

INTRODUCTION TO THE SECOND LETTER FROM PETER

There are some reasons to think that Peter wrote this Second Letter shortly after Paul's death, as he himself expected execution (*2 Pet. 1:14*). The probable date is 67 A.D.

Peter writes to warn of *impending apostasy*, which is already at work as he writes! Leaders in the church, false teachers, would permit immorality and encourage sin in general, in order to make themselves rich. Compare *Acts 20:28-31* and notes. They would also cease to look for the Second Coming, and laugh at the idea of the Lord's return! Some parts of Second Peter are so similar to Jude, that some think one must have copied from the other. And it seems reasonably sure that Jude had read Second Peter before he wrote. However, since they both deal with the same problem, and probably write within a year of each other, it is to be expected that they will say much the same thing, yet with important differences. It would also be expected that the messianic community would develop its own *vocabulary*, with certain ways of saying things, and certain Scripture examples repeated. Read the Introductions to the Letters from Jude and James.

THE SECOND LETTER FROM PETER

1 From Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ—

To those who through the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ have been given a faith as precious as ours:

²May grace and peace be yours in full measure, through your knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

God's Call and Choice

³God's divine power has given us everything we need to live a godly life through our knowledge of the one who called us to share his own glory and goodness. ⁴In this way he has given us the very great and precious gifts he promised, so that by means of these gifts you may escape from the destructive lust that is in the world, and come

1 Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ.

To those who through the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ have received a faith as precious as ours:

²Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

Making One's Calling and Election Sure

³His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he ⁴has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

1. **From Simon Peter.** As Simon, son of John, he lived his life in Judaism, until Jesus called him to *catch men!* Christ gave him the name of "Peter" (*John 1:42*). A **servant.** *2 Cor. 4:5* and note. **Apostle.** See note on *1 Pet. 1:1*. **To those.** Peter does not give the names of the churches or Christians he writes to, but in *2 Pet. 3:1* he mentions this is his second letter to them. Therefore, this Letter is addressed to those same churches mentioned in *1 Pet. 1:1*. **Have been given a faith.** Without the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ, faith would be an impossibility!!! Then it is correct to say that Christians have been given a faith, in the sense of *Acts 11:18*. The Holy Spirit **PRODUCES** faith through the message of the Good News (*Rom. 10:17*). It is *God's finished work in Christ* that we reach out through faith to seize!

2. **May grace and peace.** This is God's blessing through Christ to all who believe. **Through your knowledge.** See *John 8:32* and note.

3. **Has given us everything.** God's divine power gave to the apostles (and through them to us) the **COMPLETE MESSAGE** (*Jude 3*) which makes it possible to share His own glory and goodness!!! This means we need no *new revelation*, no *voice of the living church*, no *tradition*. The Bible and the Bible only is the Christian's objective and infallible rule of faith and practice, alone sufficient that he *may be established in the present truth* (*verse 12*).

4. **In this way.** "He has created faith and hope in us by giving us these precious promises!" [Johnson refers "In this way" to *his own glory and goodness*.] **By means of these gifts.** "So that you might reach out through faith to seize these things to make yourself part of them. Through your union with Christ, you may share the divine nature, and escape from destructive lust (*1 Pet. 4:2-5*)."

to share the divine nature. ⁵For this very reason do your best to add goodness to your faith; to your goodness add knowledge; ⁶to your knowledge add self-control; to your self-control add endurance; to your endurance add godliness; ⁷to your godliness add brotherly love; and to your brotherly love add love. ⁸These are the qualities you need, and if you have them in abundance they will make you active and effective in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹But whoever does not have them is so shortsighted that he cannot see, and has forgotten that his past sins have been washed away.

¹⁰So then, my brothers, try even harder to make God's call and his choice of you a permanent experience; if you do so, you will never fall

For this very reason, make ⁵ every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to ⁶ knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, ⁷ brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. For ⁸ if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But if ⁹ anyone does not have them, he is nearsighted and blind, and has forgotten that he has been cleansed from his past sins.

Therefore, my brothers, ¹⁰ be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall,

5. For this very reason. "Because God has called us to share his own glory and goodness." Peter teaches a practical religion which grows out of spiritual motives. Christians must cooperate actively with God, to build new characters as his children. **Do your best to add.** These qualities are not *stair-steps*, where you progress from one to the next. The idea is: in addition to your faith, seize goodness; in addition to your faith and goodness, seize knowledge; etc. The *Expositor's Greek Testament* says: "*Faith is not only illumination but character.*" **Faith.** See *James 2:19* and note. **Goodness.** Moral purity and ethical conduct. **Knowledge.** Understanding the mind of Christ revealed in the Scriptures. There can be no substitute for studying God's word.

