

Outline of II Peter

Introduction

Peter is the author of II Peter (see II Pet. 1:1; 3:1-2). It is just as difficult to place a date on II Peter as it is to date his first. Persecution upon members of the body of Christ and the death of Peter are the only dates we have to go by in dating I Peter (i.e., between 33 and 68 AD). This second epistle was written sometime after the first (see II Pet. 3:1) and thereby at a later unspecified date. The audience is general; i.e., *“them that have obtained a like precious faith”* (II Pet. 1:1).

Peter states the objective of this epistle at II Peter 3:1 saying, *“This is now, beloved, the second epistle that I write unto you; and in both of them I stir up your sincere mind my putting you in remembrance.”* Peter’s audience is admonished to remember (II Pet. 1:12, 13, 15) all the inspired apostolic writings that are designed to bring one to salvation (II Pet. 3:15). The primary life objective of every right thinking individual is to obtain the *“divine nature”* as a glorified saint of God (II Pet. 1:4). There were; however, false teachers during Peter’s day whose objective was directly opposed to such eternal bliss.

The Apostle Peter reveals one particular damning doctrine of these false teachers in this epistle. Some false teachers were claiming that Jesus would not come again (i.e., a second coming) (II Pet. 3:3-5). To substantiate their claims they challenged their audience to look at the supposed claims of Jesus’ coming and the current date. Many years had elapsed since Jesus Christ had promised another coming to save the world from the consequences of sin (see Matt. 24:36ff). Seeing that Jesus had not yet come they concluded that he was not going to come (see II Pet. 3:4).

These false teachers made *“merchandise”* (II Pet. 2:3) of *“many”* (II Pet. 2:2) who were *“unstedfast”* in their faith (II Pet. 2:14) and newly converted (II Pet. 2:18). The tactics of the false teachers was opinionated preaching (II Pet. 2:1) and railing at people who hold positions of authority as to stir up others against them (II Pet. 2:10-12). The more error that was put on the spiritual plate of the unstedfast and new convert the more truth would be evil spoken of (II Pet. 2:2). Peter compares these erroneous teachers to Balaam in that they loved riches and honor more than truth (II Pet. 2:15-16). False teachers not only destroy their own souls but the souls of others (II Pet. 2:12). God views the false teacher as an unwanted animal that is put down in death (II Pet. 2:12). Peter makes it clear, God will not *“spare”* men or women who teach and oppose His divine truths (see II Pet. 2:4-5). This epistle is thereby a warning to the faithful child of God. Peter states, *“Ye therefore, beloved, knowing these things beforehand, beware lest, being carried away with the error of the wicked, ye fall from your own steadfastness”* (II Pet. 3:17).

Remaining steadfast (i.e., firm and confident) in one’s faith is the key to *“escaping the corruption that is in the world by lust”* (II Pet. 1:4) and the error of *“false teachers”* (II Pet. 2:1). The apostle Peter thereby speaks of *“diligence”* (II Pet. 1:10; 3:14), *“spiritual growth”* (II Pet. 3:18), and obtaining *“knowledge”* (II Pet. 1:2, 3, 5, 8) as keys to spiritual survival. Said achievements will produce conviction within the soul and the ability to differentiate *“cunningly devised fables”* from the truth of the gospel message (II Pet. 1:16). Furthermore, diligence, spiritual growth, and knowledge will help one make a distinction between truth and error in general (i.e., divine revelation from pseudo religious words) (see II Pet. 1:19-21). When the Christian makes said distinctions and puts on the “Christian Graces” of II Peter 1:5-7 he will not be *“idle nor unfruitful unto the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ”* (II Pet. 1:8) and thereby obtain the *“divine nature”* (II Pet. 1:4). Let all Christians be watchers on the mountain tops of life so that error from the lips of men who disrespect the authoritative divinely revealed word of God may be vigorously opposed. Let us put on the conviction of Moses against said false teachers in that we will not *“consent, hearken, neither shall thine eye pity him, neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal him:”* (Deut. 13:8).

Outline of II Peter

I. The Christian's similitude toward the Divine Nature of God (1:1-11):

- A. *"Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained a like precious faith with us in the righteousness of our God and the Savior Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace be multiplied in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord"* (1:1-2).
1. Simon Peter was an apostle of Jesus Christ (i.e., "a messenger, ambassador, envoy" LS 107) (see John 1:40-41).
 2. Peter is addressing *"them that have obtained a like precious faith."* The faith of the apostles is equivalent to the faith of Peter's audience. Peter's general audience had *"obtained"* this faith in the *"righteousness of our God and the Savior Jesus Christ"* through the preaching of the gospel message (I Cor. 15:11; I Tim. 3:16).
 3. Peter's opening words indicate a desire for all Christians to be recipients of the Grace (forgiveness through the redemptive blood of Christ / Eph. 1:7; 2:8) and peace (free from the fear of the wrath of God against sinners / Rom. 1:18; 2:5; 5:9 etc.) that is found in God and of Jesus our Lord.
- B. *"seeing that his divine power hath granted unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that called us by his own glory and virtue"* (1:3).
1. Sometimes it is better to examine parallel Bible doctrines to interpret a passage than to define each word. We may define each word yet without knowledge of other principles set forth in God's word we are left without clarity. II Peter 1:3 seems to fit this mold of interpretation.
 2. I know that God's divine power **freely gives** (*"grants"*) me *"all things that pertain unto life and godliness..."* (Eph. 2:8). The gospel message fits this description (see Rom. 1:16). *"Knowledge"* of this gospel (along with my obedience to its principles) will lead me to be **approved** of God in life and godliness (II Tim. 2:15). Gospel principles define the *"glory and virtue"* of Jehovah. The *"call"* of said Gospel is that man would seek out the same *"glory"* (grandeur and fame) *and virtue* (great value or worth)" (II Thess. 2:13-14).
 - a. The *"exaltation"* of the Christian was a thematic part of Peter's first epistle. Peter stated, *"Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time"* (I Pet. 5:6). To be exalted is to be praised, lifted up, and or pay tribute to. Now is not the time for the Christian's exaltation to a glorious state of being; however, it is the hope of every person who hears the gospel and obeys it (see study # 46; The Glorified Saint).
 - b. The *"all things that pertain to life and godliness"* is thereby grace and peace through the hope of attaining *"eternal glory in Christ"* (see I Pet. 5:10).
- C. *"whereby he hath granted unto us his precious and exceeding great promises; that through these ye may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world by lust"* (1:4).
1. God *"grants"* (*doreomai*) = "to give freely" (Moulton 99). God's gifts are freely given and defined as *"his precious and exceeding great promises."* God's precious and great **promise** that is **freely given** is the redemption of man from the consequences of sin (compare Eph. 1:7 with 2:8). This is the central theme of the entire Bible. God had *"promised"* this to come through the seed of Abraham and eventually realized in Jesus Christ (comp. Gen. 12:1ff with Gal. 3:8-9, 14, 16). The promise of God is the forgiveness of sins (see Acts 2:38-39; 13:23, 37-39). Note the connection between *"called"* (vs. 3) and obtaining His *"promise"* (vs. 4). Those who hear and obey the gospel message receive the forgiveness of sins (i.e., God's promise) (see study # 53; God's Promise to Mankind).
 2. *"Through"* these promises (i.e., the opportunity to be forgiven of sins) an individual *"may become partakers of the divine nature."* Note to this point that the divine nature is associated with the forgiveness of one's sins and *"escaping the corruption that is in the world by lust."* The *"divine nature"* is thereby altogether opposed to sin and associated with God's *"eternal glory"* (I Pet. 5:10) and the reception of man's equivalent *"exaltation"* (I Pet. 5:6). Let us consider a few things:

- a. First, people “*may*” obtain “*the divine nature*” that is associated with forgiveness, escaping the corruption in the world by lusts, and eternal exaltation and glorification. The word “*may*” (*ginomai*) = “of events, to take place, come to pass, come on, happen” (LS 164). The Nestle Marshall text translates this Greek word as “ye might become” (NM 923). Friberg’s Analytical Greek New Testament reveals the Greek verb *ginomai* to be in the aorist tense (i.e., denotes past action without indicating completion, continuation, or repetition of this action) (Friberg 713). The proper interpretation of this Greek word is essential in understanding one’s attaining and maintaining the divine nature of God. Once obtained, through the forgiveness of sins, one must continue in spiritual growth and Godliness to keep this state of being.
- b. The overall thought thereby is that man shall obtain a share or fellowship (“*partakers*”) of the divine nature through the forgiveness of sins and escaping the lust found in the world.
3. We have yet to clearly define and identify the “*divine nature*.” Let us consider some definitions.
 - a. **Divine** (*theios*) = “divine, pertaining to God” (Moulton 193). “Being or having the nature of a deity” (AHD 412).
 - b. **Deity** = “the essential nature or condition of being a god... divine nature... God” (American Heritage Dictionary [AHD] 377).
 - c. **Nature** = “the essential characteristics and qualities of a person or thing” (AHD 832).
4. What are the characteristics and qualities of God that man may obtain? While there are traits of God that man may not obtain such as omniscience, omnipotence, and omnipresence there are traits such as patience (II Pet. 3:9), merciful and comforting (II Cor. 1:3), loving (I Jn. 4:8) and peaceable (I Cor. 14:33) that man can obtain. Peter’s I epistle has signified that the Christian, in addition to obtaining these godly traits, may also be partakers in exaltation and glorification (I Pet. 5:6, 10). The divine nature of God seems best described by Jesus when he said, “*Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect*” (Matt. 5:48). Perfection is the essential and divine characteristic that those who have obeyed the gospel attain and maintain through baptism and prayer. This perfection of character is what Moses (Lev. 11:44-45) and the apostle Peter (I Pet. 1:14-16) had in mind. Said perfection will not only illustrate itself in the patient and kind traits towards others mentioned above but also in one’s view toward sin. Moses (Deut. 7:26) and the apostle Paul (Rom. 12:9) illustrated God’s desire for man to develop a passionate hatred for sin. The divine nature of God is thereby all that God is including glorification, intolerance for sin, and patience with all who are seeking said state of being. To further define the “*divine nature*” of God Peter gives several traits (see II Pet. 1:5-11). These traits of the divine nature are often times referred to as the “Christian Graces” (see study # 52; The Nature of Man and # 46).
- D. “*Yea, and for this very cause adding on your part all diligence, in your faith supply virtue; and in your virtue knowledge;*” (1:5).
 1. Seeing that God’s divine nature is obtained by the Christian through the forgiveness of sins (i.e., God’s promises that He has given the obedient) and escaping the lusts found in the world there are now things that the faithful Christian is to “*add on your part*” (*epichoregesate*). The Greek word *epichoregesate* is defined as “to supply further; to super-add, furnish” (Moulton 163). *Epichoregesate* is an aorist verb of action (Friberg 713).
 2. Those of “*like precious faith*” i.e., Christians, are commanded to seek out God’s eternal promises and eternal divine nature by actively pursuing (give diligence or effort) areas of virtue, knowledge, etc. Note that Peter states that to each of these parts of the divine nature things must be “supplied” or “added” to one’s “*faith*” on the part of the Christian. Here are clear statements that illustrate the work Christians are to be involved in that they may obtain the divine nature:
 - a. “*Virtue*” (*arête*) = “goodness, virtue (great value or worth)” (Moulton 50).
 - b. “*Knowledge*” (*gnosis*) = “a judicial inquiry... a knowing, knowledge” (LS 167).
- E. “*and in your knowledge self-control; and in your self-control patience; and in your patience godliness;*” (1:6).

