

# The Second Epistle Of Peter



**A Study Guide With Introductory Comments,  
Summaries, And Review Questions**

**Student Edition**

This material is from **ExecutableOutlines.com**, a web site containing sermon outlines and Bible studies by Mark A. Copeland. Visit the web site to browse or download additional material for church or personal use.

The outlines were developed in the course of my ministry as a preacher of the gospel. Feel free to use them as they are, or adapt them to suit your own personal style.

**To God Be The Glory!**

**Executable Outlines, Copyright © Mark A. Copeland, 2006**

# **The Second Epistle Of Peter**

## **Table Of Contents**

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Chapter One</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Chapter Two</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Chapter Three</b>	<b>16</b>

This study guide was developed in preparation for teaching adult Bible classes.

- ◆ The objectives for each section are usually things I plan to emphasize during the class.
- ◆ I have found that summarizing and outlining helps me to better understand the Word of God. It is a practice I highly recommend to others.

# The Second Epistle Of Peter

## Introduction

### AUTHOR

The apostle Peter, as stated in the salutation (1:1). The writer claims to have had special revelation from the Lord concerning his demise (1:14; cf. Jn 21:18-19), and to have been present when the Lord was transfigured on the mountain (1:16-18; cf. Mt 17:1-9). He also alludes to the first epistle (3:1), and acknowledges acquaintance with the apostle Paul (3:15). Either Peter wrote it, or it is a blatant forgery.

The external evidence reveals that this epistle was slow to be accepted by many in the church. Eusebius (300 A.D.) considered it among doubtful books, but Clement of Alexandria (200 A.D.) accepted it, and Robertson's Word Pictures notes that those who alluded to it in their writings include Justin Martyr (165 A.D.), Irenaeus (185 A.D.), Ignatius (107 A.D.), and Clement of Rome (96 A.D.).

### RECIPIENTS

The letter is addressed to those “who have obtained like precious faith with us by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ” (1:1).

The author notes this is the second epistle he has written to them (3:1). If it is indeed the second epistle written to the same audience as First Peter, then the recipients were those Christian “pilgrims” (cf. 1 Pe 1:1; 2:11) who were living in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, provinces in what is now Turkey.

### TIME AND PLACE OF WRITING

Peter makes reference to his imminent death (1:14). It is generally accepted that Peter died during the reign of Nero. Since Nero committed suicide in 68 A.D., the epistle must be dated before then. The epistle was therefore probably written sometime during **67 A.D.**

The place of writing is uncertain, though if written while imprisoned shortly before his death, it would have been from **Rome**.

### PURPOSE OF THE EPISTLE

Peter states His purpose very clearly in writing this epistle:

- ◆ To stir up his brethren by way of reminder (1:12-15; 3:1)

Knowing his death is imminent (1:13-14), Peter wanted to ensure that his readers remain established in the truth (1:12), and be mindful of both the words spoken before the prophets and the commandments given by the apostles, especially in regards to the promise of the Lord's return (3:1-4).

### THEME OF THE EPISTLE

The theme of 2nd Peter can be gleaned from its last two verses (**3:17-18**), and stated as:

**“BEWARE, BUT GROW”**

He warns Christians to beware lest they fall from their steadfastness, being led away by error. At the same time, he exhorts them to grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ. After the opening salutation, virtually every verse of the epistle is either an encouragement to grow or a warning against false teachers (including those who scoff at the idea of the Lord returning).

**KEY VERSES: 2 Peter 3:17-18**

*“You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen.”*

**OUTLINE**

**INTRODUCTION (1:1-2)**

1. From Peter, a bondservant and apostle of Jesus Christ (**1:1a**)
2. To those who have obtained like precious faith (**1:1b**)
3. Grace and peace be multiplied in the knowledge of God and Jesus (**1:2**)

**I. GROW IN GRACE AND KNOWLEDGE (1:3-21)**

**A. WITH PRECIOUS GIFTS FROM GOD (1:3-4)**

1. All things that pertain to life and godliness (**1:3**)
2. Exceedingly great and precious promises (**1:4**)

**B. ABOUNDING IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST (1:5-11)**

1. Supplying our faith with Christ-like graces (**1:5-7**)
2. Making our call and election sure (**1:8-11**)

**C. STIRRED UP BY CAREFUL REMINDER (1:12-21)**

1. By one who knows his death is imminent (**1:12-15**)
2. Whose eyewitness testimony along with the prophetic Word we should heed (**1:16-21**)