6. **Self-control.** See *Rom. 8:9* and note. Not *asceticism*, but self-discipline. **Endurance.** The active quality of holding firmly to the promises of Christ, confident that God rules and rewards! **Godliness.** Practical godliness. The *life-style* that grows out of a strong desire to be *godlike* in conduct. See *Eph. 4:22-24* and notes.

7. **Brotherly love.** See *1 John 4:19-21* and notes. **Love.** AGAPE. We see the kind of love which God and Christ showed to us in *Christ-on-the-cross*, and then we use this love in our relationship with everyone else! Only in this way will we fulfill the command to *love our enemies*. AGAPE makes it possible to *love* someone you do not *like!!!*

8. **These.** All of these together!!! **You need.** These are to become an integral part of Christian character. **They will make you.** "When your life is activated by these good qualities they will make you active and effective in your knowledge of the *higher life of the Spirit!*" *Lipscomb* says: "Either one abounds in good works, or his life is idle and fruitless. There is no alternative."

9. **But whoever.** "The one who does not seize for himself and make an integral part of his life these qualities and attitudes I have mentioned, is purposely making himself blind to the truth of Christ, and making himself forget the promise to be holy he made to God in his baptism (*1 Pet. 3:21!*)"

10. **So then.** "Because some may forget their promise to God, you must try even harder to make these good qualities an integral part of your life." **To make.** POIEISTHAI = to make or to do for one's self. **God's call and his choice.** See *2 Thess. 2:13-14* and notes. **A permanent experience.** It is impossible to avoid the human element in *God's call and his choice!* Peter's explanation is: *If you do so, you will never fall away.* [*MacKnight* thinks Peter has in mind the falling away and rejection of the Jews as a nation and the loss of their favored position as God's people (*Rom. 11:11* and note).]

away. ¹¹In this way you will be given the full right to enter the eternal Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

¹²For this reason I will always remind you of these matters, even though you already know them and are firmly fixed in the truth you have received. ¹³I think it only right for me to stir up your memory of these matters, as long as I am still alive. ¹⁴I know that I shall soon put off this mortal body, as our Lord Jesus Christ plainly told me. ¹⁵I will do my best, then, to provide a way for you to remember these matters at all times after my death.

Eyewitnesses of Christ's Glory

¹⁶We have not depended on made-up legends in making known to you the mighty coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. With our own eyes we saw

and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Prophecy of Scripture

So I will always remind you of these things, even though you know them and are firmly established in the truth you now have. I think it is right to refresh your memory as long as I live in the tent of this body, because I know that I will soon put it aside, as our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me. And I will make every effort to see that after my departure you will always be able to remember these things.

We did not follow cleverly invented stories when we told you about the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

11. **You will be given the full right.** The one who does what *verse 10* says to do and does not fall away, will receive from God the full right to enter the eternal Kingdom. Note that Christians are in the Kingdom now (*Col. 1:13*), but *eternal Kingdom* refers to the time when Christ hands it over to the Father (*1 Cor. 15:23-24*). The Church Militant becomes the Church Triumphant!!!

12. **For this reason.** "So that you will make God's call and his choice of you a permanent experience and be given the full right to enter the eternal Kingdom, I always remind you of the TRUTH of the historical Christ, which you already know. You must make your faith perfect through your actions, as Abraham did (*James 2:22*)." Contrast *verse 16*.

13. **I think it only right.** Peter seems to apologize for writing this second letter so soon. But he expects to die very soon (*verse 14*), and he wants to do as much as possible to make them stand firm in the truth. Compare *Acts 20:31*.

14. **I know.** See *John 13:36; 21:18-19*. Traditional history of the early church places Peter at Rome during the last year of his life, and says that he was crucified upside down. If, as some think, Paul had already been executed, Peter would not need a special revelation from God to know that the time of his death was near!

15. **A way for you to remember.** By putting His word in a written form, God (working through Peter and the other writers) gave mankind a *magic door* through which they may come again and again to learn God's truth and to be reminded of all the facts of the Good News which was given to the apostles!!! Even though Peter and the other writers have been dead these many years, yet they still speak to us on the pages of Scripture!!!