1. “*Self-control*” (*egkrateia*) = “mastery over a person or thing” (LS 222). “Self control, continence (self-restraint; moderation) , temperance” (Moulton 113).
 2. “*Patience*” (*hupomone*) = “patient endurance, awaiting, patient frame of mind, perseverance, endurance in adherence to an object, an enduring of affliction” (Moulton 418). The ability to wait some things out.
 3. “*Godliness*” (*eusebeia*) = “piety (religious devotion and reverence to God... Devotion and reverence to parents and family / AHD 939), reverence towards parents, filial respect” (LS 332).
- F. “*and in your godliness brotherly kindness; and in your brotherly kindness love*” (1:7).
1. “*Brotherly kindness*” (*Philadelphia*) = “brotherly love” (LS 861). To dissect the word is to understand it a bit better. The Greek *phileo* = “to manifest some act or token of kindness or affection; to love, regard with affection, have affection for... to like, be fond of, delight in a thing” (Moulton 426). The Greek *adelphos* = “a brother; near kinsman or relative; one of the same nation or nature; one of equal rank and dignity; an associate, a member of the Christian community” (Moulton 6). The word thereby indicates the Christian’s responsibility to manifest an act of kindness, affection, love, and be fond of those who would be recognized as brethren in the body of Christ (i.e., those of “*like precious faith*” [see II Pet. 1:1]) (see study # 35).
 2. “*Love*” (*agape*) = “love, generosity, kindly concern, devotedness” (Moulton 2). There is a difference between the two loves stated. Brotherly love takes into consideration a brother in Christ’s affection and needs whereas agape love is kindly concerned for all of humanity (brethren included).
- G. “*For if these things are yours and abound, they make you to be not idle nor unfruitful unto the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ*” (1:8).
1. The apostle Peter states that “*if*” faith, virtue, knowledge, self-control, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love belong to you and “*abound*” there will be results. The idea of “*abounding*” (*pleonazo*) = “to be more than enough; to have more than enough, to have in abundance” (Moulton 335). Let us recall that Peter said at verse 4 that we “*may*” attain unto the divine nature. These terms and tenses indicate that one receives God’s promises only as they do their part (see study # 54; Conditions of Salvation).
 2. The abundance of faith, virtue, knowledge, etc. will “*make you to be not idle...*” (*argos*) = “not working the ground, living without labor... inactive, slothful, idle, lazy.... idle at a thing... unemployed” (LS 114). To be “*unfruitful*” (*akarpos*) = “unprofitable... without fruit, barren” (LS 26).
 3. The Christian who abounds in Christian virtues will not be inactive, slothful, or lazy and neither will they be unprofitable or barren when it comes to attaining the “*knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.*” The use of Christ’s name is found in juxtaposition with the gospel message of truth itself (see Col. 1:25-27; 2:8).
- H. “*For he that lacks these things is blind, seeing only what is near, having forgotten the cleansing from his old sins*” (1:9).
1. The antecedent of the word “*he*” is clearly a Christian (one who has obtained faith in Jesus Christ through the gospel message and obeyed being baptized for the remission of sins... said individual has been justified from the consequences of their sin through this faith / see Rom. 5:1ff).
 2. Peter depicts one who has been justified by their obedient faith; however, through the process of time did not grow in the Christian graces and thereby has not maintained the divine nature of God. To not abound in the seven graces mentioned above is to be “*blind, seeing only what is near, having forgotten the cleansing from his old sins.*”
 3. While the Christian who diligently looks for the appearing of Christ and the eternal glorification of the body will not be found idle, lazy, nor unprofitable in the knowledge of Jesus (i.e., the gospel message) there are some who are not so diligently minded. Said individuals are blind in relation to their divinely appointed spiritual objectives of growth (see I Pet. 2:1ff). Said individuals are not unlike the world in that they see only the things that are affecting them in the here and now (they do not have spiritual vision of faith). The third symptom of one who

has not maintained the divine nature of God through the abundance of Christian graces is that he has “*forgotten the cleansing from his old sins.*” A spirit of ingratitude and apathy toward current sins has mutilated the mind that originally sought diligently the forgiveness of sins. (see study # 55; A Lack of Spiritual Conviction). The “*forgiveness of sins*” was originally noted and accepted as God’s “*precious and exceeding great promises*” (II Pet. 1:4a) yet now through sloth, idleness, and laziness in relation to spiritual growth the man or woman has become unprofitable in the knowledge of Christ. Said individual is in deep spiritual trouble (once he was saved he is not always saved). Faith seems to be the encompassing word that summarizes the seven Christian graces. When one of these graces fails one’s faith is failing. The author of Hebrews said, “*without faith it is impossible to please God...*” (Heb. 11:7).

- I. “*Wherefore, brethren, give the more diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never stumble*” (1:10).
 1. The apostle Peter once again calls upon the Christian to exhibit great efforts in this life to live godly that their hope in the promises of God may be realized. The word “*diligence*” (*spoudazo*) = “to be busy, eager, zealous, earnest to do a thing” (LS 740). Rather than being *argos* (idle and lazy) (see II Pet. 1:8) the Christian is to be busy developing and maintaining the divine nature through these seven Christian graces (see study # 56; God Wants our Effort).
 2. The busy Christian, in the areas of virtue, godliness, etc., are making their “*calling and election sure.*”
 - a. To make something “*sure*” (*bebaios*) is to be “firm, steady, steadfast, sure, certain” (LS 149). Peter gives the formula for the Christian’s certainty of receiving eternal glorification with the father (i.e., eternal divine nature).
 - b. People are “*called*” to obtain the forgiveness of sins (i.e., God’s precious and exceeding great promise / see II Pet. 1:4). The gospel does the calling through preaching and teaching (II Thess. 2:13-14).
 - c. Once a person has answered the call of the gospel message to receive the forgiveness of sins (i.e., they are baptized into Christ / Acts 2:38) through the redeeming blood of Christ they are recognized as the “*elect*” of God. The “*elect*” (*eklektos*) = “picked out, select” (LS 240). Who are God’s “select and picked out” people? The apostle Peter has already said, “*But ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession, that ye may show forth the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.*” (I Pet. 2:9). The elect of God are thereby those who have been **called** out of darkness to light by the gospel message (see study # 1; The Election of Grace). Said class of people were foreordained before the foundation of the world to receive salvation (cf. Rom. 8:28ff; Eph. 1:3ff). Here are people who hear the gospel, believe it, and obey it. They receive the forgiveness of their sins based upon their obedient acts (as this book and Romans 6:16-25 illustrates). God chooses those who love and fear Him to be His for eternity.
 3. Peter now gives the assurance and confidence that marks the Christian’s hope. We know that when we give diligent effort to attain and maintain our salvation through love and fear of God then we will not be disappointed. God will fulfill his ultimate and everlasting promise in that we shall be eternally glorified with the heavenly Father (see I Pet. 5:4-6). Peter states that “*if you do*” (*poieo*) (present tense verb indicates ongoing action) that is, perform through diligence the Christian graces, then you shall “*never stumble*” in sin (see study # 58; Hope and Confidence in the Promises of God). There may be times that the Christian sins but he or she will not continue in it because of their mind to be like Christ and desire to go to heaven. Said Christians will thereby plead with God that he may forgive them of their trespasses (I Jn. 1:8-10).
- J. “*for thus shall be richly supplied unto you the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ*” (1:11).
 1. Let us recall that Peter is addressing Christians (i.e., those who have already heard and obeyed the call of the gospel) (I Pet. 1:1). These Christians have already been added unto the kingdom of God when they were baptized into Christ (see Acts 2:38-41; Col. 1:13; I Thess. 2:12).

2. Peter now clearly states that these baptized believers who have been added unto the kingdom of God (i.e., the church of Christ) have the opportunity of being “*richly supplied*” with an “*eternal kingdom*.” Just because one obeyed the gospel being baptized for the remission of sins does not mean that this same person shall occupy the eternal kingdom of God in heaven. There is a difference. The difference between the kingdom of God upon the earth and the kingdom of God on into eternity is found at the Day of Judgment. Those in the kingdom of God will be judged by whether they continued steadfastly in the apostle’s doctrine as revealed by divine revelation. Our salvation is thereby contingent upon whether we give diligence in this life to obtain God’s eternal kingdom.

II. Peter’s Earnest desire to Remind Christians of the Divine Origin of Revelation (1:12-21):

- A. “*Wherefore I shall be ready always to put you in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and are established in the truth which is with you*” (1:12).
 1. What “*things*” would Peter “*always*” be ready to put the brethren in “*remembrance*” of? Peter has examined the obtaining of “*knowledge*” at II Peter 1:2-3, and 8. Gaining knowledge of Christ will occur through man’s diligence, will, and observation. The more knowledge gained and applied to our lives through the seven Christian graces the more we attain the divine nature and assure the receiving of God’s promises.
 2. The Christians Peter is addressing had knowledge of the truth and were “*established*” therein. To be “*established*” (*sterizo*) = “to be firmly set or fixed, to stand fast or steady... to get a firm footing” (LS 746). Peter had previously said, “*And the God of all grace, who called you unto his eternal glory in Christ, after that ye have suffered a little while, shall himself perfect, establish, strengthen you*” (I Pet. 5:10). The Christian would be perfected, strengthened, and ESTABLISHED through suffering at the hands of wicked men (I Pet. 3:4) and Satan’s tempting vices (I Pet. 5:8-9).
 3. Though these Christians stood fast and firm in the truth they continued to have a need to be reminded of Bible truths. Herein is the value of Gospel preaching. Let no preacher grow weary of teaching truth even though you know the audience has heard these things before. We all need to be reminded (see study # 57; Preachers and Preaching).
- B. “*And I think it right, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance;*” (1:13).
 1. Peter considered reminding brethren of these principles that they already had knowledge of as the “*right*” thing to do.
 2. Peter’s objective of reminding the Christians of their duty to attain and maintain the Christian graces and divine nature was that he may “*stir*” them. To “*stir*” (*diegeiro*) = “to arouse or awake thoroughly... to be excited, agitated, as a sea... metaphorically to stir up, arouse, animate” (Moulton 99). Good preaching will arouse, stir up, and animate its audience that they may perform the commandments of God (see study # 57).
- C. “*Knowing that the putting off of my tabernacle cometh swiftly, even as our Lord Jesus Christ signified unto me*” (1:14).
 1. Peter knew that he would not live much longer. He was to put off the tabernacle of his flesh very “*swiftly*.”
 2. Jesus had told Peter of his eventual death at John 21:15-19.
- D. “*Yea, I will give diligence that at every time ye may be able after my decease to call these things to remembrance*” (1:15).
 1. With a true care for the souls of his audience Peter delivers what may be his final words to many brethren. His earnest desire was that Christians would be able to recall all the apostles’ teachings in truth.
 2. Peter gave diligence in his teaching knowing that there would be those who brought damnable doctrines before the minds of brethren. The brethren needed to be firmly established in truth that these various doctrines would not be accepted. They needed to develop an attitude against these erring doctrines that would see them through the difficult days ahead (see study # 59; Developing an Attitude of Accepting Truth Alone).

