

**REMEMBER THESE WORDS**  
**PREACHING THROUGH THE BIBLE: II PETER**  
**II Peter 3:1-2**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

**A. BRIEF DESCRIPTION**

Peter's first letter warned of attack from outside the church by those who were going to persecute believers. In his second letter, he warns of internal attack by false prophets who will teach heresy and practice immorality. He exhorts believers to stay focused on God's word and to live holy lives worthy of their calling. He assures them the day of judgment is coming for skeptics who live as though there will be no accounting for their immorality. The Day of the Lord will come suddenly, resulting in the destruction of this current order and the rise of a new one that will be thoroughly righteous. In view of these facts, we must live in a godly manner and be on guard not to be carried away by unprincipled men but to remain steadfast, so we will grow in grace and be saved.

**B. TITLE**

- *Petrou B*—'SECOND OF PETER'
- TAKEN FROM FIRST WORDS OF LETTER—**συμεων πετρος δουλως και αποστολος ιησου χριστου**

**C. PLACE IN BIBLE**

- FOURTH OF EIGHT NON-PAULINE EPISTLES
- POPULARLY [BUT INACCURATELY] KNOWN AS 'CATHOLIC EPISTLES'
  - Because James, I Peter, and II and III John were sent to specific addressees

**D. AUTHORSHIP**

1. THE APOSTLE PETER—ATTRIBUTED IN **1:1**

- a. In First Peter, he used only his name given by Christ—'Peter'
  - Here—he uses his full name—**Simon** Peter
- b. In First Peter, he identified himself as 'an apostle of Jesus Christ'
  - Here—he adds 'a **servant** of Jesus Christ'

2. HIS SECOND LETTER

- a. Author says this is his 'second letter' to the same readers
  - **3:1**—*This is now, beloved, the second letter I am writing to you*
- b. '**Now**' is emphatic—'even now'
  - Probably suggests—shortly after writing the first letter

c. What was the 'first letter'?

1. **First Peter**—traditional view—challenged by modern scholars

2. **A lost letter**

- By this author—probably Peter
- But to different recipients—other than those receiving First Peter

3. **II Peter**—is two letters combined

- a. Chapters 1-2 were the 'first letter'
- b. In this 'first letter' there might be an implied promise of a second letter

**1:15**—*And I will also be diligent that at any time after my departure you will be able to call these things to mind.*

c. Chapter 3 is the 'second letter'

4. **Jude**

- Much material in Jude is similar to **II Peter**
- Some scholars say they were authored by the same person

### 3. SCHOLARS HAVE RAISED MANY QUESTIONS ABOUT PETRINE AUTHORSHIP

a. Lack of External Evidence

1. Not quoted by any church fathers until the third century.

- Early 3<sup>rd</sup> century—Origen was first to say some doubted its canonicity
- But this fact suggests it may already have been considered canonical

2. Church fathers did not universally accept it as genuine until the fourth century

- Eusebius (275-339) expressed doubts—but said it was accepted by the majority
- Cyril of Jerusalem and Jerome cited it as genuine—late 4<sup>th</sup> century

3. Other works of apocryphal nature competed for acceptance of authenticity

- *Gospel of Peter*
- *Apocalypse of Peter*
- *Gnostic Apocalypse of Peter*
- Four versions of the *Acts of Peter*

b. Internal Evidence

1. Problems

a. Style and vocabulary differ from I Peter

- ▲ II Peter is rougher in grammar and more informal in style

b. II Peter seems to quote much of Jude

▲ And Jude probably was written after Peter's death

c. II Peter 3:15-16 refers to all Paul's epistles as though they were already in a collection and treating them as though they were already accepted as Scripture—**3:15-16**

▲ It took several years after Peter and Paul's deaths for Paul's letters to be brought together in this way—and for them to be canonized as 'Scripture'

d. Possibly the false teaching mentioned here was Gnosticism

▲ Gnosticism did not develop until the late first century—after Peter's death.