16. **We have not.** See *1 Tim. 1:4; 4:7; Titus 1:14*. Peter points to the real, historical Christ Jesus. **Mighty coming.** This must be the First Coming, since: (1) the context speaks of history; (2) *PAROUSIA* simply means *coming, arrival*, and is a non-technical word. Without the First Coming, there could be no Second Coming. Peter says *we saw!!!* Compare *1 John 1:1-4*.

his greatness. ¹⁷We were there when he was given honor and glory by God the Father, when the voice came to him from the Supreme Glory, saying, "This is my own dear Son, with whom I am well pleased!" ¹⁸We ourselves heard this voice coming from heaven, when we were with him on the sacred mountain.

¹⁹So we are even more confident of the message proclaimed by the prophets. You will do well to pay attention to it, because it is like a lamp shining in a dark place, until the Day dawns and the light of the morning star shines in your hearts.

²⁰Above all else, however, remember this: no one can explain, by himself, a prophecy in the Scriptures. ²¹For no prophetic message ever came just from the will of man, but men were carried along by the Holy Spirit as they spoke the message that came from God.

For he received honor and glory from God the Father when the voice came to him from the Majestic Glory, saying, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well-pleased." We ourselves heard this voice that came from heaven when we were with him on the sacred mountain.

And we have the word of the prophets made more certain, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

17. **We were there.** See *Matt. 17:1-8* and notes. Peter, James, and John were there when Jesus was transfigured. Peter points to this event as PROOF of the truth of the Good News!!! And certainly the transfiguration is also a GUARANTEE of the Second Coming!!!

18. **We ourselves heard.** *Lumby* says: "We learn here why the Apostles were taken with Jesus to witness His transfiguration. . . . He, and the rest with him, felt no doubt, that such a death as Jesus had spoken of would be, humanly speaking, the ruin of their hopes. . . . They heard that He who was to die was the very Son of God. The voice came from the glory of heaven; and from henceforth their hearts were still, even Peter's voice being less heard than before. . . . God's voice had been heard there attesting the Divinity of their Lord and Master; the place whereon they had thus stood was for evermore holy ground."

19. **Even more confident.** *Johnson* says: "No class of evidence had more power with Jews than to show them that Jesus was the Christ (Messiah) of whom the prophets spoke." The things mentioned in *verses 16-18* make Peter and the others even more confident in the message proclaimed by the Old Testament prophets. This also gives us more confidence in the message of the Good News, especially the fact that Jesus is Coming Again!!! **Until the Day dawns.** *MacKnight* says: "Until the Day of Judgment dawns, and Christ, surrounded with the glory of the Father, appears like the morning-star, which, by assuring you of his coming, may be said to arise (shine) in your hearts." See *Rev. 22:16-17*.

20. **Above all else.** The false teachers, whom Peter warns against, used *made-up legends* to interpret the prophecies, and even the Good News. Peter explains more about this in *chapter 2*. The Old Testament is revealed in the New Testament! Therefore the interpretation placed on it by Christ and his apostles must be the *standard or norm* of its *true meaning!!!* For examples of this, see *Acts 2:16-17; 13:32-33; 15:14-18*. [This can also be taken as the NIV does. *Johnson* says: "It is not an interpretation of the knowledge and feelings of the prophet, but of the will of God."]

21. **For no prophetic message.** *MacKnight* says: "For never, either anciently or lately, was prophecy uttered by the will of the prophet, but the holy prophets of God spoke their prophecies, being inspired by the Holy Spirit: So that the prophecies recorded in the scriptures are not the words of men, but of God." He also says: "Not, however, like the heathen priestesses, by the agency of evil spirits, who deprived them of the exercise of their faculties (senses), but by the inspiration of the Spirit of God, during which they had the entire use of their rational powers (*1 Cor. 14:32*)."

False Teachers

2 False prophets appeared in the past among the people, and in the same way false teachers will appear among you. They will bring in destructive, untrue doctrines, and deny the Master who redeemed them, and so bring upon themselves sudden destruction. ²Even so, many will follow their immoral ways; and, because of what they do, people will speak evil of the Way of truth. ³In their greed these false teachers will make a profit out of telling you made-up stories. For a long time now their Judge has been ready, and their Destroyer has been wide awake!

⁴God did not spare the angels who sinned, but threw them into hell, where they are kept chained in darkness, waiting for the Day of Judgment. ⁵God did not spare the ancient world, but brought the Flood on the world of godless men; the only ones he saved were Noah, who preached righteousness, and seven other people.

False Teachers and Their Destruction

2 But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them—bringing swift destruction on themselves. Many will follow their shameful ways and will bring the way of truth into disrepute. In their greed these teachers will exploit you with stories they have made up. Their condemnation has long been hanging over them, and their destruction has not been sleeping.

