their willingness to endure sufferings for the sake of the Gospel. Their willingness to suffer for the Gospel is added authentication of the veracity of their conversion to God from idols.

became -Aorist passive

ginomai: to come into being, to happen, to become

Original Word: γίνομαι

Part of Speech: Verb

Transliteration: ginomai

Phonetic Spelling: (ghin'-om-ahee)

Short Definition: I come into being, am born

Definition: I come into being, am born, become, come about, happen.

HELPS Word-studies

1096 *gínomai* – properly, to *emerge, become, transitioning* from one point (realm, condition) to another. **1096** (*gínomai*) fundamentally means "*become*" (becoming, became) so it is *not* an exact equivalent to the ordinary equative verb "to be" (*is, was, will be*) as with **1510** /*eimí* (**1511** / *eínai*, **2258** /*ēn*).

1096 (*ginomai*) means "to *become*, and signifies a *change of condition, state or place*" (Vine, Unger, White, *NT*, 109).

Imitators-

mimétés: an imitator

Original Word: μιμητής, οὔ, ὁ

Part of Speech: Noun, Masculine

Transliteration: mimétés

Phonetic Spelling: (mim-ay-tace')

Short Definition: an imitator

Definition: an imitator, follower.

Imitators (3402) (**mimetes**) means one who follows. **Mimetes** basically means to copy or imitate someone's behavior and has many related words in English - "mime" (one who acts out an imitation of another person or animal), "pantomime" (a theater production which originally was without words), "mimeograph" (a machine which makes many copies from one stencil).

2nd For

hoti: that, because

Original Word: ὅτι

Part of Speech: Conjunction

Transliteration: hoti

Phonetic Spelling: (hot'-ee)

Short Definition: that, since, because

Definition: that, since, because; may introduce direct discourse.

For (hoti) can be translated **because** and here presents the evidence that the Thessalonian believers had become imitators of the Judean churches. The saints in Judea suffered at the hands of the Jews, and the saints in Thessalonica suffered at the hands of the Gentiles, but even this Gentile persecution was encouraged by the Jewish unbelievers ([Acts 17:5, 13](#)). Jesus promised that this would happen ([John 15:18-27](#)).

It is amazing to me that of all the things that could be said the made it clear that they were followers of Christ is not their morality, or there rejection of idolatry, but rather there persecution The hatred of the world, or even the hatred of the the religious community

This is growing more and more

Sociologists at the University of North Texas are issuing a cautionary warning to Christians noting that, though there isn't widespread "Christianophobia" in the U.S., the small group of those who have a strong aversion to conservative believers are among the influential and elite. George Yancey and David Williamson shared findings corroborating this notion in their recently released book "[So Many Christians, So Few Lions: Is There Christianophobia in the United States?](#)" which promises to offer a "provocative look at anti-Christian sentiments in America."

The sociologists, [who define](#) Christianophobia as "unreasonable hatred or fear of Christians," argue that it's worth exploring potential intense bias against Christians, as it helps readers understand the "social dynamics" that exist in the U.S., according to [an official book description](#).

As far as how prevalent the problem truly is, Yancey [told the Christian Post](#) that it's really a small group of people that hold strong hostility, though that group is comprised of elite individuals with more societal power than the average person.

Yancey said that he and his co-author were motivated to explore potential Christianophobia after they began collecting qualitative data from interviews with liberal activists and noticed a troubling trend among a certain subset of these respondents.