## 2. Answers

a. Internal evidence

1. The claim of authorship is very specific

◇ Written by **Simon** Peter—**1:1**

◇ Who is writing his 'second letter'—[like he had written the first one]

2. References to Peter's personal experiences

a. Jesus' prediction of Peter's death—**1:14**—see **Jn 21:18-19**

b. Eyewitness of the Transfiguration—**1:16-18**

3. Distinctive wording

a. Three unique words/phrases are found in Peter's sermons in Acts

b. Five unique words/phrases are found in both First and Second Peter

c. Both epistles mention Noah

b. Style and vocabulary

▲ Possibly Sylvanus helped Peter with his first letter, but the second one was composed by Peter alone.

c. Jude's description of false teachers

▲ Might have been quoting Peter's letter—which was written first

▲ Or they might have been quoting from the same source

d. 'All Paul's epistles—as a canonized collections of letters

▲ Peter and Paul were in Rome together—and Peter almost certainly was familiar with some of Paul's writings

▲ Peter was referring to all Paul's letters he knew about

▲ Peter is not thinking in modern terms of canonicity

e. Gnosticism

- ▲ There is no evidence Peter was referring to the false teachings of Gnosticism

## E. PETER THE AUTHOR

- See notes from sermon on I Peter.

## F. BACKGROUND

### 1. DATE, LOCATION, RECIPIENTS

a. Peter probably wrote this soon after *First Peter*

- **3:1**—*This is now, beloved, the second letter I am writing to you*

b. Traditional view—date, location, and recipients were probably the same as **I Peter**

1. Date—about **64 AD**—just before Peter’s martyrdom

- His departure from his earthly dwelling is imminent—**1:14**

2. Location—from **Rome**—see ‘Babylon’ in **I Peter 5:13**

3. Recipients—churches in **Asia Minor**—see **I Peter 1:1**

c. Alternative view—still with Petrine authorship

1. Date and location—still **64 AD**—from Rome

2. But to different readers

- A second letter—following one that has since been lost
- To readers whom Peter knew more intimately
- The tone of this letter is more personal than **I Peter**

### 2. SETTING

a. ‘False prophets’ among them—**chapter 2**

1. Present or future?

a. First—Peter treats this as prophetic—they **will come**—**2:1-3**

b. Then—he speaks as though they are **already present**—**2:11-20**

2. False teachings and practices—**2:1-3** and **11-20**

- Like Old Testament ‘false prophets’
- Deny the Master [Christ]—who bought them [His atonement]
- Sensuality—fleshly desires—eyes of adultery
- Greed—profiting from their false message—deceiving others
- Arrogance—reviling angelic majesty and power
- Like Balaam—false prophets—covetous—and possibly ritual prostitution

### 3. Possible identity of false teachers

#### a. **Simonians**—followers of Simon Magus

- ▲ Said Simon was the ‘great power that emanated from God’
- ▲ Said the persons of the Trinity were three modal expressions of the same Person

#### b. **Gnostics**

- ▲ Docetics—denied Christ’s humanity—said he only *appeared* to be human

#### c. **Ebionites**

- ▲ Denied Christ’s deity—He was only a man

#### d. **Cerinthians**

- ▲ Christ descended from heaven as a dove and entered the man Jesus
- ▲ Christ did not suffer death—only Jesus the man was crucified

#### e. **Nicolaitans**

- ▲ Known for their licentiousness—**Rev 2:6, 14-16**
- ▲ Antinomianism—like when Israel was deceived by Balaam
- ▲ Resulted in eating meat offered to idols and ritual prostitution

#### b. ‘Mockers’ will come

1. Denying the second-coming—and continue in their lusts—**3:3-4**
2. Not realizing judgment and destruction are imminent—**3:5-10**

## G. STYLE

### 1. TRADITIONAL EPISTOLARY FORMAT WITH NARRATIVE STYLE

- **Greeting**—**1:1-2**
- **Content**—**1:3-3:18a**
- **Doxology**—**3:18b**

### 2. DOES NOT CONTAIN CLOSING GREETINGS—LIKE I PETER

### 3. PERSONAL AND INTIMATE STYLE

- a. More so than **I Peter**—which seems more detached and impersonal
- b. **II Peter** uses ‘beloved’—**αγαπητος**—six times

### 4. LIKE A LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT

- Peter is about to die—wants readers to recall these things after he is gone—**1:13-15**

- Again—urges them to remember God’s words already spoken to them—**3:2**

## H. BIBLICAL CONTEXT

### 1. SIMILARITY WITH JUDE

a. 17 verses of **II Peter** are similar—[some nearly identical]—to 15 verses of **Jude**.