For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell, putting them into gloomy dungeons to be held for judgment; if he did not spare the ancient world when he brought the flood on its ungodly people, but protected Noah, a preacher of righteousness,

1. **False prophets.** "In speaking about God's true prophets, I must remind you that there were also false prophets among the people in the past, and in the same way you must expect false teachers to appear among you!" **People** means the Jewish Nation. Christ predicted such things would happen (see *Matt. 24:24*). **Destructive, untrue doctrines.** See the Introduction to James and First John. And **deny the Master.** We do not know for sure just how they denied the Master, but one of the first things that the *circumcision party* did, was to try to get rid of Christ-on-the-cross! See note on *Phil. 3:18*. Some denied Jesus' Divinity; some denied Christ's humanity. **Bring upon themselves.** Compare note on *Mat. 24:21*.

2. **Many will follow.** *MacKnight* says: "And many nominal Christians will embrace their destructive heresies, because they encourage them in their sins." **Speak evil of the Way of truth.** "Those who claim to follow Christ, but who live such bad lives, will cause others to say evil things about the Way of truth. False teaching, since it denies truth, must always eventually end up in immoral living."

3. **In their greed.** "In their greed for your money, these false teachers will tell you made-up legends to try to get control of you and your property!" Compare *1 Tim. 6:3-5; Titus 1:10-11*. **For a long time.** See *Jude 4* and note.

4. **God did not spare.** "The punishment of these false teachers and those who follow them is both certain and sure! Even the angels, of such high rank, were punished by God when they sinned!" See *Jude 6* and note.

5. **The ancient world.** This means the world before the Flood. God offered to save these people all during the 120 years that Noah was building the ark (*1 Pet. 3:20*). Through Noah he proclaimed this to the people. But at the end of the 120 years, God's offer terminated, and punishment came swiftly on all who refused to repent! But note that God saved righteous Noah and his family!!!

“God condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, destroying them with fire, and made them an example of what will happen to the godless. ⁷He rescued Lot, a good man, who was troubled by the immoral conduct of lawless men. ⁸That good man lived among them and day after day saw and heard such things that his good heart was tormented by their evil actions. ⁹And so the Lord knows how to rescue godly men from their trials, and how to keep the wicked under punishment for the Day of Judgment, ¹⁰especially those who follow their filthy bodily lusts and despise God’s authority.

These false teachers are bold and arrogant, and show no respect for the glorious beings

and seven others; if he condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah by burning them to ashes, and made them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly; and if he rescued Lot, a righteous man, who was distressed by the filthy lives of lawless men (for that righteous man, living among them day after day, was tormented by the lawless deeds he saw and heard)—if this is so, then the Lord knows how to rescue godly men from trials and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment, while continuing their punishment. This is especially true of those who follow the corrupt desire of their sinful natures and despise authority.

Bold and arrogant, these men are not afraid to slander

6. **Sodom and Gomorrah.** See *Jude 7* and note. The presence of only ten righteous men in these cities would have prevented their destruction. The destroying fire was symbolic of eternal punishment.

7. **He rescued Lot.** Peter points out that Lot was saved because he lived a righteous life, even in such a wicked place! Lot was deeply disturbed by the sin of the cities, but was not so successful with his family as was Noah. When he warned his sons-in-law, “But his sons-in-law regarded him as joking.” (*Gen. 19:14* Zamenhof).

8. **That good man.** *MacKnight* says: “Lot dwelled sixteen years in Sodom after he parted with Abraham; which was a long space of severe trial. Doubtless Lot, who was so exceedingly grieved with the lewdness of the Sodomites from day to day, often earnestly desired to depart from so wicked a city. But he was directed, it seems, by God to remain, that he might be an example of his goodness and power in delivering the godly both from temptation and punishment.”

9. **And so the Lord.** “The examples of Noah and Lot show that God is willing to rescue godly men from their trials.” **And how to keep.** “The examples of the angels who sinned and of Sodom and Gomorrah (*1 Pet. 3:19*) show God will keep the wicked under punishment (*Luke 16:19-31* and notes) for the Day of Judgment. Judgment will not be *judicial*, but an *official division* of the resurrected dead (*Matt. 25:32*).

