

INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY OF

2 Peter

Who? What? Where? Written by the aged apostle Peter to fellow Christians, this short letter is the 22nd book of the New Testament, between James and John. It has . . .

- **precious promises** (ch. 1): “An entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (v. 11).
- **stern warnings** (ch. 2): “False teachers . . . will secretly bring in destructive heresies . . . and bring on themselves swift destruction” (v. 1).
- **promise of return** (ch. 3): “The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat . . .” (v. 10).

God is righteous and patient; He creates, gives, speaks, keeps promises, delivers the godly, and punishes the unjust (1:1, 3, 4, 11, 17, 18; 2:4-9; 3:5, 9a-b, 15).

Jesus Christ is Savior, Lord, and beloved Son; He had apostles, may be known, reveals things, comes in power, majesty, great noise and fire, and has an everlasting kingdom (1:1, 2, 8, 11, 14, 16, 17; 2:20; 3:2, 10, 18).

The Holy Spirit moved the writers of Scripture (1:21).

The apostles didn't teach myth, but were eye- and ear-witnesses of Christ (1:16-18).

2 Peter in a sentence: Peter reminds us of what we've read and heard about Jesus Christ, exhorts us to make our salvation sure, warns us against false teachers, and urges us to look forward to the day of the Lord and the coming age of righteousness.

God's Word created and preserves the universe (3:5, 7), should be heeded, has no private meaning, was inspired, was spoken by prophets and apostles, including Paul, and can be twisted to one's destruction (1:19, 20, 21; 3:2, 15, 16).

Godly people obtain precious faith, have grace and peace, receive all things pertaining to life and godliness, partake of the divine nature, are established in the present truth, and need to be reminded of Christ and His return (1:1-4, 12-15; 3:1-10). They should be diligent, fruitful, mindful, holy; they should be looking, taking care lest they fall, and be growing (1:5-8, 10; 3:2, 8, 11-14, 17, 18).

The wicked are blind and fruitless, deny God, deceive others, destroy themselves, criticize what they don't understand, are full of lust and greed, speak empty words, talk freedom but live bondage, scoff at Christ's return, try to forget the truth, and face the destruction of darkness forever (1:9; 2:1-3, 9-12, 14, 15, 17-21; 3:3-5).

Christian living is like riding a bike: you either **go on**, or you **go off**.

Go on means to escape worldly corruption, add spiritual fruit, remember Jesus' grace and majesty, heed the Word, look for Christ's coming, grow in His grace and knowledge (1:4-8, 12-21; 3:1-14, 18).

Go off means to forget Christ's forgiveness, hear false teachers, return to sin like a dog to vomit or a sow to mud, scoff at judgment to come (1:9; 2:1-19, 21, 22; 3:3-5).

Caution: Like Jude, 2 Peter warns about false doctrine and careless morality among professed followers of Jesus (ch. 2).

Cosmology, chronology

Earth's history is revealed in four stages (3:1-13).

Creation: The heavens and earth began by God's powerful word (v. 5).

Cataclysm: The first world perished in a flood, by God's word (v. 6).

Continuance: The present world exists by the providence of God's word (v. 7a).

Consummation: New heavens and new earth will come at the day of the Lord, with judgment by fire (v. 7b, 10-13).

Because God's calendar is not fully reducible to days and years, we cannot calculate the dates of these four cosmological facts (3:8). In God's good time, all His will for the universe must surely come to pass. Apparent delay in the divine program means only that salvation's grace is still available to those who repent (3:9, 15a).