

2 Peter

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Chapter 1

Part 1: 2 Peter 1:1-11

In this book, Peter teaches us how to live successfully - according to God's definition of success. This means living lives that are pleasing to God. Success in God's eyes is always connected to His will.

Verse 1: *“Simon Peter, a bondservant and apostle of Messiah Yeshua, to those who have obtained this same precious faith as ours in the righteousness of God and our Saviour Messiah Yeshua.”*

Simon Peter: Peter identifies himself as the author of this letter.

Bondservant: This word could also be translated ‘slave’. Peter saw himself in total submission to the Lordship of Messiah. If we are going to live successful lives (lives that are pleasing to God), from God’s point of view, then this is how we are to live – as servants of Messiah, in total submission to His will. Having a servant/slave mindset shows humility. It shows commitment. Slaves do not make their own decisions. They are required to submit to the commands of their Master – carrying out His will and not their own wills.

A bondservant and apostle: Peter sees himself first and foremost as a servant. This is what he emphasises. He does not emphasise his call to apostleship.

To those who have obtained this same precious faith as ours: Peter is writing this letter to fellow believers – those who have come to faith in Messiah.

Faith ... righteousness: There is a relationship between faith and righteousness. We first see this relationship in Genesis 15:6. Abraham believed God (had faith in Him), and it was credited to him as righteousness. When we are living faithfully, we are going to be in God's righteous will. Successful lives are lives which are lived within the will of God, lives which are lived righteously.

Verse 2: *“Grace to you and peace be multiplied in the knowledge of God and of Yeshua our Lord.”*

Peace: Biblical peace is related to the fulfilment of God's will. When God’s grace works in our lives (the grace that firstly saves us, but then works in our lives to help us to say ‘no’ to ungodliness, ie to obey and fulfil the will of God for our lives – Titus 2:11-12) it leads to peace being multiplied in our lives.

The knowledge of God and of Yeshua our Lord: We are going to grow in our knowledge of God (of both God the Father and His Son – Messiah Yeshua) when we recognise Yeshua as the Lord of our lives.

Verse 3: *“So that all of His divine power having been given to us the things pertaining to life and godliness, through the knowledge of the One who has called us through glory and the excellent things.”*

His divine power having been given to us: God’s power is mediated to us (we can have access to it) through His indwelling Holy Spirit.

Life: Kingdom life.

Life and godliness: Life and godliness are related. When we live according to Kingdom truth (Kingdom life) we are going to be manifesting or demonstrating godliness (the character of God demonstrated through action). It is for this purpose (life and godliness) that the Holy Spirit ministers in our lives. His power is given to us so that godliness is evident in our lives and so that we can demonstrate this type of godliness to others.

Called us: This is part of our Kingdom calling – God has called us to live in a way that demonstrates life and godliness. We are called to live in a way that manifests God’s glory. This is our eternal future. Forever we are going to be living in the glory of God and experiencing excellent things.

Excellent things: This Greek work speaks of more than just ‘virtue’. It is a word that alludes to excellent things – the excellent things of the Kingdom of God (i.e the very character of the Kingdom). In God’s Kingdom we are going to see His glory, but the excellent things of God are also going to be present there.

Verse 4: *“Through which the magnificent and precious promises have been given to us, so that through these (promises) you become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through desire.”*

Partakers of the divine nature: We do not live restricted by our humanness, but we live under the power of God, through the Holy Spirit, demonstrating His divine character. God’s divine nature (His divinity) does not belong to us (we will never be divine), but it is available to us, and transforms our lives, through the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

Having escaped the corruption that is in the world: As believers, partakers of the divine nature of God, we do not live as fallen individuals, stained by sin, but we escape from the corruption/sin of this world and we begin to live under the power and the authority of God - demonstrating and doing His will, manifesting His glory and righteousness.

Corruption: That which is corruptible is marked for God’s judgment and destruction. Corrupted people and corrupted practices will have no place in the Kingdom of God.