That in mind, a few months ago, the sociologist shared a sampling of some of the “unreasonable hatred” he said he encountered through interviews **with cultural progressive activists** for the purpose of his study. Here are just three of the comments that were made about the Christian right:

“I want them all to die in a fire.” (Male, aged 26-35 with Doctorate)

“They should be eradicated without hesitation or remorse. Their only purpose is to damage and inflict their fundamentalist virus onto everyone they come in contact with.” (Female, aged 66-75 with Master degree)

“They make me a believer in eugenics....They pollute good air...I would be in favor of establishing a state for them... If not, then sterilize them so they can't breed more.” (Male, aged 46-55 with Master degree)

I. The Rejection Made

who killed both the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and have persecuted us;

Matt 21:33-43

³³ “Hear another parable: There was a certain landowner who planted a vineyard and set a hedge around it, dug a winepress in it and built a tower. And he leased it to vinedressers and went into a far country. ³⁴ Now when vintage-time drew near, he sent his servants to the vinedressers, that they might receive its fruit.

³⁵ And the vinedressers took his servants, beat one, killed one, and stoned another. ³⁶ Again he sent other servants, more than the first, and they did likewise to them. ³⁷ Then last of all he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' ³⁸ But when the vinedressers saw the son, they said among themselves, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance.' ³⁹ So they took him and cast *him* out of the vineyard and killed *him*.

⁴⁰ "Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vinedressers?"

⁴¹ They said to Him, "He will destroy those wicked men miserably, and lease *his* vineyard to other vinedressers who will render to him the fruits in their seasons."

⁴² Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures:

*'The stone which the builders rejected
Has become the chief cornerstone.
This was the Lord's doing,
And it is marvelous in our eyes'?*

⁴³ "Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it. ⁴⁴ And whoever falls on this stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder."

Matt 23:31-36

³¹ "Therefore you are witnesses against yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. ³² Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers' *guilt*. ³³ Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell? ³⁴ Therefore, indeed, I send you prophets, wise men, and scribes: *some* of them you will kill and crucify, and *some* of them you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city, ³⁵ that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom

you murdered between the temple and the altar. ³⁶ Assuredly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation.

Acts 2:22-23

²² “Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know —²³ Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death;

Acts 7:51-52

⁵¹ “*You* stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! You always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers *did*, so *do* you.

⁵² Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Just One, of whom you now have become the betrayers and murderers, ⁵³ who have received the law by the direction of angels and have not kept *it*.”

Heb 11:35b-38

Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. ³⁶ Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. ³⁷ They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented—³⁸ of whom the world was not worthy.

I Kings 19:10

“What are you doing here, Elijah?”

¹⁰ So he said, "I have been very zealous for the Lord God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars, and killed Your prophets with the sword. I alone am left; and they seek to take my life."

v. 15b

and they do not please God and are contrary to all men.

The misguided, deluded Jews thought that by such hostile deeds they were pleasing to God as explained by Jesus to His disciples that the Jews...

will make you outcasts from the synagogue, but an hour is coming for everyone who kills you to **think** (they regarded this as presumably true, without particular certainty - it was their own subjective mental estimate, not God's) **that he is offering service to God.** ([John 16:2](#))

In **Romans** Paul added

I bear them (the Jews) witness that they have a zeal for God, but **not in accordance with knowledge.** ([Ro 10:2-note](#))

Through His prophet **Jeremiah** God declared...

Indeed the sons of Israel and the sons of Judah have been doing only evil in My sight from their youth; for the sons of Israel have been only provoking Me to anger by the work of their hands," declares the LORD. ([Jeremiah 32:30](#))

Paul spoke to the basic underlying principle of why any man would not be pleasing to God writing that...

the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so and those who are in the flesh cannot please (aresko) God. (see notes Ro 8:7; 8:8)

II. The Hindrance Offered

¹⁶ forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved,

forbidding

Forbidding or Hindering

(koluo from kólos = docked, lopped, clipped, kolazo = curtail) means to cut off, to cut short, to weaken and generally to hinder, to prevent, to check, to restrain or to forbid by word or act. The idea is to cause something not to happen. Koluo can describe the keeping back of something from someone ([Acts 10:47](#) referring to the Holy Spirit - see verse below).

To hinder means to make slow or difficult the progress of something by interfering in some way with the activity or progress thereof. In short **koluo** means to make it difficult for someone to do something or for something to happen.

