

# SECOND EPISTLE OF PETER

**Approximate date:** 65 to 68 C.E.

**Time period:** spread of false teaching in the community of faith, and degrees of impatience about the Second Coming

**Author:** the Apostle Peter (possibly with a scribe's assistance, and/or posthumously released)

**Location of author:** Rome

**Target audience and their location:** Jewish and non-Jewish Believers who are soon to face the absence of Peter, the same basic audience as 1 Peter

The author of the Epistle of 2 Peter identifies himself in the text as the Apostle Peter (1:1), and states how this is his second letter: "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" (3:1, NASU). The author makes the claim to be an eyewitness of the Transfiguration of Yeshua (1:16-18), and indicates that he has a strong acquaintanceship with Paul (3:15). The author of 2 Peter indicates that his death is soon to occur (1:12-15), and 2 Peter is often classified within the farewell discourses of other known Biblical figures, including: Jacob (Genesis 49), Moses (Deuteronomy 31-33), Yeshua (Matthew 24-25; John 14-16), and Paul (Acts 20:17-38; 2 Timothy).<sup>1</sup> According to early Christian tradition, the Apostle Peter was martyred in Rome at the hands of Nero (1 *Clement* 5:3; cf. Eusebius *Ecclesiastical History* 2.25.5). Following Peter's death, this letter anticipates that a variety of severe problems are going to significantly face the community of Believers.

While the Epistle of 2 Peter has certainly been valued to various degrees by today's Bible readers, few are often aware of how this letter has a number of difficult questions surrounding its purpose and composition. Many conservatives accept genuine Petrine authorship of 2 Peter, whereas all liberal theologians deny it. Moderates are somewhere in the middle of the liberal-conservative paradigm, often thinking that 2 Peter was written in the name of Peter, sometime immediately following his death, and/or possibly having been in the process of composition before Peter's death.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. J.R. Michaels, "Peter, Second Epistle of," in *ISBE*, 3:816; R. Bauckham, "2 Peter," in *Dictionary of the Later New Testament & its Developments*, pp 923-924; Carroll D. Osburn, "Peter, Second Letter of," in *EDB*, 1039.

Liberals often argue against Petrine authorship of 2 Peter, because there is no clear tradition regarding its composition, and the fact that 2 Peter was the last text to be accepted into the New Testament canon.<sup>2</sup> The Greek construction of the epistle is thought to bear no influence to someone from Judea.<sup>3</sup> The recognition of Paul's letter's bearing authority for the Body of Messiah (3:15) is believed by liberals to be a reflection from a later time after both Paul and Peter's death. 2 Peter is thought to have parallels in composition style that are closer to late First and early Second Century Christian works like *1&2 Clement* or the *Shepherd of Hermas*, with 2 Peter originating within the Roman Christian community of the late First or early Second Centuries C.E.<sup>4</sup> While liberals all agree that 2 Peter is from a later period, after the Apostle Peter's death, they are not agreed as to whether or not the epistle was composed to address the developed Gnosticism of the early-to-mid Second Century.<sup>5</sup> Other liberals have posited a time period for 2 Peter's composition immediately after the death of the Apostolic generation, particularly in terms of a growing dispatience over when the Messiah would return.<sup>6</sup> Even though genuine Petrine authorship of 2 Peter is denied, classical liberals do not discount the text as being valuable. The *ABD* entry summarizes, "It records the effort of Christianity in a transitional post-apostolic period to communicate effectively in a pluralistic cultural environment while at the same time remaining faithful to its apostolic heritage and underlying worldview."<sup>7</sup>

Why would some expositors be led to think that the Epistle of 2 Peter is pseudepigraphal, meaning that the Apostle Peter himself was not responsible for its composition? Much of the discussion over 2 Peter's authorship concerns its

<sup>2</sup> J.C. Beker, "Peter, Second Letter of," in *IDB*, 3:768; John H. Elliot, "Peter, Second Epistle of," in *ABD*, 5:283; cf. Michaels, "Peter, Second Epistle of," in *ISBE*, 3:815.