- E. *“For we did not follow cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eye-witnesses of his majesty”* (1:16).
1. Peter assures the Christians that his preaching was not from *“cunningly devised fables.”* The words *“cunningly devised”* are one word in the Greek (i.e., *sophizo*) = “to teach oneself, learn... to play subtle tricks, deal subtly... to devise cleverly or skillfully... to deceive” (LS 738). *“Fables”* (*muthos*) = “anything delivered by word of mouth, word, speech... a speech in the public assembly, talk, conversation... counsel, advice, a command... a tale, story, narrative” (LS 521). Peter’s thought is that his preaching (nor any other the other true apostles of Jesus Christ) was not a skillful and clever speech to the brethren to take them down a self imposed road of faith (see study # 60; Making a Distinction between Truth and Error).
 2. The apostle Paul was accused of preaching his own ideas by some in Corinth (see II Cor. 3:1; 4:5; 5:12; 10:12; 13:3). Paul addressed a *“bewitched”* (Gal. 3:1) group of Christians in Galatia who had been guilty of following a *“different gospel”* (Gal. 1:6) saying, *“For I make known to you, brethren, as touching the gospel which was preached by me, that it is not after man. For neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came to me through revelation of Jesus Christ”* (Gal. 1:11-12).
 3. Peter reminds his hearers that he was an eye-witness of the *“majesty”* of Christ. The context (see verse 17 below) indicates a time when Peter, James, and John all witnessed the transfiguration of Christ as recorded at Matthew 17:1ff.
- F. *“For he received from God the Father honor and glory, when there was borne such a voice to him by the Majestic Glory, this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: and this voice we ourselves heard borne out of heaven, when we were with him in the holy mount”* (1:17-18).
1. Peter’s objective is to see his readers attain the divine nature and eventually *“the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ”* (II Pet. 1:4, 11).
 2. Peter now sets out to make a distinction between the truth he and the other apostles taught and *“cunningly devised fables.”*
 3. The message he received was from none other than Lord God Almighty. Peter had been with Jesus and saw his majesty. Peter rehearses the divine statement he heard on the Mount of Transfiguration as Recorded at Matthew 17:1-8. Below are some notes on that section:

Jesus is Transfigured before Peter, James, and John (Matthew 17:1-8):

- A. *“And after six days Jesus taketh with him Peter, and James, and John his brother, and brings them up into a high mountain apart:”* (17:1).
1. Six days after Peter had made the great confession of the deity of Christ and at the same time rebuked by the Lord for a statement of ignorance the Lord takes him and two other disciples apart from the others. The three ascend atop a high mountain.
 2. Jesus will later take Peter, James, and John to pray with him in the garden of Gethsemane (Matt. 26:37). Mark records the fact that it was Peter, James, and John who the Lord chose to be with Him as he raised the ruler of the synagogue’s daughter from the dead (Mark 5:35ff). There appears to be a closer relationship between Jesus and these three disciples than what existed with the other nine men.
- B. *“and he was transfigured before them; and his face did shine as the sun, and his garments became white as the light”* (17:2).
1. Once upon the mountain Jesus is *“transfigured”* before them. To be *“transfigured”* (*metamorphoo*) = “to be transformed” (LS 503). “To change the external form, transfigure... to change one’s form” (Moulton 266).
 2. Before the eyes of Peter, James, and John Jesus was changed. The Lord’s face shined like the sun and his clothing became as light. The true nature of Jesus as the Son of God was bright light (a representation of his deity and purity / cf. I Jn. 1:5ff). Such a manifestation of the Lord’s true state produced a greater understanding in these three disciple’s minds as to the eternal being of Jesus.
- C. *“And behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elijah talking with him”* (17:3).
1. Luke tells us that Jesus and the three disciples went to the mountain to pray together and that the three disciples fell asleep. When they awoke, they saw Jesus in his glorified state talking to Moses and Elijah about *“his decease which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem”* (cf. Lk. 9:31).

2. The death of these two men had remained a mystery to the Jews. Moses had been called to Mount Nebo to be taken by the Lord and Elijah was taken into the heavens by a chariot of fire. These two well respected men, who represented the law of Jehovah God and the prophets who spoke it, met together with the Lord to talk about His impending suffering and death for the sins of the world.
- D. *“And Peter answered, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, I will make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah”* (17:4).
1. Peter knew who Jesus was and he also recognized Moses and Elijah. Peter was overwhelmed by the event and once again comes to the forefront of the disciples acting as a spokesman (like he did on Pentecost in Acts 2).
 2. Peter asks the Lord if it would be ok for them to construct tabernacles for the three of the men (i.e., Jesus, Moses, and Elijah). The tabernacle was a tent structure that Peter may have intended to be a place of worship.
- E. *“While he was yet speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold, a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him. And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. And Jesus came and touched them and said, Arise, and be not afraid. And lifting up their eyes, they saw no one save Jesus only”* (17:5-8).
1. The heavenly Father appears as Peter has made his request to make a tabernacle for Jesus, Moses, and Elijah. The Father reveals that Jesus is His Son and that all are to *“hear him.”* The authoritative words of Jesus Christ were to be elevated above all human reason.
 2. We may recall that when Jesus was baptized by John the baptizer that the Father then proclaimed, *“this is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased”* (cf. Matt. 3:17). Later, the Father will speak again in the hearing of mankind on behalf of Christ (cf. Jn. 12:28-30). Jesus responds to the voice by saying, *“This voice hath not come for my sake, but for your sakes”* (Jn. 12:30). The purpose of the outspoken divine communication between the Father and Son was to produce a greater faith in those who heard.
 3. The heavenly Father’s voice struck terror in the hearts of Peter, James, and John and they fall upon their face to the earth in fear. Knowing their sinful state and the consequences thereof in the presence of the God of holiness and purity they feared for their lives.
 4. The *“touch”* of Jesus, as he tells the three disciples to *“Arise, and be not afraid,”* helps us to see the mission of Jesus. Through mercy and compassion for man’s soul the Lord has granted the opportunity for all to stand before the holy God of heaven in a state of moral cleanness even though we have been guilty of lawlessness. Jesus is always there for all of mankind to rid us of our fear, suffering, sorrows, and anxieties. Jesus tells us today, *“Arise, and be not afraid.”* When Peter was sinking in the waters of Galilee it was Jesus that reached out his hand and grasped Peter in his moment of faithlessness (cf. Matt. 14:30-31). Likewise Jesus will always stretch forth his hand to save us through his holy words.

Back to II Peter 1:19

- G. *“And we have the word of prophecy made more sure; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts:”* (II Pet. 1:19).
1. The word of prophecy (i.e., the truth of verse 12) is made sure by the fact that the apostles who delivered these words were men who witnessed the glory of Jesus. Secondly, these words are of a divine origin. Peter concludes that his readers would *“do well that ye take heed...”* (i.e., listen, learn, and obey).
 2. These prophetic words are designed to save your soul and are equated to the *“day star”* (i.e., Christ / see Rev. 22:16). Jesus is likened unto a lamp that shines light in a morally dark world.
- H. *“Knowing this first, that no prophecy of scripture is of private interpretation”* (1:20).
1. The truth in all its purity (i.e., that which was delivered by God to the prophets and apostles) is designed to be read and understood alike by all (see study # 28).
 2. A *“private”* (*idios*) interpretation = *“one’s own, pertaining to oneself... private, personal, peculiar, separate, distinct, peculiar and different from others”* (LS 375). If one could interpret the scriptures in a different or separate manner than others would we not have religious chaos? Yet that is exactly what takes place in the religious world we live in. Peter tells us that the *“interpretation”* (*epilysis*) should be alike by all (see study # 61; Bible Interpretation). I should

conclude the same thing about baptism being for the remission of sins as one on the other side of the globe who is studying God's word. The word *epilysis* = "interpretation of what is enigmatical and obscure" (Moulton 158).

3. The transferal of divine instructions to man is not subject to a personal, distinct, and separate interpretation.
 - I. "*For no prophecy ever came by the will of man: but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit*" (1:21).
 1. There must have been false teachers who were causing men to question not only Paul's writings but other inspired men as well. Peter is diligent to show the origin and mode of the apostles receiving divine revelation. Not only had they been eyewitnesses of the Christ but they also received divine revelation "*from God*" (see study # 62; Inspiration).
 2. How did this take place? Peter states that men were "*moved by the Holy Spirit.*" To be "*moved*" (*phero*) = "to produce, bring forward, cite... to bring one word, to tell, announce" (LS 858). The work of the Holy Spirit was to communicate to men divine revelation (i.e., move, produce, cite, tell, or announce). Jesus said to his apostles, "*when the Spirit of truth is come, he shall guide you into all the truth: for he shall not speak from himself; but what things soever he shall hear, these shall he speak: and he shall declare unto you the things that are to come*" (Jn. 16:8ff). God thereby "*moved*" (II Pet. 1:21) some men to speak divine truths by the **Holy Spirit**. The Holy Spirit "*entered into*" (Ezek. 2:1-2) and "*fell upon*" (Ezek. 11:5) the apostles and prophets in times past that they may speak the commandments of God (see I Cor. 14:37). Nehemiah records, "*yet many years didst thou bear with them, and testified against them by thy Spirit through thy prophets*" (Neh. 9:30 / cf. Ezek. 1:3; 11:4-7). Others received "**visions**" and "**dreams**" from God to speak a divine message to the people (cf. Dan. 7:1; Obed. 1:1; Joel 2:28ff; Amos 1:1; Zechariah 1:7ff). When God placed His "*Spirit*" upon man they were enabled to preach divine revelation (cf. Numb. 11:26-30). These men that were moved by God to speak **confirmed** their words as being of divine origin by the signs and wonders they performed (cf. Mk. 16:20; Jn. 20:30-31; Acts 2:22; Heb. 2:2-4).

Chapter 2

False Teachers:

- Teach their own opinions (II Pet. 2:1)
- Cause truth to be evil spoken of (II Pet. 2:2)
- Make merchandise (II Pet. 2:3) of un-steadfast souls (II Pet. 2:14) and new converts to truth (II Pet. 2:18).
- Rail at dignitaries (i.e., people who hold positions of authority such as elders in the church, government leaders, husbands, parents, supervisors etc.) (II Pet. 2:10-12).
- Destroy the souls of men (II Pet. 2:12).
- Receive monitory wages for teaching error (II Pet. 2:13).
- Have no shame about their erroneous teaching (II Pet. 2:13).
- Eyes full of adulterous teachings, cannot cease from sin, covetous hearts, and children of cursing (i.e., doomed to condemnation) (II Pet. 2:14).
- Likened unto Balaam in that they love glory, honor, and riches in this life (II Pet. 2:15-16).
- Their error is likened unto empty promises that bring men into bondage of sin (II Pet. 2:17-18).
- These teachers of error are likened unto animals that are to be taken out and destroyed (II Pet. 2:12) because God will not "*spare*" such ungodly teachers (II Pet. 2:4-5). The "*blackness of darkness*" (i.e., hell) is reserved for these teachers (II Pet. 2:17).
- They are likened unto dogs (II Pet. 2:22 and Phil. 3:2).
- They mock truth (II Pet. 3:3).
- They lead Christians away from truth with their error (II Pet. 3:17).
- The best defense against said teachers is to grow spiritually (see II Pet. 3:18).

I. Peter Identifies False Teachers (2 all):

A. *“But there arose false prophets also among the people, as among you also there shall be false teachers, who shall privily bring in destructive heresies, denying even the Master that bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction”* (2:1).