Hindering us from speaking - Paul had endured the attempts of the Jews to restrain his ministry to the Gentiles in almost every town...

(**At Pisidian Antioch**) [Acts 13:45](#) But when the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy, and began contradicting the things spoken by Paul, and were blaspheming... **50** But the Jews aroused the devout

women of prominence and the leading men of the city, and instigated a persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and drove them out of their district.

(At Iconium) [Acts 14:1](#) And it came about that in Iconium they entered the synagogue of the Jews together, and spoke in such a manner that a great multitude believed, both of Jews and of Greeks. 2 But the Jews who disbelieved stirred up the minds of the Gentiles, and embittered them against the brethren.

(At Lystra) [Acts 14:19](#) But Jews came from Antioch and Iconium, and having won over the multitudes, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing him to be dead.

(At Corinth) [Acts 18:12](#) But while Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews with one accord rose up against Paul and brought him before the judgment seat

(At Jerusalem) [Acts 22:22](#) And they (the Jewish audience) listened to him (Paul) up to this statement (Jesus' command to Paul to "'Go! For I will send you far away to the Gentiles.'), and then they raised their voices and said, "Away with such a fellow from the earth, for he should not be allowed to live!"

That they might be saved

So that (2443) (**hina**) expresses the purpose for which they were seeking to speak to the Gentiles, to preach Christ and Him crucified that they might be saved.

This was the purpose for which Jesus had called him and set Paul aside, Luke recording that...

the Lord (Jesus) said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel for I will show him how much he must suffer for My name's sake. ([Acts 9:15-16](#))

Hiebert explains that the fierce opposition of the Jews... was due to the fact that Christian missionaries offered salvation to Gentiles without demanding that they first become Jews. Everywhere the Jews showed themselves wildly jealous at Paul's success in winning Gentiles to the Christian faith directly. By their persistent opposition, the Jews deliberately sought to rob Gentiles of the salvation in Christ that they resolutely rejected for themselves. As Lenski well remarks, "The worst feature of unbelief is not its own damnation, but its effort to frustrate the salvation of others." It was precisely because Paul clearly saw the seriousness of the hindering work of the Jews—that it was fraught with eternal consequences for the Gentiles they were able to turn away from the gospel—that he denounced the Jews so passionately. (Hiebert, D. Edmond: 1 & 2 Thessalonians: BMH Book. 1996)

Matt. 10:40-

III. The Hell Assured

so as always to fill up *the measure of* their sins; but wrath has come upon them to the uttermost.

Fill up

(**anapleroo** from **aná** = up or as an emphatic + **pleróo** = to fill) means to fill up, spoken of a measure. **Anapleroo** means the making up of what is lacking to perfect fulness. Anapleroo is the filling of a partial void. This description implies that there is a certain measure of wickedness that God will allow a nation, a group, or an individual to complete before His judgment falls on them. In other words this verse reveals the principle that God permits sin to run its full course. The figure of speech which the prophets used was that the cup of iniquity must be filled up. God is permitting the cup to be filled.

uttermost.

telos: an end, a toll

Original Word: ΤΈΛΟΣ, ΟΥΣ, ΤΌ

Part of Speech: Noun, Neuter

Transliteration: telos

Phonetic Spelling: (tel'-os)

Short Definition: an end, purpose, tax

Definition: (a) an end, (b) event or issue, (c) the principal end, aim, purpose, (d) a tax.

HELPS Word-studies

5056 *télos* (a neuter noun) – properly, consummation (the *end-goal*, *purpose*), such as *closure* with all its *results*.

[This root (*tel-*) means "reaching the *end (aim)*." It is well-illustrated with the old pirate's telescope, unfolding (extending out) one stage at a time to function at full-strength (capacity effectiveness).]

eis telos used in John 13:1 Jesus loved them to the end to completion

Barclay paints a vivid picture writing that...