<sup>3</sup> Beker, "Peter, Second Letter of," in *IDB*, 3:768; Bauckham, "2 Peter," in *Dictionary of the Later New Testament & its Developments*, 924.

<sup>4</sup> Elliot, "Peter, Second Epistle of," in *ABD*, 5:287; Osburn, "Peter, Second Letter of," in *EDB*, 1039.

<sup>5</sup> Beker, "Peter, Second Letter of," in *IDB*, 3:768; Against: Osburn, "Peter, Second Letter of," in *EDB*, 1040.

<sup>6</sup> Osburn, "Peter, Second Letter of," in *EDB*, 1040.

<sup>7</sup> Elliot, "Peter, Second Epistle of," in *ABD*, 5:283.

common classification of being Jewish apocalyptic literature. Bauckham indicates how "The problem of the authorship of 2 Peter arises in part out of the form and structure. In the Jewish literature of this period, testaments were pseudepigraphal. They were attributed to OT figures long dead...This establishes an initial presumption that 2 Peter is likewise a work written in Peter's name by someone else after his death, though it remains possible that the testament genre could have been used by Peter to write his own, real testament."<sup>8</sup> For a piece like 2 Peter, Bauckham concludes that the letter was written in the name of the Apostle, including some fiction. Bauckham thinks that 2 Peter was written by a leader in the Roman assembly about a generation after the Apostle's death, probably to stop some problems he saw arise: "That the author chose to write Peter's testament is probably best explained if he was a leader in the Roman church...which had counted Peter as the most prestigious of its leaders in the previous generation."<sup>9</sup> Such a proposition, in dating the Epistle of 2 Peter to the late First Century C.E., does at least allow for the possibility of some genuine Petrine concepts (oral teachings passed from Peter to the Roman Believers), to be included in its instruction.

Is 2 Peter a genuine work of the Apostle? Who were the original recipients of 2 Peter? What were their circumstances and the false teachers/teachings they needed to beware of?

Conservative theologians tend to accept genuine Petrine authorship of 2 Peter, for a variety of important reasons. There do exist some possible allusions to 2 Peter by the late First Century:

Noah preached repentance, and as many as listened to him were saved (1 *Clement* 7:6; cf. 2 Peter 2:5).<sup>10</sup>

But ye know that the day of judgment even now "cometh as a burning oven," and some "of the heavens shall melt," and all the earth shall be as lead melting on the fire, and then the hidden and open works of men shall appear (2 *Clement* 16:3; cf. 2 Peter 3:10).<sup>11</sup>

2 Peter is not quoted specifically by name until Origin used it in the mid-Third Century.<sup>12</sup> The Fourth Century Christian historian Eusebius noted how 2 Peter was "Among the disputed books, although they are known and approved by many" (*Ecclesiastical History* 3.25.3). Total acceptance of 2 Peter within the canon did take some time, but this did not mean it was treated as spurious or

questionable or quasi-heretical. "Essentially the Church up to A.D. 200 is silent about 2 Peter. The Epistle was not attacked; it was simply ignored and seems to have remained virtually unknown until the time of Origen" (Michaels, *ISBE*).<sup>13</sup> Does the infrequent use of 2 Peter point to the text being a pseudepigraphal work? Guthrie notes how "[Eusebius] makes it clear that the majority accepted the epistle as authentic, together with James and Jude, but he himself had doubts about it."<sup>14</sup> But why would anyone have doubts about the Epistle of 2 Peter?