- **60% of Jude** (15 of 25 verses)—is similar to content in II Peter
- **Jude 3-13; 16-18** and **24-25** are found in II Peter

b. Specific **II Peter** verses—similar to **Jude**

**1:12** ≈ **Jude 5**  
**2:1** ≈ **Jude 4**  
**2:4** ≈ **Jude 6**  
**2:6** ≈ **Jude 7**  
**2:10–11** ≈ **Jude 8–9**  
**2:12** ≈ **Jude 10**  
**2:13–17** ≈ **Jude 11–13**  
**2:18** ≈ **Jude 16**  
**3:2-3** ≈ **Jude 17-18**  
**3:14** ≈ **Jude 24**  
**3:18** ≈ **Jude 25**

### 2. OLD TESTAMENT PASSAGES

❖ **II Peter** refers to 12 OT passages

- 5 from **Genesis**
- 1 from **Numbers**
- 2 from **Psalms**
- 1 from **Proverbs**
- 2 from **Isaiah**
- 1 from **Ezekiel**

## I. THEMES

1. THE RELIABILITY OF SCRIPTURE—IT IS DIVINELY INSPIRED—**1:91-21**
2. STAY ROOTED IN THE WORD OF TRUTH AND BE ON GUARD AGAINST HERESY
3. DEVELOP CHRISTIAN CHARACTER: LIVE FAITHFUL AND GODLY LIVES
4. THE SECOND-COMING IS CERTAIN—AND IMMINENT
5. THE DAY OF THE LORD—WILL BRING JUDGMENT AND A NEW ORDER
6. JESUS IS—BOTH ‘LORD AND SAVIOR’

a. This phrase is *unique* to **II Peter**

b. It is used four times

- **1:11**
- **2:20**
- **3:2**
- **3:18**

c. Paul words it differently—but uses the phrase only twice

**I Tim 1:1**—*Paul an apostle of Jesus Christ . . . our Savior and Lord*

**Titus 1:4**—*mercy and peace from . . . the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior*

**7. KNOWLEDGE—BIBLICAL, EXPERIENTIAL CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE IS THE BEST ANTIDOTE FOR HERESY—REMEMBER, KNOW AND UNDERSTAND GOD’S WAY**

❖ **29 times II Peter** uses terms—exhorting us to know God’s truth and not be ignorant

- **επιγνωσις** (accurate knowledge) = 4 times—**1:2, 3, 8; 2:20**
- **ειδω** or **οιδα** (know) = 4 times—**1:12, 14; 2:9; 3:17**
- **γνωσις** (knowledge) = 3 times—**1:5, 6; 3:18**
- **υπομνησις** (remembrance) = twice—**1:13; 3:1**
- **γινωσκω** (know) = twice—**1:20; 3:3**
- **επιγνωσκω** (understand) = twice—**2:21**
- **λαμβανω ληθη** (forget) = once—**1:9**
- **υπομιμνησκω** (remind) = once—**1:12**
- **ποιεω μνημη** (hold in memory, call to mind) = once—**1:15**
- **γνωριζω** (make known) = once—**1:16**
- **προσεχω** (take heed, notice) = once—**1:19**
- **αγνοεω** (not understand) = once—**2:12**
- **μναομαι** (be mindful) = once—**3:2**
- **λανθανω** (ignorant, not understand) = once—**3:8**
- **σοφια** (wisdom) = once—**3:15**
- **δουνοητος** (hard to be understood) = once—**3:16**
- **αμαθησ** (unlearned) = once—**3:16**
- **προγινωσκω** (know beforehand) = once—**3:17**

**8. OUTLINE**

INTRODUCTION—SALUTATION	<b>1:1-2</b>
DEVELOP CHRISTIAN CHARACTER	<b>1:3-15</b>
THE RELIABILITY OF SCRIPTURE	<b>1:16-21</b>
The Accuracy of Apostolic Witness	<b>1:16-19</b>
Divine Inspiration of Scripture	<b>1:20-21</b>
FALSE TEACHERS	<b>Chapter 2</b>