Each fresh act of hostility to the Gospel was an additional drop in their cup of guilt, which had been steadily filling during the ages. (Barclay, W: The Daily Study Bible Series. The Westminster Press or Logos)

Calvin says that

this is why the punishment of the ungodly is often postponed—it is because their acts of ungodliness are so to speak not yet ripe.

God is longsuffering and gives men time to repent while at the same time permitting them to continue in wickedness. And yet there is a limit. To the antediluvians, He warned

My spirit shall not always strive with man ([Genesis 6:3](#))

And He followed through by sending the Great Flood to cleanse the earth. God delayed giving the promised land to Abraham and his seed for four hundred years because

the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full ([Genesis 15:16](#))

Peter spoke of God's longsuffering...

(in the context of angels who) once were disobedient, when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through the water. ([1Pe 3:20-note](#))

The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance. ([2Pe 3:9-note](#))

Paul addressing religious men (especially Jews) asked...

Romans 2:3-5

³ And do you think this, O man, you who judge those practicing such things, and doing the same, that you will escape the judgment of God? ⁴ Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance? ⁵ But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you

are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God,

Wrath

John MacArthur comments that

Orge does not refer to an explosive outburst of temper but to an inner, deep resentment that seethes and smolders, often unnoticed by others. It is therefore an anger that only the Lord and the believer know about. Therefore, it is a special danger, (for the believer because the anger of man does not accomplish the righteousness of God) in that it can be privately harbored. (MacArthur J. James. *Moody or Logos*)

Orge refers to to an inner, deep resentment that seethes and smolders. Orge as used of God refers to His constant and controlled indignation toward sin, while **thumos** (which originally referred to violent movements of air, water, etc., and consequently came to mean well up or boil up) refers more to a passionate outburst of rage. **Thumos** type anger represents an agitated, vehement anger that rushes along relentlessly. The root meaning has to do with moving rapidly and was used of a man's breathing violently while pursuing an enemy in great rage!

has come

Come (5348) (**phthano**) means to come on. It means to to come to or arrive at a particular state. This common verb means to do or be first to overtake. The meaning of the **aurist tense** is debated (see below), but can be understood as having come and still remaining with a potential that is yet to be fulfilled but here is spoken of as a potential that one day will be consummated (reach its goal).

John has a similar statement regarding the present state all of unbelieving mankind...

He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of

God abides (present tense = continually) on him. ([John 3:36](#))

MacArthur writes that has come...

is in the **aorist tense**, which affirms that Paul was so certain that divine wrath would come that he expressed the notion as if it had already occurred. And historically, it had occurred—in the Babylonian exile (Ezekiel 8-11). His expression likely includes the destruction of Jerusalem in a.d. 70, although then nearly twenty years off; and it denotes the eschatological wrath to come when Jesus returns to earth in judgment ([Revelation 19](#)). But primarily the expression points to the damnation of people who reject God (cf. [John 3:36](#)). That, too, was so certain that Paul could write of it as if it had already occurred. Those Jews had met all the prerequisites for future damnation. ([MacArthur, John: 1 & 2 Thessalonians. Moody Press or Logos](#))

F F Bruce feels that...

The best explanation is a constative aorist, pointing to a past arrival but an arrival only in a potential or positional sense. Such a potential presence of the wrath accords with the Epistle's emphasis on an imminent breaking forth of end time events, one of which is the well-known trouble of Israel before Messiah's return (Ed note: See discussion of the **time of Jacob's distress** above). ([Bruce, F F: 1 and 2 Thessalonians. Word Biblical Commentary. Dallas: Word, Incorporated. 1982 or Logos](#))

Hebrews 10:26

²⁶ For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, ²⁷ but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. ²⁸ Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. ²⁹ Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? ³⁰ For we know Him who said, "*Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,*" says the Lord. And again, "*The Lord will judge His people.*" ³¹ It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.