Gundry explains that "The early church exhibited some hesitancy in accepting [2 Peter] into the canon. This hesitancy can be explained by the comparative brevity of the epistle, however; and such brevity may have curtailed its distribution and limited people's acquaintance with it."<sup>15</sup> A strong possibility surrounding why the Epistle of 2 Peter was viewed with skepticism by the Second-Third Century Christian Church, likely had to do with the use of Peter's name in various pseudepigraphal works by Gnostics. Without a wide amount of circulation, and with a text purporting to be from the Apostle Peter, "If Gnostic groups had used Peter's name to drive home their own particular tenets, this fact would cause the orthodox church to take particular care not to use any spurious Petrine epistles. Some of the more nervous probably regarded 2 Peter suspiciously for this reason, but the fact that it ultimately gained acceptance in spite of the pseudo-Petrine literature is an evidence more favourable to its authenticity than against it" (Guthrie).<sup>16</sup> Carson and Moo further also concur, "The very fact that 2 Peter was accepted as a canonical book, then, presumes that the early Christians who made this decision were sure that Peter wrote it."<sup>17</sup> The Christian Church of the Third Century C.E. did finally accept 2 Peter as canonical. Most especially to be noted is how "The writer of 2 Peter says nothing which the apostolic writers of the other books of the New Testament would not have endorsed. There is no hint of esoteric doctrine or practice" (Guthrie).<sup>18</sup>

That the Epistle of 2 Peter has some kind of relationship, with the Epistle of Jude (compare 2 Peter 3:3 and Jude 17-18), is recognized by both conservatives and liberals alike. There is no theological agreement by either, though, as to which text was written first.<sup>19</sup> Would an author be more likely to expand a piece, or contract it? Some think

<sup>8</sup> Bauckham, "2 Peter," in *Dictionary of the Later New Testament & its Developments*, 924.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 925.

<sup>10</sup> *BibleWorks 8.0: Schaff, Early Church Fathers.*

<sup>11</sup> *BibleWorks 8.0: Ante-Nicene Fathers.*

<sup>12</sup> Michaels, "Peter, Second Epistle of," in *ISBE*; 3:815-816; Elliot, "Peter, Second Epistle of," in *ABD*, 5:283.

<sup>13</sup> Michaels, "Peter, Second Epistle of," in *ISBE*, 3:816.

<sup>14</sup> Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction*, 808.

<sup>15</sup> Gundry, "The Catholic, or General, Epistles," in *A Survey of the New Testament*, 443.

<sup>16</sup> Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction*, 809.

<sup>17</sup> Carson and Moo, 663.

<sup>18</sup> Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction*, 839.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Elliot, "Peter, Second Epistle of," in *ABD*, 3:284; Carson and Moo, pp 655-657.

that 2 Peter and Jude were written at around the same time, with Jude following 2 Peter. Carson and Moo describe, “Peter, having written a letter castigating false teachers in a specific community, shared its contents with Jude. Jude then borrowed freely those portions of 2 Peter that were relevant to a similar false teaching that he was dealing with in his community.”<sup>20</sup> Yet, if the Epistle of 2 Peter was a genuine composition of the Apostle Peter, produced at the end of his life in the late 60s C.E., the Epistle of Jude could have been a late First Century C.E. indication that much of what was anticipated by Peter had been realized.

It is attested in 1 Peter 5:12 that Silvanus/Silas served as Peter’s secretary for composing his first epistle, and 2 Peter 3:1 says that the Epistle of 2 Peter is the second time of the Apostle’s writing. No amanuensis is named for the composition of 2 Peter, although it does seem likely that one was employed if 2 Peter is a kind of final testimony delivered by the Apostle. Genuine Petrine authorship assumes that the letter was written between 65 to 68 C.E., (immediately) prior to Peter’s death.<sup>21</sup> If so, then given the widespread ancient testimony of Peter being martyred from Rome, a Roman composition of 2 Peter seems to be required. 2 Peter 3:1, “this is now my second letter to you” (NIV), also seems to imply that the same basic audience which received 1 Peter probably also received this letter, perhaps as a kind of addendum.

