

encourage - pick up those that fall. appeal.
witness - not holding back from witnessing - solemn
after example of our Heavenly Father. **Acts 17-18**
axins came and so the lives in place of great value

CHAPTER THREE: Timothy's visit and
Joy at his Report.
WT-5 TIMOTHY SENT TO COMFORT
Because of his affection at the

written
Acts 18 v5

BACKGROUND

It was Paul's response to the cry 'Come over into Macedonia and help us' **Acts 16 v6-10** that resulted in the establishment of the Ecclesia at Philippi and Thessalonica. Paul, Silas, and Timothy made the arduous long journey along the Via Egnatia (main Roman arterial road) 130 km from Philippi to Thessalonica.

Acts 17 v1-9 tells of the establishment of the truth in that city: There was a large well established community of Jews, indicated by the Synagogue which was the first place Paul went **v1**. He always went to the Jew first **v2**. He spoke to them on three sabbath days although he would possibly have been in the city several months. He expounded to them out of the scriptures - a lesson we should take **Rom 10 v17**. All Gospel proclamation must be based on sound scriptural reasoning and exposition - not philosophy. **I Tim 3 v16-17**; **John 17 v17**; **James 1 v18**; **I Pet 1 v23**. Paul explained to them the dilemma that all the Jews faced - that 'Christ must needs have suffered and risen again from the dead' **v3**. We have to also remember that suffering must come first **Acts 3 v18**. Some of the Jews believed, **v4**. 'And of the devout Greeks a great multitude'. Thessalonica being a free Roman city, women were permitted to hold prominent positions - and some of these also responded to the truth.

There were always however, Jews that 'believed not', and Thessalonica was no exception **v5**. They were jealous **Acts 13 v45** with great zeal, and gathered around the marketplace with nothing better to do than hang idly around waiting for some mischief to happen. This group set the whole city in an uproar and assailed the house of Jason. Jason was a kinsman of Paul **Rom 16 v21** and possibly the brethren and sisters met in his home. What happened, therefore, would have been a frightening experience as the men burst in looking for Paul and Silas and finding them not, dragged off some members of the Ecclesia. **v6**. Thus Paul in this Epistle encourages them under such trials **I Thess 3 v3-8** and also in **I Thess 1 v7**.

They laid the same charges against the Brethren as they did against Christ: 'do contrary to the decrees of Caesar' **v7**. The rulers (or 'Politarches' as they were known) and people were concerned at such a charge thinking treason against Rome was being taught **v8**. Security of Jason & one other was taken (possibly in the form of money or bail) that Paul and Silas would not return to Thessalonica. Later efforts to have this removed were unsuccessful **I Thess 2 v18**. Then Jason and the other were let free **v9**. Paul and his companions then left for Berea. Leaving under cover of darkness for fear of their lives.

The Jews in Berea also stirred up the people so Paul went on to Athens; But all the time he was thinking of the Thessalonian Brethren so sent Timothy from Athens back to comfort them **I Thess 3 v1-6** that 'no man should be moved by these afflictions' **I Thess 3 v2-3**. Paul then moved to Corinth while he awaited Timothy from Thessalonica and Silas from Berea. Finally they returned **Acts 18 v5** and Timothy reported to Paul on the faithful state of the Ecclesia. Paul was encouraged by these words and then wrote the 1st Letter to the Thessalonians. **Acts 17 v3**. It would appear that the letter was written about AD 52-53. We can see throughout the letter that he builds upon and refers to the report Timothy had given him. Therefore a great responsibility on Timothy to make an honest and mature appraisal of the Ecclesial situation. **Proverbs 25 v13**.

Thessalonica was named after the sister of Alexander the Great and wife of one of his Generals and daughter of Philip of Macedon. It was a major commercial city of that region of Macedonia and the meeting place and thoroughfare. This had impact on the Gospel proclamation efforts - **I Thess 1 v8**.

Like all Greek cities, the predominant religion was paganism. Yet many had turned in response to the Gospel. **I Thess 1 v9**.

Paul wrote to the Thessalonians expressing joy at Timothy's good news, protesting that his recent abrupt departure was no fault of his own, stressing the importance of chastity and diligence in daily work and assuring them that dead believers would not be disadvantaged at Christ's return.



- 1 Paul sends Timothy from Athens to Thessalonica. **I Thess 3 v1-6**
- 2 Timothy returns from Thessalonica to Corinth to report to Paul on the state of the Ecclesia. **I Thess 3 v1-6** **Acts 19 v5**
- 3 On Timothy's return, Paul sends the first Epistle to the Ecclesia of Thessalonica from Corinth.