

# II Corinthians

## Introduction

### *Lesson 1*

### *II Corinthians 1:1-11*

#### ***Background -Corinth***

- A. A major harbor and commercial center at the tip of the Greek mainland.
- B. Religion consisted of worship to various gods, with the sea-deities (i.e. Poseidon) and Aphrodite being the major influences.
- C. Julius Caesar made it a Roman colony in 46 B.C. and it came to be one of the prominent centers of Greece.
- D. Jews were abundant in this trade center (Acts 18:1-18).
- E. The population in the first century was approximately 600,000 - 700,000, most of whom were slaves.

#### ***Paul's First Trip to Corinth***

- A. Paul came alone directly from Athens on his second missionary journey (Acts 18:1), around 50 A.D., with the intent of preaching Christ (I Cor. 2:1-3).
- B. Paul immediately went to work and converted his co-workers Aquilla and Priscilla (Acts 18:2-3).
- C. Paul, as was his custom upon entering a city, reasoned in the synagogue, persuading Jews and Greeks (Acts 18:4-5). He was eventually rejected and lived next door to the synagogue with Justus (Acts 18:6-7).
- D. Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, and many of the Corinthians were converted, most likely forming the nucleus of the church established at Corinth (Acts 18:8, I Cor. 1:14-16).
- E. Paul was brought up on charges before Gallio, the proconsul of Achaia, by the Jews (Acts 18:12-16). Gallio refused to judge accusations based on Jewish law, with the result that Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, was beaten.
- F. Paul was in Corinth for a year and a half (Acts 18:11, 18). When he departed (around 52 A.D.), he sailed for Syria, taking Aquilla and Priscilla.
- G. It appears that the church was primarily made up of people from the lower class (I Cor. 1:26, 7:21).
- H. Because he had brought the gospel to them, Paul looked upon the Corinthians as his beloved children (I Cor. 4:14-15).

#### ***The First Epistle to Corinth***

- A. The epistle was written around 55 A.D., from Ephesus while Paul was on his third missionary journey (Acts 19:1, I Cor. 16:8).
- B. Motivations for writing the first letter:

- Reports from the household of Chloe (I Cor. 1:11).
- Reports from Apollos (I Cor. 3:5-6, 16:12).
- Reports from Corinthians (I Cor. 16:17-18).
- Great concern over immorality (I Cor. 5:9).
- Their letters to Paul (I Cor. 7:1).

### **The Second Epistle to Corinth**

- A. The epistle was written around 56 A.D., from Macedonia as Paul was traveling to Corinth (Acts 20:1-2, I Cor. 16:5-6).
- B. Primary reasons for writing the second letter:
- Joy at the news of Titus of how they had responded to the first letter
  - Further encouragement to be ready with a gift for needy saints
  - Defense of his apostleship

#### **II Corinthians 1:1-11**

*Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,*

*To the church of God that is at Corinth, with all the saints who are in the whole of Achaia:*

*<sup>2</sup> Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

*<sup>3</sup> Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, <sup>4</sup> who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. <sup>5</sup> For as we share abundantly in Christ's sufferings, so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too. <sup>6</sup> If we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; and if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which you experience when you patiently endure the same sufferings that we suffer. <sup>7</sup> Our hope for you is unshaken, for we know that as you share in our sufferings, you will also share in our comfort.*

*<sup>8</sup> For we do not want you to be unaware, brothers, of the affliction we experienced in Asia. For we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself. <sup>9</sup> Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death. But that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead. <sup>10</sup> He delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us. On him we have set our hope that he will deliver us again. <sup>11</sup> You also must help us by prayer, so that many will give thanks on our behalf for the blessing granted us through the prayers of many.*

#### **Questions (II Cor. 1:1-11)**

1. How does Paul describe God (vs. 3)?
2. What did Paul hope to be able to do for others (vs. 4)?
3. What should the Corinthians gain whether Paul was afflicted or was comforted (vs. 6)?

4. What was the affliction Paul had experienced in Asia (look at Acts 19:23-41)?
  
5. What lesson was Paul expected to have learn from his affliction (vs. 9)?
  
6. What does Paul ask of the Corinthians (vs. 11)?

Write down one topic or fact you know about the following chapters of I Corinthians:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.
- 13.
- 14.
- 15.
- 16.

Write down one topic or fact you know about the following chapters of II Corinthians:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.
- 13.