When approaching the composition of 2 Peter from the perspective that the material genuinely originated from the Apostle Peter, the genre of the letter as a final testimony does need to be kept in mind. “2 Peter presents itself as Peter’s *testament*...It is a farewell discourse of one who is about to die” (Michaels, *ISBE*).<sup>22</sup> When we see a statement like, “...at any time after my departure you will be able to call these things to mind” (1:15, NASU), it should not be surprising why some conservatives think that 2 Peter was completed immediately after Peter’s death. “It is possible that 2 Peter may represent a compendium or anthology of traditional Petrine material put together in the form of a testament by one or more of the apostle’s followers after his death. Posthumous publication in Peter’s name does not necessarily imply any intent to deceive” (Michaels, *ISBE*).<sup>23</sup> The material of 2 Peter could actually have been in the process of being written in the final days of the Apostle (1:13, 15), but then completed after his death. A posthumous composition or release of 2 Peter, making the material genuinely Petrine, should be considered preferable to a pseudepigrapher from a

generation or two later composing a letter in the name of Peter, long after his death.

No one in the academic community, liberal or conservative, has ever suggested that 2 Peter was originally written in Hebrew or Aramaic. In fact, 2 Peter is not included in the Aramaic Peshitta and is not considered canonical by the Syrian Orthodox Church. 2 Peter does employ some Greek-specific philosophical terms,<sup>24</sup> and the text demonstrates a familiarity on the author’s part with a broad Jewish and Greek audience. A Greek linguistic origin for 2 Peter should not, however, discount the strong reliance that the message of the epistle has rooted within the Tanach Scriptures.

The theology of 2 Peter may be easily divided between its three chapters. The three-fold purpose of the epistle is to encourage Believers in their spiritual growth (ch. 1), combat false teachers and their teachings (ch. 2), and encourage people to be on guard in relation to Yeshua’s return (ch. 3). The text most certainly reflects on Peter’s impending death.

Some have thought that the false teachers mentioned (2:1-3) are some kind of Gnostics, but others think that the descriptions seen are general enough that proto- or incipient-Gnosticism, or any form of Gnosticism, need not be implied.<sup>25</sup> Other proposals for the false teaching confronted in 2 Peter include an opposition to Epicureanism, as “The Epicureans were known especially for their denial of providence, the afterlife, or any kind of divine judgment—just the view that seems to be taken by the false teachers according to chapter 3” (Carson and Moo).<sup>26</sup> Carson and Moo further direct, though, “our very quest to identify [the false teachers] with a particular group may be misguided. People in the ancient world, as in our day, were bombarded by viewpoints and ideas from many different perspectives...The false teachers, in other words, may have been influenced by both the broad philosophical climate of Epicureanism and by incipient Gnosticism—and by other movements as well.”<sup>27</sup> No reader of 2 Peter can deny the strong reliance seen on the Tanach, especially as “we find a long description and denunciation, using Old Testament illustrations and imagery, of the false teachers” (Carson and Moo).<sup>28</sup>

One of the most controversial parts of 2 Peter undeniably concerns the teaching seen on the end-times. In the Last Days, there will be people who mock the idea of the Second Coming of Yeshua (3:4). Part of recognizing the eternity and sovereignty of God is how “with the Lord one day is like a thousand

<sup>20</sup> Carson and Moo, 657.

<sup>21</sup> Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction*, 844.

<sup>22</sup> Michaels, “Peter, Second Epistle of,” in *ISBE*, 3:816.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 3:818.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 3:817.

<sup>25</sup> Bauckham, “2 Peter,” in *Dictionary of the Later New Testament & its Developments*, 925.

<sup>26</sup> Carson and Moo, 658.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, pp 658-659.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 654.

years, and a thousand years like one day” (3:8, NASU; cf. Psalm 90:4). Some have used this passage as a support for the so-called 6,000 year doctrine,<sup>29</sup> where humanity has been given six millennia of time until the return of the Messiah for a thousand-year “Sabbath” reign. Elsewhere, though, it is implied that the righteous behavior of the saints is what is to hasten the return of the Lord (3:11-12).<sup>30</sup> Understanding these verses, in proper context, is a challenge for both evangelical Christians and Messianic Believers, many of whom may think that the end-times can somehow be “calculated.”