Warning—False Teachers Will Come	<b>2:1-4</b>
They Will Be Judged—As in the Past	<b>2:5-10a</b>
Description of False Teachers	<b>2:10b-22</b>
PURPOSE OF LETTER	<b>3:1-2</b>
THE SECOND COMING	<b>3:3-9</b>
Mockers Reject It	<b>3:3-6</b>
Judgment Is Reserved but Coming	<b>3:7-9</b>
THE NEW ORDER	<b>3:10-18a</b>
The Day of the Lord	<b>3:10-12</b>
New Heaven and New Earth	<b>3:13</b>
Guard Yourselves; Live Holy until Then	<b>3:14-18a</b>
DOXOLOGY	<b>3:18b</b>

## II. BIBLICAL TEXT

**II Peter 3:1-2**—1 *This is now, beloved, the second letter I am writing to you in which I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, 2 that you should remember the words spoken beforehand by the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior spoken by your apostles.*

## III. EXPOSITION

### A. BACKGROUND

#### 1. PETER HAS *ALREADY* WRITTEN ABOUT THESE THINGS

- a. **Divine inspiration**—of God’s word—**1:20-21**
- b. **Reliability of apostolic witness**—reinforced by prophecy—**1:16-19**
- c. **Remembering God’s truth**—the legacy he is leaving them—**1:12-15**
- d. His purpose—to prepare readers to withstand heresy and licentiousness—**chapter 2**

#### 2. TWO PURPOSES—OF THESE TWO VERSES

- a. Remind readers—of the **purpose of this letter**
  - Remain steadfast in God’s word—against coming heresy
- b. Introduce—the **second problem**—those who mock the Second-Coming

### B. BE STIRRED UP!



**1** *This is now, beloved, the second letter I am writing to you in which I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder* NASB

**1 . . .** *in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance* KJV

**1 . . .** *I have written both of them as reminders to stimulate you to wholesome thinking* NIV

## 1. SENSE OF URGENCY

- **Now**—is emphatic!

## 2. PERSONAL CONCERN

- **Beloved**—*αγαπητος*
- Already in **1:17**]—reiterated four more times—**3:8, 14, 16, 17**

## 3. ANALYSIS OF MEANING

### a. Possible meanings

- I stir sincere thoughts in your mind to remind you of these things
- I stir sincere thoughts in your mind by reminding you of these things
- I am reminding of these things to stir your mind to sincere thoughts [preferred]

### b. Logical flow

- **Action**—I am reminding you
- **Goal**—to stir up your mind
- **Result**—you will think sincere thoughts

## 4. ACTION—I AM REMINDING YOU

a. *ὑπόμνησις* = put under your remembering—buried in your mind

b. *By way of ‘remembrance’* [at end of verse] = I am reminding you

c. Continuation of reminder—begun in **I Peter**

1. **I Peter**—reminder to live godly lives—when facing persecution and suffering
2. **II Peter**—reminder to be steadfast in God’s word—when facing false teachers

d. Importance of ‘remembrance’

1. Recitation—rehearsal—of facts
2. In oral cultures—where written material was not readily available
3. Mnemonic method of learning—**memorizing**—was powerful
4. Don’t just read—but hear—listen—and memorize

## 5. GOAL—TO STIR UP YOUR MIND

a. **διεγείρω** = I am stirring up

- Agitate—like a churning sea
- Awaken—rouse—for the purpose of taking action

b. **Examples**

1. Joseph **awoke** from his dream—and **did** what the angel told him—**Mt 1:24**
2. Disciples **roused** Jesus in the storm—Jesus **rose** up and **calmed** the sea—**Mk 4:38-39**

c. **διάνοια**—**understanding**—not just the ‘mind’

1. Parallel idea—earlier in letter—**1:13**
2. Before dying—Peter urged them to prepare their minds— **διάνοια**

**I Pe 1:13**—*Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.*

6. RESULT—SINCERE THOUGHTS

a. ‘Sincere’—found only here and **Ph 1:10**

**Ph 1:10**—*so that you may approve the things that are excellent in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ.*

b. **εἰλικρινής** = sincere—pure—wholesome [+ **διάνοια**—understanding]