Note: As believers, we have the blessing of access, through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, to that which pertains to God - His very divine nature. We begin to live and behave differently. We have a different purpose, a different priority, a different set of objectives for our lives. We desire to live in a way that manifests God's glory and that produces righteousness. We begin to demonstrate the excellent things that belong to His Kingdom. Pursuing God, and the things of God, is going to produce a wondrous change in our lives, whereby we have a desire to flee, to escape from the corruptible desires that are in this world.

Verse 5: *“But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, adding to your faith excellence, to excellence knowledge.”*

Diligence: This is a word that shows priority and commitment. Sometimes it is translated ‘haste’. It is a word that can be used to show urgency. It is a word that shows that something is of great value or importance.

Diligence...excellence...knowledge: When we are diligent, adding excellence to our faith, it is going to cause us to grow in the knowledge of God.

Verse 6: *“To knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness.”*

To knowledge self-control: When we are committed to the things that God says are excellent things we are going to grow in our knowledge of Him. That knowledge of Him is going to produce self-control in our lives.

Self-control: It is so important to be people who are self-controlled. Self-control is related to the Lordship of Messiah in our lives. It is a quality that is related to our maturity.

Perseverance: Patience. The ability to endure. Perseverance is not a waiting while doing nothing. Perseverance involves a moving forward in the will of God.

Godliness: Persevering, in God’s will, produces godliness in our lives. Godliness is the demonstration of a Godly character.

Verse 7: *“To godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love.”*

To godliness brotherly kindness: Godliness produces a demonstration of affection (tender-heartedness) for one another.

Love: Agape love. This is sacrificial love. This is not a love that just behaves kindly to others. It is a love that is willing to sacrifice ourselves - our wants or desires - in order to be a blessing to others. This is the same type of love that Messiah demonstrated for us when He died for us on the cross – taking the curse of sin upon Himself (Galatians 3:13) and receiving the punishment that should have been ours (death).

Verse 8: *“For these things being in you and abounding, neither idle nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Messiah Yeshua will you be.”*

Neither idle: When the things mentioned above (brotherly kindness, love etc) are in us and are growing (abounding) in our lives then we are not going to be idle, but we are going live actively in the will of God.

Nor unfruitful: The implication is that if we have these things in our lives, we are going to be a fruitful people – people who are abundant in good works (works that cause others to praise God – Matthew 5:16).

Neither idle nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Messiah Yeshua: When we have the things spoken about in the preceding verses we are going to grow in the knowledge, understanding and appreciation of our Lord and Saviour. The more we know Him and appreciate Him the more we are going to be transformed – thinking and behaving differently.

Verse 9: *“For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins.”*

Shortsighted, even to blindness: They are not thinking in a Kingdom way (ie they are not giving full consideration to the Kingdom of God). They are not thinking of their eternal future but are concerned with the things of this world.

Forgotten that he was cleansed from his old (past) sins: He does not understand what God has done in his life – that he has been cleansed and purified. Sin relates to the things of this world. God cleanses and purifies us so that He can bless us with Kingdom blessings (so that we can have access to His power and the ability to store up treasure in heaven and not in this world).

Verse 10: *“Therefore, all the more, brethren, be diligent to make sure your calling and election, for doing these things, you will never fail.”*

Brethren: Peter is writing to fellow believers.

Diligent: This is a word that shows priority and commitment. Sometimes it is translated ‘haste’. It is a word that can be used to show urgency. It is a word that shows that something is of great value or importance.

Make sure: To make a confirmation or a declaration.

Calling and election: God, through the gospel, calls us. This is not a narrow call, but it is a call that every single person in the world has the opportunity to respond to. For those who respond to God’s call, God chooses/elects them. When we receive Messiah, through the gospel message, our election is sure (it is certain, it is confirmed).

Doing these things, you will never fail: If we live faithfully, we will not experience spiritual failure.

Never: At no time.