In terms of day-to-day living, the Epistle of 2 Peter does not present any challenges for Torah observant Messianics. But, 2 Peter does include many warnings that our Messianic faith community must especially heed. The background of 2 Peter largely confronts false teachers as deserving of nothing less than eternal punishment. 2 Peter includes a strong warning for those living in the Last Days, and it reflects the reality that people will fall away from the faith. As we steadily approach the return of Yeshua, Messianic approaches toward 2 Peter must keep this in mind as we try to police ourselves of any false theologies—perhaps including errant end-time predictions—that may enter into the camp.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Consult the FAQ, “6,000 Year Teaching.”

<sup>30</sup> Consult the article “The Hastening of Righteousness” by J.K. McKee, appearing in his book *When Will the Messiah Return?*

<sup>31</sup> One Messianic commentary on the Epistle of 2 Peter is Arnold G. Fructenbaum, *Ariel’s Bible Commentary: The Messianic Jewish Epistles—Hebrews, James, I&II Peter, Jude* (Tustin, CA: Ariel Ministries, 2005); written more popularly is Joel Liberman, *Letters From the Rock: Studies in 1 & 2 Kefa (Peter)* (San Diego: Tree of Life, 2014).

# 1

## **Salutation**

<sup>1</sup> Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Yeshua the Messiah, to those who have obtained a faith of equal standing with us by the righteousness of our God and Savior, Yeshua the Messiah:

<sup>2</sup> Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Yeshua our Lord;

## **The Call and Election of the Believer**

<sup>3</sup> seeing that His Divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.

<sup>4</sup> Through these things He has granted to us His precious and very great promises, so that through them you might become partakers of the Divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world by lust.

<sup>5</sup> Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply excellence, and in *your* excellence, knowledge;

<sup>6</sup> and in *your* knowledge, self-control, and in *your* self-control, perseverance, and in *your* perseverance godliness;

<sup>7</sup> and in *your* godliness, mutual affection, and in *your* mutual affection, love.

<sup>8</sup> For if these things are yours and abound, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Yeshua the Messiah.

<sup>9</sup> For whoever lacks these things is blind, being shortsighted, having forgotten the cleansing from his old sins.

<sup>10</sup> Therefore, brothers and sisters, be more diligent to make your calling and election sure; for if you do these things, you will never stumble;

<sup>11</sup> for in this way there will be richly provided to you the entrance into the eternal Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Yeshua the Messiah.

<sup>12</sup> Therefore, I will always be ready to remind you of these things, though you know them and are established in the present truth.

<sup>13</sup> And I think it right, as long as I am in this *Earthly* tabernacle, to stir you up by way of reminder,

<sup>14</sup> knowing that the putting off of my *Earthly* tabernacle is soon, as our Lord Yeshua the Messiah made clear to me.

<sup>15</sup> And I will also be diligent that at any time after my exodus<sup>a</sup> you may be able to call these things to remembrance.

## **Messiah's Glory and the Prophetic Word**

<sup>16</sup> For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Yeshua the Messiah, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty.

<sup>17</sup> For when He received honor and glory from God the Father, such a voice was issued to Him, *as this* by the Majestic Glory, "This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased" –

<sup>18</sup> and we *ourselves* heard this voice issued from Heaven, when we were with Him on the holy mountain.

<sup>19</sup> And we have the word of prophecy *made* more sure, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts.

<sup>20</sup> *Be* knowing this first: that no prophecy of Scripture is of one's own interpretation<sup>b</sup>,

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<sup>a</sup> Grk. *meta tēn emēn exodon* (μετὰ τὴν ἐμὴν ἔξοδον); "after my decease" (ASV); most often rendered as "after my departure" (NASU); the CJB also has "after my exodus."

<sup>b</sup> Grk. *idiās epiluseōs* (ιδίαις ἐπιλύσεως); "is of private interpretation" (ASV).

