

will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire.” Their suffering persecution would end, and their enemies are going to be destroyed, verses 8-9, when Christ returns in glory. In light of this we can also understand his statement in verse 6, *“For after all it is only just for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you.”* The coming vengeance on their enemies was a matter of God’s justice, and a fierce and awful *“affliction”* it will be, for *“those who afflict you,”* as verse 8 and 9 portray rather vividly.

2 Thessalonians 1:8-9 - 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, NASU
A. 8 dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. – Here Paul vividly describes the personal vengeance that Christ pours out on the unbelieving world at His coming when he says, *“dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.”* Christ Himself will lead His *“mighty angels in flaming fire”* as they deal out serious “retribution” on the world of unbelievers. The fact that these are unbelievers is clear from the statement, *“those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.”* Some commentators suggest that these are two distinct groups of people. Those *“who do not know God”* represent the Gentiles, and, *“those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus”* represent the Jews. Whether this is true or not is not explicit in the text, however what is plain is that this includes everyone in the world that is outside of God’s Kingdom, whom only have entered by repentance from sin and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. There is no other way to escape this fierce judgment which is coming upon the whole world. See here in the Bible that the Second Coming of Christ brings with it fierce judgment on all people who *“do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.”*

Luke 21:25-28 - 25 "And **there will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and upon the earth dismay among nations,** in perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves, 26 **men fainting from fear and the expectation of the things which are coming upon the world;** for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. 27 "And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. 28 "But when these things begin to take place, **straighten up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."** NASB

Here in Luke, even Jesus encouraged His hearers that they would be delivered when He came *“in a cloud with power and great glory.”* Learn from the above explanation that both the final deliverance of the church from its persecutors, and the Second Coming of Christ are an event that take place at the same time. Paul does the same here in 2 Thessalonians 1:5-10, explaining that their deliverance is also the *“day of vengeance”* of our God, as Isaiah the prophet so clearly portrayed! Jesus will come and deal out retribution to His enemies in fulfillment of God’s Word.

Isaiah 63:4-6 - 4 "For **the day of vengeance was in My heart,** And My year of redemption has come. 5 "And I looked, and there was no one to help, And I was astonished and there was no one to uphold; So My own arm brought salvation to Me; And My wrath upheld Me. 6 "**And I trod down the peoples in My anger, And made them drunk in My wrath, And I poured out their lifeblood on the earth."** NASB
Isaiah 34:1-4,8-10 - 34 Draw near, O nations, to hear; and listen, O peoples! Let the earth and all it contains hear, and the world and all that springs from it. 2 For **the Lord's indignation is against all the nations, And His wrath against all their armies;** He has utterly destroyed them, He has given them over to slaughter. 3 So their slain will be thrown out, And their corpses will give off their stench, And the mountains will be drenched with their blood. 4 And **all the host of heaven will wear away, And the sky will be rolled up like a scroll; All their hosts will also wither away As a leaf withers from the vine,** Or as one withers from the fig tree. 8 For **the Lord has a day of vengeance, A year of recompense for the cause of Zion.** 9 And its streams shall be turned into pitch, And its loose earth into brimstone, And its land shall become burning pitch. 10 It shall not be quenched night or day; Its smoke shall go up forever; From generation to generation it shall be desolate; None shall pass through it forever and ever. NASB

B. 9 These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power – Now here see the specific fate of those who are the objects of Christ’s “*retribution.*” The severity of this statement could not be overstated, “*These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction.*” Here Paul indicates that not only will they be destroyed, but that this destruction is “*eternal.*” The horror of such a predicament is beyond grasp as here is expounded the final end of all who “*do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.*” This is how Jesus Himself described the end of those among the nations who did not obey Him.

Matthew 25:46 - 46 "And these will **go away into eternal punishment**, but the righteous into eternal life." NASB

Throughout scripture God has warned of this coming wrath and destruction of the ungodly.

Romans 2:5-6 - 5 But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart **you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God**, 6 who will render to every man according to his deeds: NASB

2 Peter 3:10-11 - 10 But **the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up**. 11 Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, NASB

In fact, when we call someone to be saved by believing the Gospel of Jesus Christ, it is from this coming wrath that they are being saved from. This wrath of “*eternal destruction*” is the very wages of sin. The fact that it is “*eternal*” speaks of the nature of the offense of sin. Note that sin is of such offense to God and His holiness, that the righteous and just penalty for it is “*eternal destruction.*” This should help us to calculate the great danger that people are in, being culpable for their sins without a substitute to die in their place. Also notice that this destruction is “*away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power.*” Here Paul is describing that in the state of eternal judgment, people are “*away from the presence of the Lord.*” This is not to say that God is not omnipresent and somehow not able to go where this place of torment is, for the simple truth that God created this place of eternal torment (Matt 25:41) speaks to the fact that God’s presence transcends the boundaries of that place. Paul’s point is that these will be outside of God’s goodness and blessing, the idea is to be outside of His favor completely. Jesus described this state in a very serious way, and using the language of Isaiah 66:24 calls it the “*furnace of fire,*” where “*there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, where the worm does not die and the fire is never quenched.*”

Matthew 13:41-42 - 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 cast them into the furnace of fire; in that place there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.** NASB

Mark 9:43-45 - 43 "And if your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life crippled, than having your two hands, **to go into hell, into the unquenchable fire, 44 [where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.]** NASB

It is very obvious that in this place of “*eternal destruction*” that the goodness of God, His grace and mercy, love and kindness, patience and forbearance, have no place but have run their course seeking to bring mankind to repentance while he does live. Having spurned the gracious hand of God’s kindness through their lives, their rejection of God and His Son has now come full circle at the day of judgment, and they will be shut out “*from His presence.*” Paul further describes that place as “*away...from the glory of His power.*” His point here is that they will be completely outside of the good presence of God, in fact, in the language of Jesus that place is “*outer darkness.*” There will be no light in that place forever and ever, in contrast to eternal life on the New Earth in God’s home of righteousness, where God Himself is the very light that illumines that place, forever and ever, and there will be no night there (Rev 21:25). Suffice to say that this final end of the unbeliever is as terrible as one could imagine. This shows the utter ruin of the second death, and the awful state of the coming wrath that we warn people to flee from in