1. Literally = sun’s rays + judgment
2. Judged by the sun’s rays
  - Like cloth—unfolded—and examined in sunshine
3. Cleansed—by rolling
  - Exposure and sifting—by shaking to-and-fro—in a sieve

c. Not so much clear and transparent—but purged—winnowed—unmingled

d. Not physically clean—**καθαρός**—but ethically pure

e. Result = wholesome and pure thinking

1. **Plato**—**pure reason**—uncontaminated by seductive influence of the senses
2. Goals
  - a. **Correct** understanding—accurate and undistorted
  - b. Wholesome thinking—honest/pure—in a moral sense

**C. REMEMBER THESE WORDS!**

*2 that you should remember the words spoken beforehand by the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior spoken by your apostles*

1. BACKGROUND PASSAGES—PROPHETIC AND APOSTOLIC FOUNDATION

**Eph 2:19-20**—*So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God’s household, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone*

**Eph 3:4-5**—*By referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit;*

2. PARALLEL PASSAGE

**Jude 17**—*But you, beloved, ought to remember the words that were spoken beforehand by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ*

3. THAT YOU SHOULD REMEMBER

- a. **μνάομαι** = recall—be mindful of—dwell on—grasp—gnaw
- b. **remember**—is a purpose infinitive—connected to remind in verse 1
  - 1. I rouse you—to take action—to remember
  - 2. Remember—should be an *active* response—*grasping* and *holding* it in the memory

4. WORDS SPOKEN BY THREE SOURCES

- a. **Prophets**—foretold Christian truth
- b. **Jesus**—fulfilled the prophets—embodied Christian truth
- c. **Apostles**—interpreted and taught—Christian truth

5. WORDS SPOKEN BEFOREHAND BY THE HOLY PROPHETS

- a. ‘**Holy** prophets’—meaning
  - Emphasis here is not on moral/ethical virtue
  - But that they were set apart by God—to speak His word
- b. ‘Holy Prophets’—predictive role—phrase found in two other NT passages
  - 1. Mouthpieces of God proclaiming salvation—from ancient times—**Lk 1:70**
  - 2. Who predicted the restoration of all things by Christ—**Acts 3:21**
- c. Remember—their predictions
  - 1. ‘Mockers’ who reject God’s judgment—will be judged

- Jer 5:12-24; 17:15
- Ezek 12:22-25
- Amos 6:3; 9:10
- Zeph 1:12
- Mal 2:17

2. ‘The Day of the Lord’—predicted 18 times by 9 OT prophets

- Isaiah—3 times—**2:12; 13:6, 9**
- Jeremiah—1 time—**46:10**
- Ezekiel—2 times—**13:5; 30:3**
- Joel—5 times—**1:15; 2: 1, 11, 31; 3:14**—and ‘that day’ **3:18**
- Amos—2 times—**5:18, 20**
- Obadiah—1 time—**1:15**
- Zephaniah—2 times—**1:7, 14**
- Zechariah—1 time—**14:1**
- Malachi—1 time—**4:5**

6. THE COMMANDMENT OF THE LORD AND SAVIOR SPOKEN BY YOUR APOSTLES

a. The commandment(s) of the Lord and Savior—could be:

1. His body of ethical teachings—such as the Sermon on the Mount
2. His specific command—in view of the end times—“Watch!”—**Mk 13:36**
3. His command—in the Great Commission

**Mt 28:20**—*teaching them to observe all that I commanded you . . .*

b. Lord and Savior

1. Unique emphasis of this letter
2. Reminder—He is *both* Lord **and** Savior
  - In view of the ‘Day of the Lord’
  - He will come not only to judge/destroy—but also to save

c. **Your** Apostles

1. The original 12 apostles
  - Those living then—in readers’ own times—not OT prophets
2. Those who personally gave them the true message—see **1:16**
3. True ‘messengers’—**αποστολοι**—of Christ
4. Contrasted with ‘false teachers’ and ‘mockers’—who disobeyed His commands
5. Who conveyed Christ’s words—upon which doctrine the church was built

**Acts 2:42**—*They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.*

**ACTIVELY GRASP, MEMORIZE, AND REMAIN LOYAL TO THESE WORDS**