<sup>21</sup> for no prophecy ever came by human will, but people spoke<sup>a</sup> from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit.

## 2

### ***False Prophets and Teachers***

**Jude 4-13**

<sup>1</sup> But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction.

<sup>2</sup> And many will follow their licentiousness, and because of them the way of the truth will be blasphemed.

<sup>3</sup> And in *their* greed they will exploit you with false words; their judgment from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep.

<sup>4</sup> For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into Tartarus<sup>b</sup> and committed them to pits of darkness, being kept for judgment;

<sup>5</sup> and did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a herald of righteousness, with seven others, when He brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly;

<sup>6</sup> and *if* He condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to catastrophe, reducing *them* to ashes, having made them an example to those who would live ungodly;

<sup>7</sup> and *if* He rescued righteous Lot, greatly distressed by the licentiousness of the wicked

<sup>8</sup> (for by what he saw and heard, a righteous one living among them, *Lot* had *his* righteous soul tormented day after day by *their* lawless works),

<sup>9</sup> *then* the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation, and to keep the unrighteous for *the* day of judgment, being punished,

<sup>10</sup> and especially those who follow after the flesh in the lust of defilement and despise authority<sup>c</sup>. Daring, self-willed, they do not tremble to blaspheme glories<sup>d</sup>,

<sup>11</sup> whereas angels, though greater in might and power, do not bring a blasphemous judgment against them before the Lord.

<sup>12</sup> But these, like irrational animals, born as creatures of instinct for capture and corruption<sup>e</sup>, blaspheming in matters of which they are ignorant, will in their corruption also be corrupted<sup>f</sup>,

<sup>13</sup> suffering wrong as the wages of doing wrong. They count it pleasure to revel in the daytime. They are spots and blemishes, reveling in their deceptions, while they carouse with you,

<sup>14</sup> having eyes full of adultery, and who cannot cease from sin, enticing unstable souls, having a heart trained in greed, accursed children;

<sup>15</sup> forsaking the right way they have gone astray, having followed the way of Balaam, the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness,

<sup>a</sup> Grk. *thelēmati anthrōpou...elalēsan...anthrōpoi* (θελήματι ἀνθρώπου...ἐλάλησαν...ἄνθρωποι); "human will...spoke...men and women" (NRSV); "human will...people spoke" (TLV).

<sup>b</sup> Grk. verb *tartarōō* (ταρταρώω); "cast them into hell" (NASU); "he put them in gloomy dungeons lower than Sh'ol" (CJB); "Tartarus, thought of by the Greeks as a subterranean place lower than Hades where divine punishment was meted out, and so regarded in Israelite apocalyptic as well: Job 41:24; En 20:2; Philo, Exs. 152; Jos., C. Ap. 2, 240; SibOr 2, 302; 4, 186) **hold captive in Tartarus**" (BDAG, 991); "having cast *them* down to Tartarus" (YLT); "thrust down into Tartarus" (LITV); "having sent [them] to Tartarus" (Brown and Comfort, 824).

<sup>c</sup> Grk. *kuriotēs* (κυριότης); "lordship" (Brown and Comfort, 824).

<sup>d</sup> Grk. *doxas ou tremousin blasphemountes* (δόξας οὐ τρέμουσιν βλασφημοῦντες); "they do not tremble at glories, speaking evil" (LITV).

<sup>e</sup> Grk. *phthora* (φθορά); "**breakdown of organic matter, dissolution, deterioration, corruption**, in the world of nature" (BDAG, 1054); rendered as "corruption" in LITV.

<sup>f</sup> Grk. *en tē phthora autōn kai phtharēsontai* (ἐν τῇ φθορᾷ αὐτῶν καὶ φθαρήσονται); "in the corruption of them indeed they will be corrupted" (Brown and Comfort, 825); "and shall/will utterly perish in their own corruption" (KJV/NKJV).

