

There are no Old Testament quotations in II Thessalonians, nor is the timing of the persecutions clear in the two epistles. II Thessalonians 3:2 need not mean "For we have just now heard for the first time." Evidence against reversal of the letters is the intensity of the three situations with which Paul deals--persecution, the Second Coming, and idleness seems to intensify from I to II Thessalonians. II Thessalonians 2:2, 15; 3:7 refer to a prior letter from Paul. II Thessalonians lacks the personal greetings of the first letter--it is a response to questions raised by the first this makes sense, but not if the order is reversed.

Despite some questions, therefore, it seems that the present canonical order reflects their chronological order and that II Thessalonians was written from Corinth shortly after I Thessalonians in late AD 50 or early AD 51.

Outlines:

- I Thessalonians:
- I. Salutation 1:1
 - II. Personal Concerns of Paul 1:2-3:10
 - A. Paul's Thanksgiving 1:2-10
 - B. Paul's Ministry 2:1-16
 - C. Timothy's mission and report 2:17-3:10.
 - III. Concerns of the Thessalonians 4:1-5:22
 - A. Christian Morality 4:1-12
 - B. The Parousia 4:13-18
 - C. The DAY of the Lord 5:1-11
 - D. Practical Notes 5:12-22
 - IV. Benediction and farewell 5:23-28

II. Thessalonians

- I. Salutations 1:1
- II. Paul's Prayer 1:3-12
- III. The Parousia 2:1-12
- IV. Thanksgiving and Assurance 2:13-3:5
 - A. Thanksgiving and Prayer 2:13-17
 - B. Assurance of God's Faithfulness 3:1-5
- V. Discipline of the idle 3:6-15
- VI. Benediction and Farewell 3:16-18

History of Redemption:

Due to the intensely pastoral and personal nature of the Thessalonian epistles most of their doctrinal teaching is incidental rather than developed (as, for instance, in Romans or Ephesians).