1. Peter has meticulously identified the divine origin of truth so that no man may be mistaken (see II Pet. 1:12-21). The Bible clearly brings out the fact that truth alone saves. Throughout history there has been a perversion of truth by false teachers. Solomon wrote, *“A lying tongue hates those whom it hath wounded”* (Prov. 26:28). When a man / woman speaks spiritual words of error their hatred is spewed to all who hear and heed. Peter states that as there *“arose false prophets... also among you there shall be false teachers...”* A study of the OT ought to produce conviction within the reader against any who bring different religious doctrines. When one turns their attention to the OT we find warnings of false prophets:

a. Moses wrote of false prophets saying, *“Ye shall walk after Jehovah your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him, and cleave unto him. And that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams, shall be put to death, because he hath spoken rebellion against Jehovah your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed thee out of the house of bondage, to draw thee aside out of the way which Jehovah thy God commanded thee to walk in. So shalt thou put away the evil from the midst of thee”* (Deut. 13:4-5). From the readings of Deuteronomy 13 and 20:16-18 we find that Moses commanded that **Israel give no pity, sympathy, or protection to those who would teach contradicting doctrines.**

b. The prophets of God wrote of those who were false prophets too. Jeremiah referred to them as those who have no shame in misleading people (Jer. 6:13-15), caused people to err (Jer. 23:13-14), and he called out these men by name (Jer. 20:6; 28:1-4). Ezekiel said that they follow their own spirit in their erroneous teaching (Ezek. 13:1-7). Habakkuk said that they are teachers of lies (Habak. 2:18-20) and Zechariah said that they would be made to feel the sting of **shame** for their erroneous teaching once the gospel of the kingdom was revealed (Zech. 13:4-6). So many today want to conceal, protect, pity, defend, and sympathize with false teachers because of their past relationships with these men; however, this was not the case under the Mosaic Law. Such a one was to be put to death without pity (even if that person was one’s good friend, wife, or children / see Deut. 13:6ff). Moses said of such, *“thou shalt not consent unto him, nor hearken unto him; neither shall thine eye pity him, neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal him: but thou shalt surely kill him; thy hand shall be first upon him to put him to death...”* (Deut. 16:8ff).

2. The New Testament has somewhat to say about false teachers as well (many books in the Bible warn against false prophets and teachers):

a. Jesus warned against false prophets and said that you would know them by their fruit (i.e., their teachings) (see Matt. 7:15ff). Jesus also warned of putting erring family members above truth (see Matt. 10:37).

b. Paul said that they, *“pervert the right ways of truth”* (Acts 13:6-10).

c. They beguile the hearts of the innocent (Rom. 16:18).

d. Known by their words (I Cor. 12:3).

e. Teach fleshly wisdom as opposed to divine revelation (II Cor. 1:12-14) and their doctrines lead to spiritual death (II Cor. 2:16).

f. Their doctrines are troublesome to all (Gal. 1:6-7) and brings people to spiritual bondage to sin (Gal. 2:3-5) by bewitching them (Gal. 3:1). Said men are accursed (Gal. 1:8-9) and are easily identified not only by their error but that they love to have a following among the brethren (Gal. 4:17).

g. Delude people with persuasive speech of error (Col. 2:4).

h. Teach different doctrines (I Tim. 6:3).

i. They withstand truth (II Tim. 3:8). Timothy named false teachers by name (II Tim. 2:17; 3:8).

- j. Believed that they had a deeper understanding of truth than others (I Jn. 2:20-21, 27), denied that Jesus was the Christ (I Jn. 2:22) and that he came in the flesh to this earth (I Jn. 4:2; II Jn. 7). Some were claiming separation from sin (i.e., once saved always saved) (I Jn. 1:8, 10). Again, some were teaching that not all God's laws are binding (I Jn. 2:4). Some believed and taught that one could sin and remain in fellowship with God and brethren (I Jn. 1:5-7). The apostle John reveals that false teachers have no real and true love for God (I Jn. 3:10). We ought to all test every spiritual word that we hear from man (I Jn. 4:1ff).
 - k. Jude said that these false teachers deny Jesus (1:4), they are condemned (1:7), defile the flesh with their dreams (1:8), they are like animals in that they do and teach what seems good to them (i.e., their conscience is the standard that they and all else are judged by) (1:10), they contradict and twist the scriptures (1:11), they grumble and complain against those of authority (elders for example in the church) as they uphold the truth (1:8, 16), and cause division in the church (1:18).
3. Peter states that these false teachers will do three things:
- a. First, they shall, "*privily bring in destructive heresies.*" The Nestle / Marshall text reads, "*who will secretly bring in opinions of destruction...*" When something is "*privily bring in*" (*pareisago*) it is "to lead in by one's side, bring forward, introduce" (LS 606). "To introduce stealthily" (Moulton 307). False teachers introduce and or bring forward destructive heresies (*haireisis*) = "opinions" (Nestle / Marshall 925)... "A choice or opinion; hence, a sect, faction; discord, contention" (Moulton 9). Here is one who introduces his own opinions that stand in the place of truth and thereby destroys the faith of many (see Rom. 16:18; II Tim. 2:17) (see study # 63; False Teachers).
 - b. False teachers "*deny even the Master that bought them.*" Some have said that a false teacher is one that simply denies that Jesus was the Christ; however, this statement goes much deeper than this. To deny the Son is to reject His authorized teachings. To illustrate this point clearly compare I Jn. 2:23-24 with II Jn. 9. These people are of the spirit of antichrist (I Jn. 2:18, 22).
 - c. Thirdly, Peter identifies the false teacher as one who "*bring upon themselves swift destruction.*" Said brethren who teach false doctrines have nothing but the judgment of condemnation to look forward to (see Jude 1:14-15). Not only judgment at the hands of God but by convicted brethren who will warn others of their sinful teaching (Matt. 7:15ff), call out their name as did Paul (II Tim. 2:17; 3:8), avoided and never ever concealing, protecting, defending, nor exercising sympathy toward (Titus 3:10).
- B. "*And many shall follow their lascivious doings; by reason of whom the way of the truth shall be evil spoken of*" (2:2).
- 1. The false teacher's ways are "*lascivious*" (*apoleia*) = "destruction" (LS 113)... "State of being destroyed... eternal ruin, perdition" (Moulton 45). When a teacher teaches a doctrine of his own fleshly reason he has sought after self glory (Jn. 12:43; Jude 1:12), sets himself up as a god (II Thess. 2:3-4), and leads "*many*" away from truth to his opinions.
 - 2. Through his teachings, that affront the word of God, he shall cause people to speak words that are against divine revelation. Men will be sore troubled at the calling out of the names of false teachers, men will be troubled when you tell them that they are in error for fellowshiping others in error, men will be troubled when you tell them they are in error period. These false teachers are troubled by an eldership that does God's ordained work. The truth takes on another shape and form in the minds of these people. They speak evil of the truth because it convicts and condemns their teachings, actions, and friendships (see Jn. 16:8). These men and women fashion their minds around opinions of what the church should be, teach, and do rather than leaning upon a "thus saith Jehovah."
- C. "*And in covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose sentence now from of old lingers not, and their destruction slumbers not*" (2:3).
- 1. The false teacher is "*covetous*" in that he longs to have the glory of men (something that doesn't belong to him) (see Jn. 12:41-43). So with "*feigned words*" (*plastos logos*) = words

(*logos*) that are “fabricated, counterfeit, delusive” (Moulton 327) the false teacher “*makes merchandise of you.*” To “*make merchandise*” (*emporeuomai*) = “to travel to trade... buy and sell, make merchandise” (Strong’s 1710). This is the only place in the Bible that this word is used. The implication is that the false teacher uses counterfeit words (i.e., lies in relation to truth) to figuratively buy you from the current spiritual stand you take. You now belong to them rather than Christ. You are their merchandise that they have bought with their false teaching (see Rom. 16:18). The people that become the merchandise of false teachers no longer belong to God. They are serving their own lusts and will indeed face the wrath of God. Here are people who are not teaching false doctrines by word; however, by their following these teachers they are exerting an evil influence on others to do so.

2. Peter states that those who perform such acts have destruction to look forward to by the hands of God; “*it slumbers not.*”
 3. Many read said instructions and conclude that the false teacher is one who sets out to deceive people and gain a following. This is not the case with these men. Here are deluded men and women who truly believe that what they teach and represent is the truth. They fail to see that the truth has convicted their lives of sin and that they are in all reality retaliating against God (see II Thess. 2:11).
- D. “*For if God spared not angels when they sinned, but cast them down to hell, and committed them to pits of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;*” (2:4).
1. Is Peter speaking of divine or human messengers here? The word “*angel*” (*angellosz*) is found 179 times in the NT and is defined as “A divine messenger, angel” (LS 4). *Angellos* is translated “*angel*” 173 out of the 179 times used and “*messenger*” 6 times (three of which are the same reference / see Matt. 11:10; Mk. 1:2; Lk. 7:27) [the other three uses are found at Lk. 7:24; II Cor. 12:7; James 2:25]. If Divine messengers are intended at II Pet. 2:4 and Jude 1:6 they apparently have the capacity to go against God’s divine will and thereby they are “*committed to the pits of darkness*” (II Pet. 2:4). Galatians 1:8 may be evidence that angels can do such things??? Fallen divine messengers indicates that angels are apparently given law to follow (how would angels sin if there is no law for them to follow / cf. II Pet. 2:4 and compare with Rom. 4:15). One thing for sure and that is Satan is not alone in having the dark pits of hell awaiting him. He has “*angels*” too (see Matt. 25:41).
 2. Angels are created beings (Ps. 148:1-5) that are of a higher order than mankind (Ps. 8:5). Angels had delivered the Law of God to Moses at Sinai (Deut. 33:2; Ps. 68:17; Acts 7:53; Gal. 3:19). Angels are clearly spirit beings that exists in the unseen spirit world and are never given in marriage to each other (Luke 20:35).
 3. Apparently Angels in heaven have sinned against God’s sovereign rule and are thereby, like the false teacher, they are doomed to a judgment of condemnation. The main reason I believe Peter and Jude are speaking of divine messengers of God is that both apostles are using **extremes** to illustrate God’s sure judgment against the ungodly. If God will not “*spare*” angels that sin what about a mere man that teaches false doctrine? If “*angels*” do not dare bring railing accusations against people in positions of authority what makes a mere man think he can do so and get away with it (see II Pet. 2:11; Jude 1:9)? These “*angels*” are of “*greater might and power*” than man (II Pet. 2:11). If divine messengers are undoubtedly intended at II Pet. 2:11 and Jude 1:9 why not at II Pet. 2:4? Secondly, note that Jude’s example of Michael the arch angel is the same use of Peter’s at II Pet 2:4. The text infers that Michael had the capability of railing yet he dared not do so.
 4. Jude said, “*And angels that kept not their own principality, but left their proper habitation, he hath kept in everlasting bonds under darkness unto the judgment o f the great day*” (Jude 6). Jude tells us of angels that “*kept not their own principality.*” The word “*kept*” (*tereo*) = “to watch over, protect, guard... to be constantly guarded... to give heed to, watch narrowly, observe... to watch for... to watch, keep watch, look out... to observe or keep an engagement” (LS 805). The word “*kept*” is translated “having kept” (NM 952) and is parsed a verb in the active voice and aorist tense (Friberg 736). The verb tense indicates that at some point in the past these sinful angels did not watch, protect, or guard their assigned “*principality.*” Sin;

thereby, occurred on the part of angels (cf. II Pet. 2:4). The word “*principality*” (*arche*) = “the first place or power, sovereignty, dominion, command... a term of office... the authorities, i.e., the magistrates” (LS 121). These words help us to infer that God gave angels laws to follow and a designated level of command. These sinful angels did not watch, guard, or protect their assigned command and secondly they “*left their proper habitation.*” Nestle and Marshal translate the word “*left*” (*apolipontas*) as “having deserted” (952). Friberg parses the verb as aorist active voice again indicating that the action occurred at some point in the past without indicating repetition (736). At some point in the past these sinful angels did not keep watch on their assigned command and they deserted their “*proper* (own / NM 952) *habitation.*” What “*habitation*” did they desert? The word “*habitation*” (*oiketerion*) = “a dwelling place” (LS 545). “A habitation, dwelling, abode” (Moulton 285). God created angels, gave them laws to follow, set up rank in the order of angels (cf. Jude 9), and gave them a dwelling place. Some angels were apparently not satisfied with their rank and dwelling place given to them by God and so they left. Clearly, angels have free will to choose the course they take. If some angels have faced such judgment for their violation of God’s law what about everyone else? This is Peter’s point. Many today believe that once they are saved they are always saved no matter their sinful lifestyles. Passages such as this ought to knock some sense into such a one.