10. **Especially.** “If God will punish sinners of all kinds, he will especially punish those who follow filthy bodily lusts and despise God’s authority.” These *filthy bodily lusts* are the perversions of human nature that Paul describes in *Rom. 1:18-32*. **These false teachers.** Now Peter describes them. **Bold and arrogant.** This is their motivation. *MacKnight* says: “In this passage the apostle had an eye to the false teachers of the Jewish nation, whose principles led them to despise the heathen magistrates, and even to revile (slander) and resist them.” Compare *Rom. 13:1-10*. **Show no respect.** The *Expositor’s Greek Testament* says: “The false teachers may have scoffed at the idea both of angelic help, and of diabolic temptation. Their tendency seems to have been to make light of the Unseen, to foster a sense of the unreality both of sin and of goodness and to reduce the motives of conduct to a vulgar hedonism.”

above; instead, they insult them. ¹¹Even the angels, who are so much stronger and mightier than these false teachers, do not accuse them with insults in the presence of the Lord. ¹²But these men act by instinct, like wild animals born to be captured and killed; they insult things they do not understand. They will be destroyed like wild animals; ¹³they will be paid with suffering for the suffering they caused. Pleasure for them is to do anything in broad daylight that will satisfy their bodily appetites; they are a shame and a disgrace as they join you in your meals, all the while enjoying their deceitful ways! ¹⁴They want to look at nothing else but immoral women; their appetite for sin is never satisfied. They lead weak people into a trap. Their hearts are trained to be greedy. They are under God's curse! ¹⁵They have left the straight path and have lost their way; they have followed the path taken by Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the money he would get for doing wrong, ¹⁶and was rebuked for his sin. A dumb ass spoke with a human voice and stopped the prophet's insane action.

celestial beings; yet even ¹¹angels, although they are stronger and more powerful, do not bring slanderous accusations against such beings in the presence of the Lord. But these men blas- ¹²pheme in matters they do not understand. They are like brute beasts, creatures of instinct, born only to be caught and destroyed, and like beasts they too will perish.

They will be paid back ¹³with harm for the harm they have done. Their idea of pleasure is to carouse in broad daylight. They are blots and blemishes, reveling in their pleasures while they feast with you. With eyes ¹⁴full of adultery, they never stop sinning; they seduce the unstable; they are experts in greed—an accursed brood! They have left the straight ¹⁵way and wandered off to follow the way of Balaam son of Beor, who loved the wages of wickedness. But he was ¹⁶rebuked for his wrongdoing by a donkey—a beast without speech—who spoke with a man's voice and restrained the prophet's madness.

11. Even the angels. "Even the holy angels do not insult these wicked false teachers who are doing so much damage among the churches!" See the example Jude gives in *Jude 9*.

12. But these men. "They are amoral like wild animals, fierce, greedy, destructive, rutting, etc." **They insult.** "They insult spiritual things that seem nonsense to them (*1 Cor. 2:14*)."
They will be. "Both in the present and in the future life, they will be destroyed by their own actions!"

13. They will be paid. "For sin pays its wage - death" (*Rom. 6:23*). Compare *Rev. 18:6*. **Pleasure for them.** Sinners ordinarily do their deeds in secret. These are so bold and arrogant that they do not care who knows the sins they commit, and so they do these things openly without shame, like wild animals!!!
They are. See *Jude 12* and note.

14. They want. See *Matt. 5:28* and note. The Greek says literally: "Having eyes full of an adulteress." This can mean: (1) they have an obsession to look at immoral women; (2) in their mind, every woman is immoral. *MacKnight* says: "They inflamed themselves by looking lasciviously (lewdly) on the married women, whom they had debauched (seduced) by telling them that Christ's precept (command) of loving one another was chiefly to be understood of the mutual love of the sexes. Thus did these wicked teachers and their disciples live in riot (orgy) by their own deceits." Compare *Rev. 2:20* and note. **God's curse!** See *Matt. 25:41* and note.

15. Left the straight path. Balaam sold out to an evil cause, for the money that was in it. See *Rev. 2:14* and note.

16. And was rebuked. See *Num. 22:28-31*. The false teachers claimed the things they were doing was based on special knowledge that God had given them. Peter here implies that what they are doing is really insane!!!