**II. BEWARE OF FALSE TEACHERS (2:1-22)**

**A. THEIR DESTRUCTIVENESS (2:1-3)**

1. Their destructive heresies (**2:1-2**)
2. Their destructive methods (**2:1,3**)
3. Their destructive end (**2:1,3**)

**B. THEIR DOOM (2:4-9)**

1. The example of the angels who sinned (**2:4**)
2. The example of the flood (**2:5**)
3. The example of Sodom and Gomorrah (**2:6-8**)

4. God will deliver the godly, and punish the unjust (2:9)

**C. THEIR DEPRAVITY (2:10-17)**

1. Reviling against authority (2:10-12)
2. Reveling with great pleasure (2:13-14)
3. Revolting against the right way (2:15-17)

**D. THEIR DECEPTIONS (2:18-22)**

1. Deceptive in their methods (2:18)
2. Deceptive in their promises (2:19)
3. Whose latter end is worse than the beginning (2:20-22)

**III. LOOK FOR THE LORD'S RETURN (3:1-18)**

**A. THOUGH SCOFFERS WILL COME (3:1-9)**

1. Who forget the world was destroyed by water (3:1-7)
2. Do not forget that the Lord is not bound by time, and is longsuffering (3:8-9)

**B. FOR THE DAY OF THE LORD WILL COME (3:10-18)**

1. As a thief in the night, with cataclysmic destruction (3:10,12)
2. For which we should be ready, with holy conduct, looking for the promise of new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells (3:11,13-14)
3. Remembering that the Lord's longsuffering is salvation, as Paul wrote (3:15-16)
4. So beware lest you fall, growing in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ (3:17-18)

**REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE INTRODUCTION**

- 1) **To whom was this second epistle of Peter written? (1:1; 3:1)**
- 2) **What region of the world did they live in?**
- 3) **When was this epistle possibly written?**
- 4) **Where was Peter when he wrote this epistle?**
- 5) **What purpose did Peter have in writing this epistle? (1:12-15; 3:1)**
- 6) **What is suggested as the theme of this epistle?**
- 7) **What is suggested as the key verses in this epistle?**

**8) According to the outline above, what are main divisions of this epistle?**

# The Second Epistle Of Peter

## Chapter One

### OBJECTIVES IN STUDYING THIS CHAPTER

- 1) To note the value of growing in the knowledge of Jesus Christ
- 2) To understand what is involved in growing in the knowledge of Jesus
- 3) To appreciate the importance of being reminded of things we already know
- 4) To see that our faith relies on both eyewitness testimony and prophetic fulfillment

### SUMMARY

Peter addresses his second epistle to those with like precious faith, evidently the same recipients to whom he wrote his first epistle (**3:1**; cf. **1 Pe 1:1**). His benediction of grace and peace is bestowed in connection with the knowledge of God and Jesus, hinting at one of the main themes of this epistle. Reference is then made to God's divine power as the source of all things that pertain to life and godliness, including precious promises by which those who have escaped worldly lusts may now be partakers of the divine nature (**1-4**).

In view of such blessings, Peter exhorts his readers to diligently abound in graces that will render them fruitful in the knowledge of Christ. Failure to do so would be indicative of grave spiritual malady, while diligence in doing so will ensure their calling and election, resulting in an abundant entrance into the heavenly kingdom of Jesus Christ (**5-11**).

Peter then explains why he would write such things when he knows they are well established in them. In light of his impending death, he wants to stir them up and make sure they will always be mindful of these things after he is gone (**12-15**).

He also reminds them of the nature of his testimony concerning power and coming of the Lord. He was an eyewitness, not a deceiver with cunningly devised fables. As an example, reference is made to the events he witnessed on the Mount of Transfiguration (**16-18**; cf. **Mt 17:1-9**).

Peter then exhorts them to give careful heed to the prophetic word made sure, for it will serve as a light in a dark place until the day dawns and the morning star rises in their heart. Such prophecies are to be heeded because they come from men who were moved by the Holy Spirit (**19-21**).

### OUTLINE

#### I. INTRODUCTION (1-2)

##### A. THE AUTHOR (1a)

1. Peter
2. A bondservant and apostles of Jesus Christ

**B. THE RECIPIENTS (1b)**

1. Those who have obtained like precious faith
2. By the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ

**C. GREETINGS (2)**

1. Grace and peace be multiplied
2. In the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord

**II. GROW IN GRACE AND KNOWLEDGE (3-21)**

**A. WITH PRECIOUS GIFTS FROM GOD (3-4)**

1. His divine power has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness
  - a. Through the knowledge of Him
  - b. Who called us by glory and virtue
2. His glory and virtue has given us exceedingly great and precious promises
  - a. Through which we may be partakers of the divine nature
  - b. Having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust

**B. ABOUNDING IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST (5-11)**

1. Diligent to add to our faith:
  - a. Virtue, knowledge, self-control, perseverance
  - b. Godliness, brotherly kindness, love
2. Diligent to make our call and election sure
  - a. Abounding in these graces, neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of Christ
  - b. Not lacking in these graces, neither shortsighted nor forgetful of our cleansing
  - c. Ensuring that we do not stumble, but have an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ

**C. STIRRED UP BY CAREFUL REMINDER (12-21)**

1. By one who knows his death is imminent
  - a. Who desires not to be negligent in reminding them
  - b. Even though they know and are established in the present truth
  - c. Who thinks it right to stir them up by way of reminder
  - d. Knowing he will shortly put off his tent, as Jesus showed him
  - e. To ensure they will always have a reminder of these things after his death
2. Whose eyewitness testimony along with the prophetic Word we should heed
  - a. He did not offer cunningly devised fables
    - 1) When proclaiming the power and coming of the Lord
    - 2) But was an eyewitness of His majesty
    - 3) Such as when Christ received honor and glory from God the Father on the Mount of Transfiguration
  - b. We also have the prophetic word confirmed
    - 1) Which we do well to heed
      - a) As a light in a dark place
      - b) Until the day dawns and the morning star rises in our hearts
    - 2) Knowing the prophetic nature of Scripture
      - a) It was not of private interpretation (origin), or by the will of man

b) But holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit

## **REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE CHAPTER**

- 1) What are the main points of this chapter?**
- 2) To whom does Peter address this epistle (1)**
- 3) In what way are grace and peace multiplied for the Christian? (2)**
- 4) What has God's divine power given to us? How? (3)**
- 5) What else has been given to us? Why? (4)**
- 6) What spiritual graces are we to diligently add to our faith? (5-7)**
- 7) What will be our condition if we abound in these graces? (8)**
- 8) What will be our condition if we lack these graces? (9)**
- 9) What benefit will there be in doing these things? (10-11)**
- 10) What was Peter careful to ensure concerning these things? (12,15)**
- 11) What did Peter hope to accomplish? What did he know would soon happen? (13-14)**
- 12) In making known the power and coming of the Lord Jesus, what did Peter claim? (16)**

**13) What experience in Jesus' life does Peter refer to as an example of witnessing the Lord's honor and glory? (17-18)**

**14) In addition to apostolic testimony, what else do we have to which we should give careful heed? (19)**

**15) How does this word serve us? (19)**

**16) What should be remembered regarding the prophetic word? (20-21)**

# The Second Epistle Of Peter

## Chapter Two

### OBJECTIVES IN STUDYING THIS CHAPTER

- 1) To examine Peter's detailed description of false teachers
- 2) To be aware of their techniques in leading others astray, and their sad end
- 3) To ascertain whether or not these false teachers had ever been true Christians

### SUMMARY

One of the themes of Peter's second epistle is "beware of false teachers", and such is the focus of the second chapter. Just as there were false prophets in Old Testament times, so there would be false teachers.

Peter first describes **the destructiveness of false teachers**. Denying the Lord who bought them, they will secretly introduce destructive heresies. Many will follow them, and the way of truth will be blasphemed. But they will bring swift destruction on themselves (1-3).

Illustrating **the doom of false teachers**, Peter reminds his readers of what happened to the angels who sinned, the ancient world destroyed by the flood, and the fiery end of Sodom and Gomorrah. Surely God knows how to reserve the wicked for the day of punishment, and the example of Lot shows that He also knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations (4-9).

Peter then discusses **the depravity of false teachers**. In arrogance they revile against authority, all the while reveling in pleasure and lusts as they circulate among the Christians they seek to influence. Like the prophet Balaam, they are motivated by the wages of unrighteousness and have forsaken the right way. Empty of true substance, they are like wells without water, clouds tossed by a tempest (10-17).

Finally, Peter describes **the deceptions of false teachers**. In both their methods and promises they seek to deceive those who like them had once escaped the pollutions of the world. But the false teachers are once again enslaved by such pollutions and their last end is worse than the beginning (18-22).