5. God “*hath kept in everlasting bonds under darkness unto the judgment of the great day*” these sinful angels. To be kept in “*bonds*” (*desmon*) = “binding, enchaining... captive” (LS 179-180). The binding of the sinful angels is “*under darkness*” (*upo zophos*) = under “the gloom of the world below, nether darkness... generally gloom, darkness...” (LS 344). “Gloom, thick darkness” (Moulton 183). “darkness, gloom... esp. the darkness of the nether regions” (AG 339). The netherworld is the “world of the dead... Hades” (AHD 838). These sinful angels are enchained in Hades until the “*judgment of the great day*” (cf. Matt. 25:41). Peter refers to this place as “*hell*” (*tartaroo*) = “Tartarus, which in the mythology of the ancients was that part of Hades, where the wicked ere confined and tormented” (Moulton 398). This is the place of “*pits of darkness.*”
 6. False teachers are thereby compared to fallen angels (they once had truth and fellowship with God; however, their dissatisfaction with the blessings of God and desire for other things compelled them to rebel and thereby be rejected by the Lord). They will be judged and condemned as the angels in Tartarus.
- E. “*and spared not the ancient world, but preserved Noah with seven others, a preacher of righteousness, when he brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly;*” (2:5)
1. The “*ancient world*” was the time of Noah and great sin. Moses records at Genesis 6, “*And Jehovah saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented Jehovah that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And Jehovah said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the ground; both man, and beast, and creeping things, and birds of the heavens; for it repents me that I have made them. But Noah found favor in the eyes of Jehovah*” (Gen. 6:5-8). God caused a flood to come upon the whole world and everything that had breath in its nostrils died (save for those in the ark) (see Gen. 7:21-23). Noah is identified by Peter as a “*preacher of righteousness.*” Noah apparently preached truth to the wicked all the years of his building the ark yet they rejected his words.
 2. If God does not spare the sinful angels and the ancient world during the days of Noah He will not spare the false teacher of any generation.
- F. “*and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, having made them an example unto those that should live ungodly;*” (2:6).
1. Sodom and Gomorrah was thought to be located on the central east side of the Dead Sea. The Word of God states, “*Now the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners against Jehovah exceedingly*” (Gen. 13:13). God appeared to Abraham in the form of three men at Genesis 18 and said, “*Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous; I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know*” (Gen. 18:20-21). When two angels came

- to visit Sodom that they may find 10 righteous souls and save the city from destruction they find Lot and his family. Lot tries to save the angels; however, the young and old men of the city seek them out that they might have homosexual relations with them (cf. Gen. 19:5 compared to Lev. 18:22 and Rom. 1:26-27).
2. Jude writes, *“Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them, having in like manner with these given themselves over to fornication and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the punishment of eternal fire”* (Jude 7). The fornication and going after strange flesh practiced in Sodom and Gomorrah was homosexuality as illustrated in the Genesis verses listed above. It was *“strange”* in that the act when against the nature whereby man was created (see Rom. 1:26-27).
 3. Sodom and Gomorrah ever stand as an *“example”* against those who would so choose a lifestyle that is antithetical to the ways of God. The individual who rejects God’s laws can expect to *“suffer punishment of eternal fire.”* Fire is the eternal lot of pain and suffering for all who would live ungodly as the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah, the people of God coming up out of Egypt, and the sinful angels (cf. Matt. 5:22; 13:42-50; 18:8; 25:41; II Thess. 1:9; Rev. 20:14-15) (see study # ; The Day of Judgment).
 4. False teachers, i.e., those who teach, reject, and loose sight of truth will stand before the Lord at judgment and face the same fate as those wicked men of Sodom and Gomorrah. This statement helps us see the seriousness of false teaching. Some believe that since a man appears to be so honest and sincere in his false teaching that we should all fellowship them because God does. Nothing could be further from the truth. False teachers, no matter their stand in society, will face the eternal judgment of damnation if there is no change in their teaching while among the living. Note that no amount of emotional appeals and excuses will be accepted by God.
- G. *“and delivered righteous Lot, sore distressed by the lascivious life of the wicked (for that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their lawless deeds):”* (2:7-8)
1. God did not spare the wicked people of Sodom and Gomorrah; however, He did *“deliver righteous Lot.”* Lot, his wife and two daughters were permitted to escape the wicked cities before God rained down fire and brimstone upon them (see Gen. 19:15).
 2. Lot’s deliverance from punishment of God’s wrath was due to his being righteous. Lot’s inner being had been *“distressed”* (*kataponeo*) = “subdued after a hard struggle” (LS 413)... “to exhaust by labor or suffering; to weary out” (Moulton 219) and *“vexed”* (*basanizo*) = “to afflict, torment; pained” (Moulton 67) on a daily basis by the lawless deeds and lascivious life styles.
 3. The lawless deeds of the wicked today cause the righteous to be weary and pained by the experience (see study # 64; Living Right in a Godless Society).
- H. *“the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment unto the day of judgment;”* (2:9).
1. Note to this point that Peter mentions *“angels that sinned”* (II Pet. 2:4), the *“ancient world”* that was deemed *“ungodly”* during the days of Noah (II Pet. 2:5), and *“Sodom and Gomorrah”* that too was deemed *“ungodly”* during the days of Abraham and Lot (II Pet. 2:6). Each of these examples of ungodly people were not spared but rather punished by being thrown in pits of darkness, drown in a world wide flood, and turned into ashes by fire. During these wicked days there were also righteous men and women (Noah, Lot, and their families). God *“spared,”* *“preserved,”* and *“delivered”* these people from the condemnation of the wicked.
 2. Likewise, God *“knows how to deliver the godly out of temptation”* today and *“keep the unrighteous under punishment unto the day of judgment.”* To *“deliver”* (*rhoumai*) = “to drag out of danger, to rescue, save... deliver” (Moulton 360). The danger that is posed to man is God’s wrath in the form of judgment against the ungodly. God delivers (saves) man from His wrath by His divine word. While man undergoes *“temptation”* (*peirasmos*) = “trial” (Moulton 314 / LS 616) God provides the way of escape. The apostle Paul wrote, *“There hath no temptation taken you but such as man can bear: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation make also the way of escape, that ye may be able to endure it”* (I Cor. 10:13). The way of escape from any trial in our lives

is to be discovered in the Word of God itself. God's word reveals the identity of sin (Jn. 16:8; I Jn. 3:4) and the consequences thereof (i.e., separation from God [Isa. 59:2] and eternal punishment [Rom. 2:5ff]). God's word also reveals the rescue plan; i.e., the Lord forgives those who seek it!

3. The Lord keeps the unrighteous under punishment through His word. His word is offensive to the proud and sinful. Their hearts are hardened against God and His word because it exposes their wickedness. As long as truth exists their hearts will be hardened. God, thereby, "keeps the unrighteous under punishment unto the day of judgment" by simply having His Word presented to them (see study # 65; Hard Hearts).
- I. *"but chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of defilement, and despise dominion. Daring, self-willed, they tremble not to rail at dignities:"* (2:10).
1. To this point, the apostle Peter has revealed the false teacher to be one who teaches destructive heresies, denies the Master, and are condemned as erring angels, the wicked in ancient days of Noah, and those of Sodom and Gomorrah.
 2. The hard hearted false teacher whom God preserves unto fierce judgment is now further identified by Peter (see study # 63):
 - a. False teachers "*walk after the flesh*" (i.e., their lascivious and covetous ways dictate their manner of life rather than the Word of God / see II Pet. 2:2-3) (see also Rom. 8:5ff). These people introduce destructive opinions (i.e., heresies of II Pet. 2:1) that ruin the faith of many (II Pet. 2:2). Their lust for ways that do not convict them or others of sin (i.e., make them feel guilty for their wicked deeds) is identified as a "*defilement*" (*molusmos*) = "to stain, sully; to defile, contaminate morally" (Moulton 272). Here are morally contaminated people who are directly associated with sin (see Lev. 18:30).
 - b. False teachers "*despise dominion.*" To "*despise*" (*kataphroneo*) = "to think in disparagement of; to contemn, scorn, despise, to slight... disregard" (Moulton 222). The word "*dominion*" (*kuriotes*) = "dominion" (LS 459). "A lord, master, owner, possessor, potentate, sovereign, a power, Jehovah, Jesus, a term of respect of various force... sir, Lord... constituted authority..." (Moulton 244). Jude states that these false teachers "*set at nought*" (*atheteo*) dominion which means "to set aside, to **deny** one, to refuse his request" (LS 17). Here are men (or women) who disregard and refuse to submit to others of authority (i.e., elders in a church, civil authorities, husbands, parents, supervisors etc.). Here are people who desire to be the "top dog" in control over all aspects of life (Diotrephes appears to be such a one [cf. III Jn. 9]).
 - c. False teachers are "*daring*" (*tolmetes*) = "a bold venturesome man" (LS 812). Here is one that is bold to a fault. We ought to be bold in truth; however, when a man is bold in his false perception of truth he is termed "*daring.*" Like a daredevil that takes his life in his own hand so a false teacher takes his soul within his hand and cast it to the eternity of hell.
 - d. The false teacher is "*self-willed*" (*authades*) = "one who pleases himself, willful, obstinate; arrogant, imperious" (Moulton 59). It takes an arrogant man to speak words that deny the words of the Master. Some tell us today that we cannot understand all truth alike. These brethren think that parts of the scriptures are too difficult for all to understand and thereby we ought to all "agree to disagree" that so called love and unity would prevail. No more arrogant words could be heard, in my estimation, with regards to spiritual subjects. When one makes such a statement they are saying that if they don't understand something no one else can possibly understand it.
 - e. False teachers "*tremble not to rail at dignities.*" Due to their daring and arrogant ways they have no fear when it comes to "*railing at dignities.*" To "*rail*" (*blasphemeo*) at someone is to "to drop evil or profane words, speak lightly or amiss of sacred things... to utter ominous words... to speak ill or to the prejudice of one, to speak slander... to speak impiously or irreverently of God" (LS 151). The word "*dignity*" (*doxa*) = "dignitaries (a person of high rank)" (Moulton 104). To speak lightly, ill, or irreverently of God, elders, parents, husbands, employers, or political leaders is to err in God's sight. God has ordained these individuals to have a degree of authority and those under such dignities are

to willingly submit as long as their rule does not cause us to sin against the Lord. Let us be careful not to tell political, religious, parental, and employer jokes that cut at the divinely appointed authoritative positions that these occupy.