¹⁷These men are like dried-up springs, like clouds blown along by a storm; God has reserved a place for them in the deepest darkness. ¹⁸They make proud and stupid statements, and use immoral bodily lusts to trap those who are just beginning to escape from among people who live in error. ¹⁹They promise them freedom, while they themselves are slaves of destructive habits—for a man is a slave of anything that has conquered him. ²⁰If men have escaped from the corrupting forces of the world through their knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and then are again caught and conquered by them, such men are in worse condition at the end than they were at the beginning. ²¹It would have been much better for them never to have known the way of righteousness than to know it and then turn away from the sacred command

These men are springs ¹⁷
without water and mists
driven by a storm. Blackest
darkness is reserved for
them. For they mouth emp-
ty, boastful words and, by
appealing to the lustful de-
sires of sinful human nature,
they entice people who are
just escaping from those who
live in error. They promise ¹⁸
them freedom, while they
themselves are slaves of de-
pravity—for a man is a slave
to whatever has mastered
him. If they have escaped ¹⁹
the corruption of the world
by knowing our Lord and
Savior Jesus Christ and are
again entangled in it and
overcome, they are worse off
at the end than they were at
the beginning. It would have ²⁰
been better for them not to
have known the way of right-
eousness, than to have
known it and then to turn ²¹
their backs on the sacred
commandment that was

17. Dried-up springs. The East is dry, with few springs and little rain. It was a tragic disappointment for a thirsty traveler to come to a spring and find it dried-up. Peter says the false teachers are like that. They promise much but actually give nothing. **Clouds.** The farmer was equally disappointed to see clouds that promised rain, but gave none. Compare *Jude 12* and notes. **God has reserved.** In scripture, darkness symbolizes a condition of misery without hope. Compare *Matt. 8:12*. Here Peter is talking about eternal punishment.

18. Proud and stupid. "They claim to be more important than us apostles and so they make proud and stupid statements to impress people." Use **immoral bodily lusts.** "They seduce people to join with them in the immoral lusts which they, the false teachers, are addicted to." **Just beginning to escape.** The life-style of the Christian is in sharp contrast to that of the pagan. See *1 Pet. 4:2-4* and notes. Therefore it is necessary to re-educate the convert to Christ. See *1 Thess. 1:9* and note. New converts are especially vulnerable to the type of thing the false teachers use to trap them. This is one place where the mature Christian can do a great service for Christ. See *Gal. 6:1-2* and notes.

19. They promise them. See Paul's warning in *Gal. 5:13* and note. The false teachers claimed that being free in Christ gave a person the right to do anything and everything they pleased!!! **They themselves are slaves.** See *John 8:34* and note.

20. If men have escaped. This includes the false teachers themselves, who had at one time escaped from sin through Jesus Christ. It is not enough to escape from sin: you must actively fill your life with good!!! If you purposely return to sin, it will be much worse than before and much more difficult to escape from!!! See what Jesus said in *Matt. 12:45* and note.

21. It would have been. Compare *1 Tim. 4:2*. If a man is ignorant of truth, you can give him truth more easily, than if he already knows it and has renounced it! If a man gives up the Christian life-style and returns to the habit of sin, he is doing a deliberate act that puts him in the power of the Devil. This could lead to the condition of *Heb. 6:4-6; 10:29*.

that was given them. ²²What happened to them shows that the proverb is true, "A dog goes back to what it has vomited," and, "A pig that has been washed goes back to roll in the mud."

The Promise of the Lord's Coming

3 My dear friends! This is now the second letter I have written you. In both letters I have tried to arouse pure thoughts in your minds by reminding you of these things. ²I want you to remember the words that were spoken long ago by the holy prophets, and the command from the Lord and Savior which was given you by your apostles. ³First of all, you must understand that in the last days some men will appear whose lives are controlled by their own lusts. They will

passed on to them. Of them ²²the proverbs are true: "A dog returns to its vomit," and, "A sow that is washed goes back to her wallowing in the mud."

The Day of the Lord

3 Dear friends, this is now my second letter to you. I have written both of them as reminders to stimulate you to wholesome thinking. ²I want you to recall the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets and the command given by our Lord and Savior through your apostles.

³First of all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil

22. What happened. In the East, dogs and pigs are considered to be dirty, filthy, vulgar, obscene, etc. *Lumby* says: "But all the loathing which attached to these outcasts of the brute creation did not suffice to portray the defilement of these teachers of lies and their apostate lives. It needed those other grosser features - the return to the disgorged meal; the greed for filth, where a temporary cleansing serves, as it were, to give a relish for fresh wallowing - these traits were needed ere the full vileness of those sinners could be expressed." *Lipscomb* adds: "It should be observed that in both instances the animal was *changed*. That each returned to its former offensive habits does not alter the fact that a change had occurred."