### OUTLINE

#### I. THE DESTRUCTIVENESS OF FALSE TEACHERS (1-3)

##### A. THEIR DESTRUCTIVE HERESIES (1-2)

1. Just as there were false prophets, so there will be false teachers
2. They will bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them
3. Many will follow their destructive ways, and the truth will be blasphemed

##### B. THEIR DESTRUCTIVE METHODS (1,3)

1. They bring in their heresies secretly

2. They will exploit through covetousness and deceptive words

**C. THEIR DESTRUCTIVE END (1,3)**

1. They will bring swift destruction on themselves
2. Their judgment is not idle, their destruction does not slumber

**II. THE DOOM OF FALSE TEACHERS (4-9)**

**A. THE EXAMPLE OF ANGELS WHO SINNED (4)**

1. God did not spare the angels who sinned
2. He cast them down to hell (Tartarus)
3. Delivered them to chains of darkness, reserved for judgment

**B. THE EXAMPLE OF THE FLOOD (5)**

1. God did not spare the ancient world, bringing the flood on the ungodly
2. He saved Noah and his family of eight, a preacher of righteousness

**C. THE EXAMPLE OF SODOM AND GOMORRAH (6-8)**

1. God turned the cities into ashes, condemning them to destruction
2. He made them an example to those who would live ungodly
3. He delivered righteous Lot
  - a. Who was oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked
  - b. Who was tormented daily by seeing and hearing their lawless deeds

**D. GOD WILL DELIVER THE GODLY, PUNISH THE UNJUST (9)**

1. The Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations
2. He will reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment

**III. THE DEPRAVITY OF FALSE TEACHERS (10-17)**

**A. REVILING AGAINST AUTHORITY (10-13a)**

1. They walk according to the flesh in the lust of uncleanness
2. They despise authority, are presumptuous, self-willed
3. They are not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries, unlike angels
  - a. Who are greater in power and might
  - b. Who do not bring reviling accusations before the Lord
4. They are like natural brute beasts made to be caught and destroyed
  - a. Speaking evil of things they do not understand
  - b. Who will utterly perish in their own corruption
  - c. Who will receive the wages of unrighteousness

**B. REVELING WITH GREAT PLEASURE (13b-14)**

1. They count it pleasure to carouse in the daytime
2. Spots and blemishes, they carouse in their own deceptions while feasting with Christians
3. They have eyes full of adultery that cannot cease from sin, beguiling unstable souls
4. They have hearts trained in covetous practices, and are accursed children

**C. REVOLTING AGAINST THE RIGHT WAY (15-17)**

1. They have forsaken the right way and gone astray
2. Like Balaam, who loved the wages of unrighteousness
  - a. Who was rebuked for his iniquity
  - b. His madness restrained by donkey speaking with a man's voice
3. They are wells without water, clouds carried by a tempest
4. For who the gloom of darkness is reserved forever

#### **IV. THE DECEPTIONS OF FALSE TEACHERS (18-22)**

##### **A. DECEPTIVE IN THEIR METHODS (18)**

1. They speak great swelling words of emptiness
2. They allure those who have escaped through the lusts of the flesh, through licentiousness

##### **B. DECEPTIVE IN THEIR PROMISES (19)**

1. They promise liberty, while they themselves are slaves of corruption
2. For by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage

##### **C. WHOSE LATTER END IS WORSE THAN THE BEGINNING (20-22)**

1. Having become entangled and overcome by the pollutions of the world which they had escaped through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ
2. It would have been better not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them
3. It has happened to them according to the proverb
  - a. "A dog returns to his own vomit"
  - b. "A sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire"

#### **REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE CHAPTER**

- 1) **What are the main points of this chapter?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 2) **What does Peter warn that false teachers will do? (1)**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 3) **What impact will such false teachers have? (2)**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 4) **How will such teachers exploit people? (3)**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 5) **What three examples does Peter use to illustrate the doom of false teachers? (4-6)**

- 6) How was Lot oppressed by living in Sodom? (7-8)**
- 7) What two things does the Lord know to do? (9)**
- 8) Who in particular will receive such punishment? (10)**
- 9) What are angels unwilling to do? (11)**
- 10) How does Peter further describe the false teachers? (12-14)**
- 11) In whose way have such false teachers followed? (15-16)**
- 12) How else does Peter describe these false teachers? (17)**
- 13) How are the false teachers able to allure others? (18)**
- 14) Who will they seek to allure? (18)**
- 15) In promising others liberty, what are they themselves? Why? (19)**
- 16) What had these false teachers once escaped? How? (20)**
- 17) What had then happened to them? (20)**
- 18) How had their latter end become worse for them than the beginning? (20-21)**

**19) What twofold proverb does Peter use to describe their sorry condition? (22)**

**20) What in this chapter reveals that these false teachers had once been saved? (1,15,20,21, 22)**

# The Second Epistle Of Peter

## Chapter Three

### OBJECTIVES IN STUDYING THIS CHAPTER

- 1) To be reminded that there will be scoffers of the promise of the Lord's coming
- 2) To review the catastrophic events to occur when the Lord returns, and the promise of new heavens and a new earth
- 3) To note Peter's estimation of Paul as a brother and his epistles as Scripture
- 4) To carefully consider the twofold admonition at the end of the epistle

### SUMMARY

In this final chapter Peter seeks to stir up his readers by reminding them to give heed to the words of the prophets and apostles of the Lord. Especially as it relates to promise of His coming, for in the last days scoffers will come who conveniently forget that the Word which tells of the judgment day by fire was also the same Word which brought about the destruction of the world by the flood. Any delay is not to be construed as slackness on the Lord's part, for time means nothing to the Lord. Rather, delay is an indication of the Lord's longsuffering, who does not want any to perish but for all to repent (**1-9**).