<sup>16</sup> but he was rebuked for his own law-breaking<sup>a</sup>; a mute donkey spoke with a human voice and restrained the madness of the prophet.

<sup>17</sup> These are springs without water, and mists driven by a storm, for whom the black darkness has been reserved.

<sup>18</sup> For, uttering loud boasts of folly, they entice by the lusts of the flesh, by licentiousness, those who are barely escaping from those who live in error,

<sup>19</sup> promising them freedom while they themselves are slaves of corruption; for whatever overcomes a person, to that he is enslaved.

<sup>20</sup> For if after they have escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Yeshua the Messiah, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the last state has become worse for them than the first.

<sup>21</sup> For it would be better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn away from the holy commandment delivered to them.

<sup>22</sup> It has happened to them according to the true proverb, "A DOG RETURNS TO ITS OWN VOMIT" [Proverbs 26:11]<sup>b</sup>, and, "A sow, after washing, *returns* to wallowing in the mire."<sup>c</sup>

### 3

#### ***The Promise of the Lord's Coming***

<sup>1</sup> 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,

<sup>2</sup> that you should remember the words spoken previously by the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior *spoken* through your apostles.

<sup>3</sup> *Be* knowing this first: that in the last days mockers will come with *their* mocking, following after their own lusts,

<sup>4</sup> and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For, *ever* since *our* ancestors fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation."

<sup>5</sup> For they deliberately ignore this, that by the word of God *the* Heavens existed long ago and *the* Earth was formed out of water and by water,

<sup>6</sup> through which the world that then existed, being deluged with water, perished.

<sup>7</sup> But by the same word the present Heavens and Earth have been stored up for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly people.

<sup>8</sup> But do not let this one thing escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day<sup>d</sup>.

<sup>9</sup> The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is longsuffering toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

<sup>10</sup> But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the Heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be dissolved with intense heat, and the Earth and the works in it will be burned up.

<sup>11</sup> Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness,

<sup>12</sup> looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the Heavens, being set on fire, will be dissolved, and the elements will melt with intense heat?

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<sup>a</sup> Grk. noun *paranomia* (παρὰνομία); "transgression of law, decency or order" (LS, 600); more commonly rendered as "transgression" (NASU).

<sup>b</sup> "Like a dog that returns to its vomit is a fool who repeats his folly" (Proverbs 26:11, PME).

<sup>c</sup> This is a likely quotation from the Seventh-Sixth Century B.C.E. Ahiqar, a tale which spread throughout much of the Ancient Near East: "My son, thou has been to me like the swine that had been to the baths, and when it saw a muddy ditch, went down and washed in it..." (cited in J.M. Lindenberger, "Ahiqar," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, Vol 2 [New York: Doubleday, 1985], 487).

<sup>d</sup> The CJB has bolded "a thousand years like...day" for 3:8, noting a possible allusion to Psalm 90:4: "For from your viewpoint a thousand years are merely like yesterday or a night watch" (CJB).

<sup>13</sup> But according to His promise we wait for a new Heavens and a new Earth<sup>a</sup>, in which righteousness dwells.

<sup>14</sup> Therefore, beloved, since you wait for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless.

<sup>15</sup> And count the longsuffering of our Lord *as* salvation; just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you,

<sup>16</sup> as also in all *his* letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist, as *they do* also the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.

<sup>17</sup> You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, beware lest, being carried away by the error of the unprincipled, you fall from your own steadfastness,

<sup>18</sup> but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Yeshua the Messiah. To Him *be* the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.

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<sup>a</sup> The CJB has bolded "new heavens and a new earth" for 3:13, noting a possible allusion to Isaiah 65:17; 66:22:

"For, look! I create new heavens and a new earth; past things will not be remembered, they will no more come to mind" (Isaiah 65:17, CJB).

"For just as the new heavens and the new earth that I am making will continue in my presence," says *ADONAI*, "so will your descendants and your name continue" (Isaiah 66:22, CJB).