1. My dear friends. AGAPETOI = those who form a *unity* in Christian love. Peter uses this four times in this chapter. **This is now.** He refers to the Letter of First Peter, and implies that only a short time separates the two letters. See note on *2 Pet. 1:13*. **I have tried to arouse.** As Peter writes, the next few years will be especially crucial for Jewish Christians. The Jewish wars will climax in the destruction of Jerusalem (70 A.D.), perhaps *one-third* of the Jewish nation will be killed, and the Jewish Christians will barely escape (*1 Pet. 4:17-18*). Peter writes to arouse pure thoughts in their minds, because this will be the best defence against the false teachers. Truth and love are the two strongest weapons, and no false teacher can use them!!!

2. To remember the words. The things spoken by the Old Testament prophets. See note on *2 Pet. 1:19*. The Old Testament prophets predicted the coming of Christ in Judgment (*compare Jude 14*). **And the command.** The command of Christ to prepare for the Judgment. Peter could mean the whole truth which Christ gave to his apostles.

3. First of all. The *last days* began at Pentecost (*Acts 2:16-17*) and will continue until Christ Comes Again!!! Christians live in a *last-hour situation* (see *1 John 2:18* and note). False teachers will arise all during the time God's offer of salvation is still in effect!!! **Make fun of you.** See *Jude 18* and note.

make fun of you 'and say, "He promised to come, didn't he? Where is he? Our fathers have already died, but everything is still the same as it was since the creation of the world!" 'They purposely ignore the fact that long ago God spoke, and the heavens and earth were created. The earth was formed out of water, and by water, 'and it was by water also, the water of the Flood, that the old world was destroyed. 'But the heavens and earth that now exist are being preserved, by the same word of God, for destruction by fire. They are being kept for the day when godless men will be judged and destroyed.

'But do not forget this one thing, my dear friends! There is no difference in the Lord's sight between one day and a thousand years; to him the two are the same. 'The Lord is not slow to do what he has promised, as some think. Instead, he is patient with you, because he does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants all to turn away from their sins.

desires. They will say, 4
 "Where is this 'coming' he 5
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But do not forget this one 21
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 stand slowness. He is patient 28
 with you, not wanting any- 29
 one to perish, but everyone 30
 to come to repentance.

4. **And say.** "These people will say: 'Where is his promised Coming to raise the dead and destroy the earth??? For from the time of the death of the first race of men, all parts of our universe continue just as they were in the Creation. Christ's Coming is therefore only something which you dreamed up!!!' "

5. **They purposely ignore.** "They say the stability of the universe disproves both Creation and any coming destruction. But in saying this they must purposely ignore the facts which they already know! Our universe HAS NOT continued to be just as it was without any changes, as the Flood proves!!!" Was formed. See *Gen. 1:7-10; Psalm 136:6; 24:2.*

6. **By water also.** *MacKnight* says: "The reason is, if the word of God destroyed the old world by water, he certainly is able to destroy it a second time." See *Gen. 7:11-12.*

7. **That now exist.** "But though the destruction of the old world shows that the present world is capable of being destroyed, I do not say that it will be again destroyed by water. The same word of God who destroyed the old world by water, is now preserving the present heavens and earth for their future destruction by fire at the time when godless men will be judged and destroyed." On being preserved by the word, see *Heb. 1:3.*

8. **But do not forget.** "Do not listen to those who say the fact that Christ has not come yet proves he will not come at all. God is not limited by time as we are, and both one day and a thousand years are the same thing to him!" Peter paraphrases *Psalm 90:4* to show that God works in ETERNITY!!!

9. **The Lord is not slow.** "If the Lord seems slow to keep his promise to destroy the world, it is certainly not because he cannot do it!!!" Instead, God acted in Christ to offer salvation to all mankind! God desires all human beings to hear and come (*John 6:44-45; 1 Tim. 2:4-6; Rev. 22:17*). Why does God delay??? *Oecuminius* writes: "The time of the end is deferred, that the number of them who are to be saved may be filled up." Compare *Rev. 6:9-11* and notes.

¹⁰But the Day of the Lord will come as a thief. On that Day the heavens will disappear with a shrill noise, the heavenly bodies will burn up and be destroyed, and the earth with everything in it will vanish. ¹¹Since all these things will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people should you be? Your lives should be holy and dedicated to God, ¹²as you wait for the Day of God, and do your best to make it come soon—the Day when the heavens will burn up and be destroyed, and the heavenly bodies will be melted by the heat. ¹³But we wait for what God has promised: new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness will be at home.

¹⁴And so, my friends, as you wait for that Day, do your best to be pure and faultless in God's

But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare.

Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.

