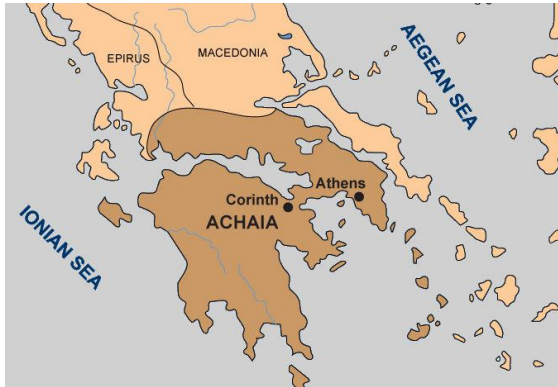


Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians

INTRODUCTION

2 Corinthians 1:1-2 NIV (1) Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, To the church of God in Corinth, together with all the saints throughout Achaia: (2) Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.



Paul lived in the first century AD. He would not have known this. He would have followed the Hebrew calendar. So he wrote this letter in (approximately) the year **3815**.

For us this second letter to the Christians at Corinth was written around 56 AD. This was 20 years after Paul was converted. The Romans were at war in Britain. Boudicca led a revolt in 60 AD. Around that time the Emperor Claudius was murdered. Nero became emperor.

Historical records show that Christianity was spreading across the known world. Many contemporaries of Paul mention him in their writings. There is ample evidence that he was a real person, not a fictional character in a film! His focus on Jesus Christ needs attention. He was a man of integrity and intelligence. He writes confidently about Jesus - a real person in history who really died by crucifixion and rose from the dead.

The Corinthian Christians were a bit disorderly. Paul's first letter to the church is full of challenges and criticisms of their careless ways. The second letter is softer and much more personal. Paul saw the church as "his" baby. He had preached there and saw the first people come to Christ in faith. Acts 18:11 tells us that Paul stayed 18 months in Corinth, teaching and nurturing the young Christians. It seems that people from all languages, cultures and nations were being saved.

Timothy - a friend, someone that Paul could rely on. Someone he could trust to preach faithfully. Someone who understood the New Way that Jesus had opened up for humanity to know and serve God. 2 Corinthians **1:3 NIV Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort.**

COMFORT = PARAKALEO - note that the Holy Spirit of God is named THE COMFORTER [PARAKLETOS] = someone who comes alongside, who stands with you.

John 15:26 NIV "When the Counsellor [PARAKLETOS] comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me.



God strengthens us like a stake holds a small tree steady. Or as Jeremiah found:

Jeremiah 20:11 NIV But the LORD is with me like a mighty warrior; so my persecutors will stumble and not prevail. They will fail and be thoroughly disgraced; their dishonour will never be forgotten.

It is interesting that Paul begins with words of encouragement. In the first letter, after a reminder of foundation truth, Paul begins to challenge the church about its wrong attitudes and behaviour.

The point Paul makes is that people of faith will find comfort from God through their experiences. God proves His love and faithfulness to His promises even in dark and difficult times.

Paul suffered but did not give up. This encouraged others to stay true and keep the faith. Paul was rescued, healed, delivered. This encouraged others to press on and experience God's grace in their hard times. God is our Father, and He will console us by His Presence, His Promises and His Provision.