- f. Summarily, these five character traits reveal a mind that has no respect for the authoritative positions ordained of God because they believe they have a better way of doing something. One thing such an individual forgets is that it is through Christ alone that we receive salvation and no one else (Acts 4:12)!
 - g. Interestingly, many today will tell us that said traits do not represent their friend who is being accused as a false teacher. These ignorant and untaught people fail to realize that by one's acceptance or teaching of such doctrines that affront the word of God they have exposed their true inner selves as being arrogant and disrespectful toward God. They are antichrist (I Jn. 2:18ff) and a son of perdition (II Thess. 2:3ff).
- J. *“Whereas angels, though greater in might and power, bring not a railing judgment against them before the Lord”* (2:11).
1. Peter's admonition against false teachers follows Jude's description very closely. Peter explains that false teachers have no fear when speaking evil against those of authority; however, not even powerful angels would do what they do. Jude considers the *“contending”* that took place with Michael the arch angel and the devil over the body of Moses (Jude 9) (considered in the text box below). Both of these truths illustrate extremes. If angels do not practice *“railing judgments”* against dignitaries and if Michael did not pass a railing judgment upon Satan (the father of lies and sin) then what makes the false teacher think that God will accept his railing?
 2. I would like to insert my class notes over Jude 9 here because it illustrates the same thought in relation to Michael the arch angel's attitude toward those of authority.

Jude 1:9

“But Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing judgment, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.”

1. Jude continues his exposure of *“ungodly men”* who turn the *“grace of God into lasciviousness, and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ”* (1:4). These ungodly men are compared to the rebellious Israelites, angels, and inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah (1:5-7). Said ungodly men defile the flesh with their dreams and have no respect for positions of authority (1:8). To sum up Jude's ungodly men is to observe that they do not follow God's laws. Said individuals are bent on serving their own selfish desires through sinful actions and teachings.
2. Michael the archangel is set in contrast to these ungodly men. The word *“But”* (*de*) = “but: conjunction Particle... may often be rendered by *while, whereas, on the other hand...*” (LS 175). Jude states, “on the other hand” we have Michael the archangel. A comparison is being made between two characters that completely opposed to each other. Michael is one of only two named angels in the Bible (the other being Gabriel {Dan. 8:16-27; 9:21; Lk. 1:11-38}). Some have concluded that since Michael is the only *“archangel”* (i.e., chief angel) that he alone holds this position in relation to all other angels.
3. No where in God's word do we read of an incident where Michael and the devil dispute and contend over the body of Moses except for Jude. Some have concluded, without evidence, that Michael wanted the body of Moses due to fear that if the devil got it he could tempt Israel to worship the shrine of Moses. Though we do not know the details and facts revolving around the incident between Michael and the devil we do know that it happened. The event itself is not the intended lesson by Jude. Jude intends to show a contrast in characters between the *“ungodly”* and Michael the archangel. To this point, Jude has revealed that the ungodly are guilty of corrupting the word of God and practice sin. Michael did the following; however, with the devil:
 - a. He *“contended”* (*diakrino*) = “to separate one from another... to be parted... to contend with one” (LS 189). “To dispute, contend” (Moulton 93). This word helps us understand that Michael and the devil had an opposing view over the body of Moses.
 - b. To *“dispute”* (*dialegomai*) = “to discourse, argue, reason... to address, speak to, contend, dispute” (Moulton 93). This word helps us understand that Michael and the devil actually spoke to each other in argumentative language over the body of Moses.
 - c. Rather than separating one's self and contending with the devil false teachers let the wicked one have his way with them.
4. During the argument between Michael and the devil over the body of Moses the archangel *“durst not bring against him a railing judgment, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.”*
 - a. To *“rail”* (*blasphemeo*) at someone is to “to drop evil or profane words, speak lightly or amiss of sacred things... to utter ominous words... to speak ill or to the prejudice of one, to speak slander... to speak impiously or irreverently of God” (LS 151) (see use of word at verse 8).
 - b. Michael did not speak lightly, profane, or slanderous words of *“judgment”* (*krisis*) against the devil. The word *“krisis”* = “a separating, power of distinguishing... choice, selection... a decision, judgment... in legal sense, a trial... the result of a trial, condemnation” (LS 451).
 - c. So serious is speaking evil against dignitaries that Michael would not even do so to the devil. This gives us insight as to who the devil is; i.e., a dignitary (those ordained to have a degree of authority). God has given the devil a limited authority to tempt man to sin (cf. Job 1:12; 2:1-6).

5. Rather than speaking light words of profanity and slander toward the devil, Michael said, “*The Lord rebuke thee.*” Since it is the Lord who gives the devil his degree of authority it is the Lord who has the power to “*rebuke*” Satan.
6. Consider now the evil rulers of our land and those in power during the days of the Roman Empire and the apostles. Paul would not speak evil against these sinful men because God had ordained their position. So serious is said case that Michael would not even speak evil against the devil for God has ordained his authority of limited temptation toward mankind. The devil is a part of God’s order (as church elders, parents, governments, and all those in authority). To speak “*railing words*” against any of God’s ordained authoritative positions is to speak against God. This is a character trait of false teachers and sinful men (i.e., they do not respect authority).
7. Note that Michael contended and disputed with the devil but did not rail against him. Herein is a good rule of thumb in a debate. Let us contend and dispute the truth; however, never ever rail at the sinner we oppose. When W. W. Otey debated J. B. Briney over using instruments in worship and the societies he said, “I wish to emphasize the fact that this conflict is not between men, but between principles. For Elder Briney, as a man, I entertain none but the kindest feelings. In this investigation I shall not combat the man personally. I shall combat only what I most sincerely believe to be errors in his teaching and practice. I would spare the man, but I shall not spare his errors. These principles of difference between us, and of which he is so able an advocate and defender – these principles, I sincerely believe to be diametrically opposed to truth, to the peace and unity of the church and to the will of God.”¹ When men are guilty of slander in debate it is often called *argumentum ad hominem* (personal attacks). Character assassination helps no one. Let us stick to the facts when contending for the truth. **The facts will reveal a man’s character flaws without the godly saying one thing about their person.** I shall allow the ungodly false teachers to destroy their own character and reputation when they open their mouth and let poisonous words proceed. Jesus said we shall know a tree by its fruit (Jn. 7:15). A false prophet or false teacher is known by their fruits (i.e., their teaching and practices).

K. “*But these, as creatures without reason, born mere animals to be taken and destroyed, railing in matters whereof they are ignorant, shall in their destroying surely be destroyed*” (2:12).

1. In case anyone has missed it to this point, God does not care for the one who shows disrespect toward His ordained positions of authority. We ought to be terrified to speak ill words of dignitaries (elders, government authorities, managers at work, husbands, parents, etc.). When these dignitaries act in dishonorable ways let us patiently let their own wickedness expose their true identities.
2. Those who disrespect God and His ordained positions of authority are likened unto animals (*phusikos*) = “following the instinct of nature, as animals” (Moulton 432). The ASV translates the Greek *phusikos* at Jude 10 as “*natural.*” The point of Peter and Jude is that those who have no respect for the authority of God are like animals who act and react based upon what naturally feels good or seems good (see study # 52). False teachers and ongoing sinners are like wild animals that seek only to please and gratify their natural appetites no matter the cost to others. While living in such a state of being they are “*destroyed*” (*phtheiro*) = “to ruin, waste, spoil, destroy” (LS 860). Like milk gone bad these false teachers are self ruined. Once again we are minded of the fact that God will not “spare” these teachers of error (see II Pet. 2:4-5).
3. The state of conducting one’s self according to animal instincts is deemed “*ignorant.*” While God has created man with innate (natural) abilities to determine the reality of eternity, God, right, and wrong (see Romans 1-2) He never intended for man to misuse His natural order. Man naturally has affection for the opposite sex; however, that does not mean that man can take every woman he is attracted to as would an animal. Peter is telling us that it goes against God’s created nature of man to act in such a way that ignores divine revelation and respect for authoritative positions (see study # 52).

L. “*Suffering wrong as the hire of wrong-doing; men that count it pleasure to revel in the day-time, spots and blemishes, reveling in their deceivings while they feast with you;*” (2:13).

1. Having clearly established God’s view of man’s disrespect toward positions of authority and identifying false teachers as such Peter moves on to other attributes of these people.
2. False teachers “*suffer wrong as the hire of wrong-doing.*” The Greek reads *adikoumenoi* (“unjust, unrighteous, iniquitous, vicious; deceitful, fallacious” [Moulton 7]) *misthon* (wages or reward) *adikias* (injustice, wrong; falsehood, deceitfulness [Moulton 7]). To put the sentence together we read “unjust wages for wrong doing.” Peter is saying that these men teach wrong and receive wages or rewards for doing so.
3. Again, the false teacher is one who “*count it pleasure to revel in the day-time.*” Again the Greek reads “*count*” (*hegeomai*) = “to think, consider, count, esteem, regard” (Mouton 184). False teachers consider “*reveling in the day-time*” pleasurable. To “*revel*” (*truphe*) = “to live

- delicately and luxuriously” (Moulton 410). False teachers regard luxurious and delicate living as pleasurable and are not ashamed. Consider this disposition with John the baptizer’s (see Matt. 3:4ff; 11:7ff).
4. False teachers represent “*spots and blemishes*.” A “*spot*” (*spilos*) = “a spot, stain, blot; a moral blot, contaminate, defile” (Moulton 373). A “*blemish*” (*momos*) = “a disgrace to society, a stain” (Moulton 274). The Lord God Almighty looks upon the false teacher within the societies they live in and views them as a contaminated stain on society and especially the church. They are as undesirable as trash laying in the road.
 5. Again, the false teacher “*revels in their deceivings while they feast with you*.” To “*revel*” (*entrophao*) = “to live luxuriously, riot, revel (to take great pleasure or delight / AHD 1057) (Moulton 142). The delight of the false teacher is their “*deceiving while they feast with you*.” To “*deceive*” (*apate*) = “deceit, deception, delusion” (Moulton 36). Here is a man who takes pleasure in leading members of the body of Christ away from truth. Let us recall that Paul said such a one is a law giver and thereby sets himself up as God (see II Thess. 2:4). This person truly believes he has truth and feels the necessity to convert people to his way of thinking. Every Christian ought to be careful not to be made merchandise of such a one but rather test each word a man speaks in relation to spiritual service (see I Jn. 4:1ff).
- M. “*having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; enticing unstedfast souls; having a heart exercised in covetousness; children of cursing;*” (2:14)
1. The false teacher has eyes full of adultery in that he persist in setting aside the word of God and leaning upon his own fleshly wisdom (i.e., spiritual adultery). Doing so he or she “*cannot cease from sin*.”
 2. While these false teachers persist in their error they “*entice unstedfast souls*.” To “*entice*” (*deleazo*) = “entrap, take or catch with a bait; allure, entice, delude” (Moulton 87). The “*unstedfast*” (*asteriktos*) = “not made firm; unsettled, unstable, unsteady” (Moulton 57). The enticing doctrine of the false teacher captivates the soul that is not made firm in truth. Many are likened unto fence riders. They are sitting on the middle line that defines them as being unconvinced one way or the other. They attempt to take a neutral position; however, with God there is no such place. One is either a follower of Christ and His teachings or Satan. The immature saint shall surely be made merchandise by false teacher if swayed toward error.
 3. The false teacher’s heart (mind) is exercised or trained in “*covetousness*” (*pleonexia*) = “some advantage which one possesses over another; an inordinate desire of riches...” (Moulton 328). The advantage the false teacher holds over the un-steadfast is knowledge. While the false teacher’s knowledge is not in truth it nonetheless captivates its audience and makes merchandise of them (i.e., they are bought away from divine revelation).
 4. Lastly, false teachers are “*children of cursing*.” The word “*cursing*” (*katara*) = “from the Heb. condemnation, doom, Gal. 3:10, 13; II Pet. 2:14; a doomed one, one on whom condemnation falls” (Moulton 219) (see II Pet. 2:12).
- N. “*forsaking the right way, they went astray, having followed the way of Balaam the son of Beor, who loved the hire of wrong-doing; but he was rebuked for his own transgression: a dumb ass spake with man’s voice and stayed the madness of the prophet*” (2:15-16).
1. False teachers leave truth in the lurch as they stray toward erroneous doctrines. Moses divinely revealed the fierce anger, wrath, and indignation of God against those who “*forsook*” His commandments at Deuteronomy 29:23-25. They are likened unto Balaam of the book of Numbers.
 2. Balaam was a well known prophet from Midian. The book of Numbers reveals the march of Israel toward Canaan. Israel easily defeated the Amorites and then went on their way to Moab. The king of Moab, Balak, was fearful that Israel would destroy him too. Balak seeks the services of a well known Midianite prophet by the name of Balaam. Balak offers Balaam **money and honor** if he would come to Moab and curse the Israelites (Numb. 22:6-8). Though God warned Balaam on two occasions not to go to Moab and curse the Israelites, Balaam went anyway. God sent an angel to stand in Balaam’s way to rebuke him for his wicked purpose. The prophet’s donkey sees the divine angle; however, Balaam did not. Eventually Balaam’s