When the day of the Lord does come, it will be unexpected like a thief in the night. A mighty conflagration will dissolve the heavens and the earth with all its works. In anticipation of such things, Christians are to focus on holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening that day when God's promise will be fulfilled of new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells (**10-13**).

We should view the longsuffering of the Lord as opportunity for salvation, even as Paul wrote in his epistles of such things (though unlearned and unstable souls have twisted his words to their own destruction, just as they do the rest of the Scriptures). With admonitions to beware lest they fall, and to grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus, Peter brings his second epistle to a close with a doxology to Christ (**14-18**).

### OUTLINE

#### I. THE SCOFFERS WILL COME (1-9)

##### A. REMEMBER THE WORDS SPOKEN BEFORE (1-4)

1. Peter writes this second epistle to stir up his readers by way of reminder
2. To be mindful of the prophets' words and the apostles' commandments
3. That scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts
  - a. Questioning the promise of the Lord's coming
  - b. Declaring that all things continue as they were since creation

##### B. REMEMBER THE WORLD WAS DESTROYED BEFORE (5-7)

1. Which the scoffers willfully forget
2. That the world once perished being flooded with water
3. The same word that brought destruction by water now promises judgment by fire
  - a. The heavens and the earth which now exists are reserved for fire
  - b. When comes the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men

**C. REMEMBER THE LORD'S TIMELESSNESS AND LONGSUFFERING (8-9)**

1. Do not forget that time means nothing to the Lord
  - a. One day is as a thousand years
  - b. A thousand years is as one day
2. The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, but longsuffering
  - a. Not willing that any perish
  - b. But that all should repent

**II. THE DAY OF THE LORD WILL COME (10-18)**

**A. UNEXPECTED WITH CATAclysmic DESTRUCTION (10-12)**

1. The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night
2. The heavens and the earth be dissolved
  - a. The heavens will pass away with a great noise
  - b. The elements will melt with fervent heat
  - c. The earth and its works will be burned up
  - d. The heavens will be dissolved being on fire
3. Since all these things will be dissolved...
  - a. What manner of persons ought we to be in holy conduct and godliness?
  - b. Looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God?

**B. EXPECTED BY THOSE WHO ARE LOOKING (13-18)**

1. According to His promise, we look forward
  - a. To new heavens and a new earth
  - b. In which righteousness dwells
2. Looking forward to these things, we should be diligent
  - a. To be found by Him in peace
  - b. To be without spot and blameless
3. We thus consider the longsuffering of the Lord to be salvation
  - a. Of which the beloved brother Paul has written, according to the wisdom given him
  - b. In which are some things hard to understand, which the unstable and untaught twist to their own destruction
4. Knowing such things beforehand, we should beware and grow
  - a. Beware lest we fall from our own steadfastness, led away with the error of the wicked
  - b. Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ
5. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen.

**REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE CHAPTER**

- 1) What are the main points of this chapter?

- 2) **How did Peter seek to stir up his readers' minds? (1-2)**
- 3) **What would scoffers be saying in the last days? (3-4)**
- 4) **What do they willfully forget? (5-6)**
- 5) **What does the Word of God say concerning the heavens and the earth? (7)**
- 6) **What should we be careful not to forget? (8)**
- 7) **How will the day of the Lord come? (9)**
- 8) **What will happen when that day comes? (9)**
- 9) **Since all these things will be dissolved, what should we do? (11-12)**
- 10) **Again, what will happen to the heavens and the elements? (12)**
- 11) **Despite such an end, what do we look for according to His promise? (13)**
- 12) **Looking forward to such things, about what should we be diligent? (14)**
- 13) **How should we view the longsuffering of the Lord? (15)**
- 14) **Who else wrote about such things? How? (15-16)**

**15) How does Peter describe the epistles of Paul? (16)**

**16) What do the untaught and unstable do with such writings of Paul? (16)**

**17) In what category does Peter place the writings of Paul? (16)**

**18) Knowing such things beforehand, what warning does Peter give his readers? (17)**

**19) What final admonition does Peter give to his readers? (18)**