So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with

10. **Will come as a thief.** Compare *Matt. 24:36-44* and notes. **On that Day.** The *Expositor's Greek Testament* says: "No distinction is made between the Day of the Lord, and the Coming of Christ. This is remarkable, as excluding any idea of millenarian teaching, which speedily made its appearance in the Early Church." *Clement of Rome* paraphrases this verse in his writings: "But ye know that the day of judgment cometh even now as a burning oven, and the powers of the heavens shall melt, and all the earth as lead melting on the fire, and then shall appear the secret and open works of men" (*2 Clem. 16:3*). **Will vanish.** HEURETHESETAI rather than the KATAKAESETAI of the T.R. The point is: (1) our material creation as we know it will vanish; (2) all (unforgiven) human sin will be laid bare.

11. **Since.** "Since you know the prediction that all these things will be destroyed in this way, what should be your response??? You should always be prepared for the Lord to Come!!!"

12. **As you wait.** See *Phil. 3:20* and note. **To make it come soon.** Compare note on *1 Cor. 16:22*. This is John's *last-hour situation* (*1 John 2:18* and note). Christians are to have a sense of *urgency* and pray for Christ to bring the Day of Judgment! This is the attitude which the early church had. **The Day when.** Peter repeats what he had said in *verse 10* for emphasis. This is also to introduce the next verse.

13. **But we wait.** The Coming will be both judgment for the wicked and triumph for the Kingdom! The Church Militant will become the Church Triumphant!!! **New heavens and a new earth.** *MacKnight* understands God's promise to Abraham of Canaan to refer to this new creation, and that Isaiah describes this in *Isa. 65:17-23*. Compare *Acts 3:21*; *Rom. 8:18-23*; *Col. 1:20*. The fact that our bodies will be raised and transformed would certainly fit in with the idea of a new earth (after this one is destroyed by fire). See *1 Cor. 15:35-54*. Compare *Rev. 21:1-7* and notes.

14. **And so, my friends.** "Since we expect this whole world-system to be destroyed, we must each do our best to be pure and faultless in God's sight and to be at peace with him. We must firmly hold to God's *finished work in Christ* as the means of our being *put right with God*. And as God's people, we must live lives which are holy and pure!!!" See *2 Pet. 1:10-11* and notes.

sight and to be at peace with him. ¹⁵Look on our Lord's patience as the opportunity he gives you to be saved, just as our dear brother Paul wrote to you, using the wisdom God gave him. ¹⁶This is what he says in all his letters, when he writes on this subject. There are some difficult things in his letters which ignorant and unstable people explain falsely, as they do with other passages of the Scriptures. So they bring on their own destruction.

¹⁷But you, my friends, already know this. Be on your guard, then, so that you will not be led away by the errors of lawless men and fall from your safe position. ¹⁸But continue to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory, now and forever! Amen.

him. Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him. He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.

Therefore, dear friends, ¹⁷ since you already know this, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of lawless men and fall from your secure position. But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen. ¹⁸

15. **As the opportunity.** "Don't think of the Lord's delay in coming as proof that he will not come at all!!! Instead, think of it as the opportunity which he gives all to be saved!!!!" See note on *verse 9. Paul wrote.* Remember that much writing was done very early in the life of the church (*Luke 1:1-4* and notes). Since the New Testament writers wrote by inspiration, they could write down God's message in a short time. These writings were being widely circulated, as would be expected, and these churches had no doubt read all that Paul had written, probably even Second Timothy. It is important also to note that Peter puts his *stamp of approval* on the things which Paul has written. There is **ONE GOSPEL** for BOTH Jews and Gentiles!!!

16. **This is what he says.** This implies that Paul is now dead and that Peter has read everything Paul had written. Note that Peter calls their attention to the fact that Paul wrote the very same thing about the Judgment that he is writing!!! **Some difficult things.** This is not criticism of Paul, but rather of the false teachers who purposely misuse Paul's writings. See Introduction to James. **With other passages.** Note that Peter includes Paul's writings as part of the Scriptures!!! This certainly proves that at this point in time there was already in existence a body of writings accepted as authentic Scripture - in addition to the Old Testament Scriptures!!!

17. **Already know this.** "You already know all these things I have warned you about. I just want to put you on your guard so that no false teachers will be able to steal your promise away from you and make you fall from your safe position!!!"

18. **But continue to grow.** See *1 Pet. 2:1-3* and notes. A failure to grow spiritually exposes you to the Devil's power!!! But you never progress *away from* God's act in Christ to set you free: you progress deeper and deeper *into* it!!! Everything God has for *his people* is based on **CHRIST-ON-THE-CROSS!!!** To him. This is Peter's doxology of praise to Jesus Christ our Messiah!!!