donkey enlightens him (i.e., “*a dumb ass spake with man’s voice and stayed the madness of the prophet*”). Balaam repents; however, Numbers 31:16 reveals that Balaam played a part in bringing down Israel with the use of fornication and idolatry. The inference is clear. Though Balaam’s error was stayed by the angel he eventually gave in to his lust of man’s honor and riches. Balaam is **a story of a man who loved money and the glory of men more than God**. False teachers are compared to Balaam in that they have a love for things other than God’s word (i.e., glory and honor among men) (see study # 46). There are three times that the character of Balaam is brought out in the NT (i.e., II Pet. 2:15; Jude 11; Rev. 2:14):

- a. The apostle John addresses the church of Pergamum saying, “*But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there some that hold the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit fornication*” (Rev. 2:14). The apostle John had earlier said, “*whosoever goeth onward and abide not in the teachings of Christ hath not God: he that abides in the teaching; the same hath both the Father and the Son*” (II Jn. 9). There were some Christians who were “*holding*” to erroneous teachings, and the church was tolerating it. Balaam gave Balak the information needed to cause Israel to stumble (sin) in participating in idolatry and fornication. A *stumbling block* is used “metaphorically as any person or thing which one is (‘entrapped’) drawn into error or sin; to put a stumbling block in one’s way, i.e. to do that by which another is led to sin” (Thayer 577). Apparently there was some sort of group that believed that they could participate in imperial worship and fornication and remain in good standing with Jehovah God. They tempted the Lord’s people with this erroneous doctrine and therefore placed a “*stumbling block*” in the path of good Christians. Compromise with truth was never praised by Jesus! The Lord told the Christians in Pergamum to repent! The repentance was to come from two sources: First, those in error were to “*repent*”, and secondly, the members of the church were to repent for tolerating false teaching and practices.
 - b. The ungodly of the book of Jude are compared to Balaam in that they loved the things of this world over the purity of the truth. They are willing to teach error if it gets them gain. The church in Pergamum had similar teachers that taught that it was ok for Christians to worship Roman deities because they would remain in good standing with God (this reminds us of those in Jeremiah’s day / Jer. 23:14). Whatever teaching gains them the greatest following and offers the least resistance will be their creed. Teaching the truth will not make one popular and will always face resistance.
- O. “*These are springs without water, and mists driven by a storm; for whom the blackness of darkness hath been reserved. For, uttering great swelling words of vanity, they entice in the lusts of the flesh, by lasciviousness, those who are just escaping from them that live in error;*” (2:17-18).
1. Jude tells us that False teachers are like “*clouds without water, carried along by winds*” (Jude 12). Palestine does not receive much annual rainfall. When a dark cloud is seen in the horizon much hope of rain is anticipated; however, when the cloud continues on its wind driven course and gives no rain man’s hope is turned to disappointment. Disappointment likewise exists when coming upon a spring that produces no water. Such is the false teacher’s swelling “know it all” words. Their words may appear to be great; however, their outcome is disappointing and destructive. Solomon wrote of one that is in contrast to a messenger that brings refreshing news, “*As clouds and wind without rain, so is he that boasts himself of his gifts falsely*” (Prov. 25:14). Only the un-steadfast and foolish shall be made merchandise of such error.
 2. What seems sad is that those who are new in the faith and have “*just escaped them that live in error*” are the many that are made merchandise of. Even sadder is the sight of an aged saint who fills the bill of “*un-steadfast*” (see I Cor. 3:1ff; Heb. 5:12-6:4). While targeting the un-steadfast is a dastardly thing to do it nonetheless indicates that all are responsible for their words and actions.
 3. The “*blackness of darkness is reserved*” for these false teachers. Peter has said that these men will be “*taken and destroyed*” (II Pet. 2:12), “*cursed*” (i.e., condemned) (II Pet. 2:14) and now

he states that a black and dark place is reserved in hell for them. The point is clear, God will not “*spare*” them (see II Pet. 2:4-5).

- P. “*promising them liberty, while they themselves are bondservants of corruption; for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he also brought into bondage*” (2:19).
1. False teachers delude the masses with their “*promises of liberty*” (i.e., you will be set free from the rule of these tyrant elders... you will maintain your freedom from sin... etc.). Again their words are filled with poison and while they speak they are “*bondservants of corruption*” in that they corrupt the word of God.
 2. Peter reveals a truth saying, “*For of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he also brought into bondage.*” When one is overcome in a battle the defeated become slaves. When one is overcome in spiritual teaching he is a bondservant of the teacher and his doctrines. When error overcomes the un-steadfast they now have been made merchandise and are in bondage to sin.
- Q. “*For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein and overcome, the last state is become worse with them than the first*” (2:20).
1. The antecedent to “*they*” is the false teachers in the context. Here are men and women who at one time obeyed the gospel and enjoyed freedom from the consequences of sin. Now; however, they have once again returned to this sinful state in that they have rejected truth and taught error.
 2. Knowledge is the first step to being forgiven of sins. One who hears the gospel, gains knowledge of its requirements, and obtains faith has successfully followed Romans 10:17.
 3. One; however, who hears, believes, and obeys and then goes back to error is one whose “*last state is become worse with them than the first.*” If one who does not obey the gospel is in sin and the one who obeys the gospel, yet falls away, is considered sinful as well, how is this second state worse than the first? Simply put, the man that has God’s commandments before him and rejects them through hardness of heart (i.e., the lawful issue under consideration is not something that he is willing to do) has displayed a spirit of rebellion that was not detected from the beginnings of his faith. Once this character is made manifest through his disobedience he is worse than at the beginning of his faith because he is not likely to change or repent. He has already changed for the worse.
- R. “*For it were better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after knowing it, to turn back from the holy commandment delivered unto them*” (2:21).
1. The author of Hebrews gives commentary on this. Many Hebrew Christians were turning away from the faith and not growing spiritually as they should have been. The writer states that their restoration through repentance is next to impossible because they “*crucify afresh the Son of God*” (Heb. 6:6). Jesus was crucified (shed his blood) for the remission of man’s sins (Matt. 26:28). Those who receive the remission of sins have taken advantage of God’s promises. Those; however, who at first take advantage of the blood spilled by Christ and then return to the world go back into sin and figuratively cause Christ to be crucified again for them. Here is one that persists in sin after baptism due to a hardened heart against the law of God. From this perspective, “*it were better for them not to have known the way of righteousness*” because having known it and discarded it they have displayed a hardened heart that knows no repentance (see study # 65).
 2. Again, the author of Hebrews writes, “*For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remains no more a sacrifice for sins...*” (Heb. 10:26). Here is one who voluntarily and of his own free will decides to persist in sinful behavior. The sacrifice of Jesus does not help such a one because he has “*trodde[n] under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace*” (Heb. 10:29).
- S. “*It has happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog turning to his own vomit again, and the sow that had washed to wallowing in the mire*” (2:22).
1. The proverb under consideration is Proverbs 26:11. Solomon wrote, “*As a dog that returns to his vomit, so is a fool that repeats his folly.*” The false teacher is like a dog that vomits and

then goes back and eats it. Most all of us have seen such disgusting behavior on the part of animals. Again, the cleaned pig goes immediately back to the filth that it was cleansed from.

2. These two illustrations indicate one that had rid their life of the defilements of the world only to return to its filth. These are factual statements about the false teacher. Peter does not deal with their nice, loving, kind, and do anything for you spirit. Peter deals with their teaching. One who teaches error (no matter how kind, loving, or helpful) is likened unto a dog and pig. They are condemned and will not be spared by the Lord God Almighty (see study # 63).

Chapter 3

The apostle Peter deals with a specific false doctrine that was being perpetrated during his day in chapter 3. Apparently some were saying that Jesus was not going to come again. Their proof was that many years had passed since this inspired apostolic promise. Peter gives an answer to this error.

I. False Teachers were saying that Jesus is not coming Back (3:1-7):

- A. *“This is now, beloved, the second epistle that I write unto you; and in both of them I stir up your sincere mind by putting you in remembrance: that ye should remember the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles:”* (3:1-2).
 1. Peter writes this second epistle (I Peter was the first) with a two fold objective:
 - a. First, Peter’s objective is to *“stir”* the sincere mind of the Christians. To *“stir”* (*diegeiro*) = “to stir up, arouse, animate (to impart interest or zest... to fill with spirit, courage, or resolution... to inspire to action / AHD 111)” (Moulton 99). Such writing by the prophets and apostles of Jesus Christ were designed to impart interest, resolution, and inspire one to action. These epistles give us conviction! When I read of the dastardly work of the false teachers and where they and their followers are to end up I am convicted to expose and reject such men and women (see study # 66; Developing Spiritual Conviction).
 - b. Secondly, Peter wrote these epistles to cause brethren to *“remember”* what they had previously been taught (see II Pet. 1:12-15). We all need reminders and this is why gospel preachers among congregation have a good work (see study # 67; Work of the Gospel Preacher).
 2. Though Christ taught much while upon the earth he entrusted the apostles and inspired prophets to be his spokesman once he was gone (see Jn. 16:12-13; Eph. 3:3-5) (see study # ; Bible Inspiration).
- B. *“Knowing this first, that in the last days mockers shall come with mockery, walking after their own lust”* (3:3).
 1. While the apostles and prophets spoke divine revelation *“being moved by the Holy Spirit”* (see II Pet. 1:21) there will be men in the future who do not so speak. Peter warns that false teachers will speak words which cause many to question the validity of the second coming of Jesus Christ because a long period of time had lapsed with no Christ.
 2. These false teachers are termed *“mockers”* (*empaiktes*) = “mock, deride, scoff” (Moulton 135; LS 254). Here are men who scoff at revelation and prophecy of God’s word because they *“lust”* after other religious and spiritual ways (see II Pet. 2:10). God’s ways convict of sin... these men and women want to feel good and comfortable in error.
- C. *“and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? For, from the day that the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation”* (3:4).
 1. One false doctrine that was being espoused by some was that Jesus was not coming back again to reclaim the faithful. During the Apostle John’s day some were saying that Jesus did not come in the flesh (see II Jn. 7).
 2. Though Jesus (Matt. 24:36-44; Jn. 5:25-29) and the apostles (Acts 1:9-11; I Cor. 15:50-58; I Thess. 4:13ff) had personally taught this doctrine by divine revelation some false teachers rejected it.

