

COMMENTARY

II Peter Chapter 1:

vs. 1-2 This epistle was written by Simon Peter, the disciple of Jesus. He had become one of the 12 apostles and a recognized leader in Christ's church. He wrote this letter between the spring of 65 A.D. and 70 A.D.

He is writing to all Christians at this point and wishes them the grace that God gives liberally and the peace of Jesus, both of which come through knowledge of them.

vs. 3-11 Peter reminds the people that God not only provides for all of our physical needs, but also all that we need to become holy people and acceptable to Him. We gain this, by an understanding of His message. That message contains great and precious promises that include salvation and eternal life. By understanding these promises, with the help of the Spirit which also is promised us, we can overcome temptations and become God's people.

Since this is possible, we should add to our faith, goodness, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness and love. These all build upon one another, yet we are to be increasing the amount of each, in our lives. When we continue to grow in these areas, we become more like Christ and the more like Him we become, the better servant of God we become. If we neglect these things, we become less like God and have forgotten all that He has promised and offered to us. Peter tells us to make sure we do these things and are growing, by doing so we can have confidence of a part in the Kingdom.

vs. 12-21 Peter tells his readers that he will soon pass from this life. He wants to make sure before he goes however, that they are firmly established concerning the matters that he has just written about. He reminds them that he was an eyewitness of Jesus' life and that the message they have believed is not made up. He reminds them of the transfiguration (Matt. 17:1-13).

Peter tells them that the message of the Scriptures has always been a message from God given to us through the work of the Holy Spirit. The message of the prophets is sure and will take place for it is not their own creation or message but comes from God who will see to it that everything happens as He has planned.

COMMENTARY

II Peter Chapter 2:

vs. 1-22 Peter reminds the people that there were not only prophets of God, but also false prophets. These were men who told the people what they wanted to hear [Prophets of Baal, Zedekiah (I Kings 22:11-28), etc.]. Peter says that there will be false teachers among us, similar to the false prophets among the Israelites. Peter says these men will introduce destructive heresies [Jesus not being the Son of God, Jesus not resurrected, Miracles do not take place, creation is a farce; would all be examples of heresies that have been introduced], will follow their shameful ways [homosexuality is allowable, sin is not all that bad, abortion and killing is O.K., whatever society feels is right; these would be some examples]; will make up stories [a new revelation, "theories" of when the world will end, authority now belongs to bodies or individuals instead of Christ and His Word, etc.; these are examples of some stories], they carouse in broad daylight, revel in their pleasures, never stop sinning, experts in greed, mouth empty and boastful words, promise freedom, exploit people, and appeal to the lustful desires of people and entice them. What a picture Peter paints of these people. He is not saying that all of these traits will necessarily be in every false teacher, but there will be some in each false teacher.

Peter reminds us that God has always punished the wicked in the past. If someone was deserving and failed to turn to Him, they were destroyed. Peter says that this will be the end of the false teachers also. They will be punished for their deception and wickedness.

Peter states that those who are faithful to God will be saved from such punishment. He cites occasions of the past where God destroyed and punished those who were wicked, yet He protected and saved those who followed Him. So will it be in the last days and the day of judgement.

Peter speaks of the false teachers and others who fall into the trap of returning to their wicked ways, after finding the truth. Peter says that they are worse off and that it would have been better never to have turned to God than to have turned to God and then fallen away. This should be a lesson for us of the importance of remaining faithful and carefully examining God's Word to the message of the ones teaching us.

COMMENTARY

II Peter Chapter 3:

vs. 1-18 Peter tells his readers that the purpose of his letters is to stimulate them to thinking the way God would want them to. He tells them to recall the words spoken through the prophets and the Lord. This is the basis that Christians should follow today. If we will listen only to the words of the prophets of old and the message of Jesus Christ in His Word, we will have everything we need to live lives that are acceptable to God (II Peter 1:3).

Peter reminds the readers that even though the message is clear, that there will be some who will reject it and scoff. These people will "conveniently" forget how God has been faithful in the past, remains faithful today, and will be faithful in the future.

These same people fail to realize that God's waiting is to give more people a chance at accepting His gift of salvation and eternal life. He is waiting for our benefit.

God will not wait forever, though. When Christ returns, it will be as a thief. Nobody will know when Christ will return and He will come suddenly and unexpectedly. This is in contrast with the attitudes of some "scholars" who feel by studying, one can determine when Jesus will return. At His return, the heavens and earth will be destroyed. Exactly how is not determined, other than with a roar and with fire. God is great and He can accomplish this, with or without the work of men. A new heaven and a new earth will be provided in that day.

Realizing this, Christians are challenged by Peter to live holy and godly lives and to make every effort to be spotless, blameless and at peace with our Lord when that day comes.

Peter speaks of Paul's writings and reminds his readers that Paul has said some of the very same things through God's Spirit. Peter also tells the people that some of Paul's writings have been distorted and have been misused. Those who do so, he states, will be destroyed and punished.

Peter's final challenge is for the readers to be wary of false teachers and to check out all individuals carefully so that we won't be deceived. Such deception, could result in the loss of our salvation. Therefore, we should strive to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ and not in the favor and knowledge of human teachers or instructors.

STUDY GUIDE

II Peter Chapter 1:

1. Who does Peter say he is writing to?
2. What has the divine power given us?
3. What should be the result of the precious promises that have been given us?
4. What 7 things should be added to our faith?
5. What will these same qualities prevent, if we possess them in increasing measure?
6. What is the person who does not have these qualities?
7. Why should we be eager to make our calling and election sure?
8. What did Peter want them to do after he departed from this life?
9. How does Peter know that the majesty and power of Jesus was not a made up story?
10. When did Jesus receive honor and glory?
11. Where did prophecy have its origin?

BONUS:

1. Explain how the divine power of God and Jesus, has given us everything we need for life and godliness.
2. What is the purpose of the precious promises, are they doing that in your life?
3. What do you think are the precious promises that Peter is talking about?
4. Explain how the qualities listed will help keep one from being unproductive if they are found in increasing measure in ones life.
5. What was the importance of Christ receiving honor and glory from God, in your mind?
6. How do verses 20,21 apply to "prophets" today? How do they apply to our opinion of the Scriptures?

STUDY GUIDE

II PETER CHAPTER 2:

1. What were there among the people and what will there be among us?
2. What will these secretly introduce and what will they deny?
3. What will be the result of those who follow their shameful ways?
4. What will these teachers do to us?
5. Name those that God protected.
6. Name those that perished.
7. How are the false teachers described in verses 13-16?
8. What do they appeal to and who do they entice?
9. How can one become worse off than they were at the beginning?
10. What is it said that they have turned their backs on?

BONUS:

1. What are traits that identify false teachers?
2. Do we have false teachers today? How do you know?
3. Why should we warn each other about falling away?

STUDY GUIDE

II PETER CHAPTER 3:

1. Why did Peter write his two letters?
2. What did he want the people to recall?
3. What will come in the last days and what will they say?
4. What do these people deliberately forget?
5. Why is the Lord patient with us?
6. Describe the day of the Lord.
7. Since everything will be destroyed, how should we live?
8. What are we looking forward to and how should we live because of it?
9. Why should we be on our guard?
10. What should we grow in?

BONUS:

1. What does Peter imply are suitable for our teaching? How should this apply to Christians today?
2. Make a case for: "There will be a literal destruction of the earth. God will surely do just that."
3. Aware of future judgement and of our hope, how should we live? Would this be information to share with others? Why?
4. Explain how God's patience can lead to repentance and salvation.