3. The false teacher's proof that their doctrine was truth was the current state of man. Since the creation of man all things continue as they always have. What is our answer to such teaching?
- D. *"For this they willfully forget, that there were heavens from of old, and an earth compacted out of water and amidst water, by the word of God"* (3:5)
 1. The world was created by the spoken word of God and it shall be destroyed the same way (see Psalms 33:6-9).
 2. These false teachers *"willfully forget"* in that they had gained a knowledge of the truth, rejected it, returned to their own vomit ways of filth and thereby reject the plain teaching of Christ and the apostles on the subject. Seeing that this was an apparent false doctrine espoused during Peter's day the apostle sees it necessary to refute the notion and to set the matter straight.
- E. *"by which means the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: but the heavens that now are, and the earth, by the same word have been stored up for fire, being reserved against the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men"* (3:6-7).
 1. Peter draws a comparison to the days God brought a flood upon the earth due to the wickedness of mankind. By the spoken word of God all flesh that had breath in its nostrils drowned to death with the exception of Noah, his wife, three sons and their wives (eight people). Likewise a day of judgment comes upon the inhabitants of the world. The *"same word"* (i.e., the powerful spoken word of God) will call for the earth's destruction and judgment at an unknown time (see Matt. 24:36). At this time the just and unjust dead shall be resurrected (Acts 24:15). The righteous dead and alive at the time of Christ coming will ascend into the heavens (I Thess. 4:13-18). The unjust shall be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone to spend eternity with the devil and his angels (Rev. 20:10ff). The earth shall be dissolved with fire.
 2. The day of the earth's destruction by fire will be a Day of Judgment and *"destruction of ungodly men."*

II. The destruction of the Earth (3:8-13):

- A. *"But forget not this one thing, beloved, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day"* (3:8).
 1. Peter makes a contrast between the error taught by some regarding Christ not coming again and the truth of the matter. There is a difference between truth and what some men say is truth.
 2. The Apostle Peter admonishes the saints to not forget the nature of God as opposed to the nature of man. While man's existence is in relation to time God's is not. God is in the realm of eternity; i.e., a place where time does not exist. Thereby, from man's perspective, one of God's days could be likened unto one thousand of our years. Conversely, a thousand years to the Lord could be like one day to man. When man looks at God's promises and puts a time table on when these things will come to pass he is ignorantly forgetting that we live on earth and God in the eternal heavens.
- B. *"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some count slackness; but is longsuffering to you-ward, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance"* (3:9).
 1. The Apostle Peter points out the why as to man's perception that God's promises are being delayed. While man considers God's eternal environment with an impatient and disbelieving eye Peter explains that there is a reason for God's waiting to send His son.
 2. To charge God with *"slack"* is to lack understanding of God's purpose for this world. To be *"slack"* (*braduno*) = "to be behindhand [to be behind time, slow]" (Moulton 73). Such a charge against God places the Sovereign Lord God Almighty upon the wishful timetable of man. How can a man say to God, "Lord, you are behind time in relation to sending your Son?"
 3. Peter explains that what man sees as God being behind time and slow in relation to sending His Son into the World God explains as a period of *"longsuffering"* toward all. To be *"longsuffering"* (*makrothumeo*) = "to be slow towards, be long-enduring; to exercise patience, be long-suffering, clement, or indulgent, to forbear" (Moulton 256). God wants to give every man and woman a chance to repent of their sins and receive his promise of the forgiveness of sins and eternal heavenly home. This will take time and God is not concerned with that time. The main thing to see is that God does not discriminate against anyone when it comes to

offering salvation. He wants even the vilest of minds to be changed to good and he is going to give all the time that such a one needs to make such a change.

- C. *“But the day of the Lord will come as a thief; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up”* (3:10).
1. Peter describes what will take place when the Son of God comes to bring his saints to the eternal glories of heaven (see study # 20).
 2. Just as a homeowner knows not the day when a thief comes even so shall Christ come at an unexpected time (see Matt. 24:36ff).
 3. When the time does come; however, there will be a fearful sight. The heavens (i.e., stars and expanse above the earth) *“shall pass away with a great noise.”* The sound of a volcano erupting, intense thunder, the explosion of an atomic bomb, or a horrendous train crash may explain the noise. What ever the sound it will be heard by all and the results will be the disappearance of the heavens as we know them. The elements of the earth (rocks and all things upon the earth) shall be *“dissolved with fervent heat being burned up.”* Their may be a chain reaction that occurs upon the earth after the *“great noise”* that caused the heavens to *“pass away”* *“being on fire”* (II Pet. 3:12). Heat will be so intense that all things (i.e., living and non-living) will be burned.
- D. *“Seeing that these things are thus all to be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy living and godliness, looking for and earnestly desiring the coming of the day of God, by reason of which the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?”* (3:11-12).
1. Peter calls upon his readers to recognize both the reality of the coming of Jesus and the fearful event that shall take place at that time. When Jesus comes again the heavens will catch fire, a great noise will sound and the heavens will be no more. The earth shall be destroyed by intense heat. All life will be ended and time will be no more.
 2. With such a catastrophic event before the minds of his readers Peter asks, *“What manner of person ought ye to be in all holy living and godliness...”* At the end of all things God will judge humanity based upon their actions here on earth (see Jn. 12:48). Just as sure as the heavens and earth will be destroyed even so Jesus will come again and judge mankind’s life to determine whether a man or woman met the standard of truth divinely revealed by God.
- E. *“But, according to his promise, we look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness”* (3:13).
1. When the heavens above and the earth we live on are all destroyed and human existence extinct there will be, *“according to his promise,”* a *“new heaven and earth wherein dwells righteousness.”*
 2. The apostle John describes this new heaven and earth as the *“new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband”* (see Rev. 21:1-2). Read Revelation 21 for a complete description of the beauty of heaven (see study # 5). Peter tells us that the inhabitants (i.e., those who dwell therein) are the *“righteous”* (see also Rev. 21:27). Such a place of eternal existence is *“according to his promise.”*
 3. Peter makes sure his audience knows that Christ’s coming again, the destruction of the heavens and earth, and the new heaven and earth are promises of God that He will keep!

III. A Final Warning to the Saints not to be carried away by False Doctrines (3:14-18):

- A. *“Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for these things, give diligence that ye may be found in peace, without spot and blameless in his sight”* (3:14).
1. Peter depicts the saint of God as one who is *“looking”* for the day when Christ will come again and the world destroyed by fervent heat (see also II Pet. 3:13). The coming day of Christ ought to be on the minds of all humanity (see study # 20).
 2. The idea of man being judged by the word of God and being sent to an eternal home of hell or heavenly bliss ought to motivate us (*“give diligence”*) to be found on that day *“in peace, without spot and blameless in his sight.”* All things that man does is in the *“sight”* of God (see Jer. 23:24). Those in peace and blameless in the sight of God are those without moral *“spot”*

(*aspilos*) = “spotless, unblemished, pure see I Tim. 6:14; James 1:27; I Pet. 1:19)” (Moulton 56). Within the OT book of Leviticus moral purity and the lack thereof is depicted in such terms as purity, spotlessness, and blamelessness. Those who were “*blemished*” were equated with those who walk in sin in that they are depicted as “*unclean*” (Lev. 16:16, 30), “*defiled*” (Lev. 18:30), “*impure*” (Lev. 22:21), and having a “*blemish or imperfection*” (Lev. 22:21).

- B. “*And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given to him, wrote unto you; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; wherein are some things hard to be understood, which the ignorant and unsteady wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction*” (3:15-16).
1. Peter reveals **five things** that man ought to be involved in seeing that the heaven and earth will be destroyed with fire and that Jesus will come again.
 2. The **first** thing man is to do is “*look*” for this day to come (i.e., not only be aware but be prepared). **Secondly**, man is to “*give diligence*” to be found without sin at coming of Jesus. **Thirdly**, Peter explains that Christians ought to “*account*” the longsuffering and salvation of God. The word “*account*” (*hegeomai*) = “to think, consider, count, esteem, regard” (Moulton 184). Man ought to “regard” and “consider” the longsuffering of God. While we are among the living we still have hope of making the proper changes in our lives that God would be pleased with us and we may obtain “*salvation*.”
 3. After this third duty, Peter gives the stamp of inspired approval upon his words by calling the Apostle Paul’s words into comparison. Paul too desired that man would think of his eternal existence (I Cor. 15 all; II Cor. 4:16ff; Phil. 3:20ff etc.), the longsuffering of God (see Rom. 2:4; I Tim. 1:16), and the coming again of Christ (see I Thess. 4:13ff).
 4. Peter admits that some of the Apostle Paul’s inspired writings are “*hard to be understood*.” The English phrase, “*hard to be understood*,” is one word in the Greek; i.e., *dusnoetos* which is defined exactly as the supplied translation (see Moulton 109). Hard subjects are not impossible things to know. Man must give diligence in Bible study to put all pieces of the puzzle together and make a proper interpretation. Peter is acknowledging some of the difficult epistles of Paul’s, such as Romans, but not saying that man cannot understand them (see Eph. 3:4) (see study # 68; Can We Know Truth?).
 5. To the contrary, Peter states that those who do not give diligence in understanding often are “*ignorant and unsteady*.” The word “*unsteady*” (*asteriktos*) was encountered at II Pet. 2:14 and defined as “not made firm; unsettled, unstable, unsteady” (Moulton 57). The “*unsteady*” are easily made merchandise of by false teachers who entice them with erroneous doctrines (see II Pet. 2:3, 14). These “*unsteady*” souls “*wrest*” scriptures to their own destruction. The idea of “*wresting*” (*strebloo*) = “to pervert or distort words” (LS 749). When one perverts or distorts the Word of God it will certainly lead to their destruction (see II Pet. 2:12) (see study # 63).
- C. “*Ye therefore, beloved, knowing these things beforehand, beware lest, being carried away with the error of the wicked, ye fall from your own steadfastness*” (3:17).
1. Peter delivers the **fourth** Christian duty in relationship to the impending coming of Christ and destruction of the heavens and earth. Peter warns Christians to be on the guard against false teachers who would seek to destroy their souls through erroneous ideas that do not have a divine origin. The word “*beware*” (*phulasso*) = “to keep watch and ward, keep guard” (LS 874). Jesus warned the disciples to be watchers on guard against false teachers as well at Matthew 7:15 and 16:6-12. Many wicked men call us “watchdogs” and tell us that we do not have the authority to be on watch for false doctrines and teachers of error. These instructions are offensive to them because it exposes their true identity. While they say don’t do it Peter, Paul (see Rom. 16:17), and Jesus say do it. Here in they live up to Peter’s warnings in that the “*cause the truth to be evil spoken of*” (see II Pet. 2:2). Let all Christians learn to obey the words of God rather than men (see Acts 5:29) (see study # 63)
 2. Those who are “*carried away with the error of the wicked*” shall fall from grace (see Gal. 5:4 comp. to Gal. 1:6; 3:1 see also I Jn. 2:26). The Christian is not to let any error detour him from the authorized path that leads to heaven.

- D. *“But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and for ever. Amen.”*
1. The **fifth** and final instruction from Peter to Christians, in relationship to the destruction of the heavens and earth, second coming of Christ, and the work of false teachers is that we would *“grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”* Spiritual growth is a must if Christians are not to be led astray by erring doctrines (see I Cor. 3:1ff; II Tim. 2:15; Heb. 5:11-6:4). Peter had said the same thing in his first epistle (see I Pet. 2:1-2).
 2. Peter concludes the epistle with a doxology of praise directed at *“our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”*