Verse 11: *“For thus will be supplied to you, in abundant richness, the entrance into the eternal Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Messiah Yeshua.”*

Abundant richness: This speaks about God supplying abundantly, generously or in a wealthy manner.

Supplied to you...the entrance: We are called to demonstrate that we do not belong to this world. We are not heading in a worldly direction, but our lives need to display to others that we are headed toward the (entrance of the) Kingdom of God (Matthew 7:13-14).

Chapter 1

Part 2: 2 Peter 1:12-21

When Peter wrote this epistle, he was a changed man from the Peter who had served as a disciple when Jesus was on earth. What changed him? He witnessed the resurrection; he spoke to the resurrected Lord, and he was also a recipient of the indwelling Holy Spirit. After experiencing these things, Peter became a greater disciple, a greater servant – a precious vessel willing to be used for the purposes of God.

Verse 12: *“Therefore, I am not unprepared to always remind you concerning these things, though you know and are established in the present truth.”*

I am not unprepared: This verse begins with a double negative. Sometimes, in the Greek language, a double negative is for the purpose of strongly emphasising. It means ‘no, not ever’. Sometimes a double negative in Greek is similar to English in that it simply turns something that is negative into something which is positive – as in this case. Peter is not unprepared, ie he is always prepared.

These things: The call upon our lives and, through our response to that call, our election in Messiah. God, through our acceptance of the gospel message, has chosen us to serve Him in a specific way - sacrificially. Our call and election have provided us with an assurance that we have a sure entrance into the Kingdom of God.

Established: Strong. They are strong in this truth. It is like a firm foundation in their lives.

Verse 13: *“Yes, I consider it right, as long as I am in this tent, to stir you up by reminding you.”*

Right: A word which can also be translated ‘righteous’, ‘proper’ or ‘correct’. This is a word which relates to the glory of God. The outcome of righteousness is the manifestation of the glory of God. This is what our lives should be all about: living in such a way that we bring glory to God.

Tent: Tabernacle. A structure or a dwelling place which was made of skin(s). Peter is speaking about his body, which is housed in his skin.

As long as I am in this tent: I.e. As long as I am in this body.

To stir you up: Peter’s life’s commitment was to stir up the believers, to cause them to remember. The things that Peter wanted them to remember were things which were foundational for them in living God-pleasing lives. If we are people who want to live praiseworthy lives, lives that bring God glory, then these things are foundational for us too.

Verse 14: *“Knowing that shortly I must put off my tent, just as our Lord Messiah Yeshua showed me.”*

Shortly I must put off my tent: Peter knows that he is going to die soon.

Our Lord Messiah Yeshua showed me: Peter did not base the fact that he knew he was going to die soon on his feelings, his emotions or on an experience. He knew because Yeshua had revealed it to him. Messiah, Himself, revealed to Peter that he was going to die in the then near future.

Note: Peter seems to be so matter of fact about his impending death. He does not become introspective and ‘woe is me’, but there seems to be an urgency within him to tell the believers what he feels he needs to tell them or remind them of. This is very similar to what we read in Deuteronomy 31:14. When Moses was about to die, he began to invest his life into Joshua – the leader who was going to take over from him. Moses (like Peter) did not bemoan his death, but he made the end of his life meaningful by preparing the leader(s) of the next generation.

Verse 15: *“But I will be diligent to ensure that you always have a reminder of these things after my departure.”*

Diligent: A word for urgency. Sometimes it can be translated ‘to make haste’. This, however, is not a careless haste. It is a purposeful urgency and a diligence to accomplish something.

Note: Peter wants them to be influenced by what he is reminding them of. By writing this epistle, Peter has left us, believers 2000 years after the fact, a reminder of these foundational things that are of utmost importance.

Verse 16: *“For NOT cleverly devised myths did we follow after, but we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Messiah Yeshua as we became eyewitnesses of the majesty of that One.”*

Myths: Legends, fables, Rabbinical folklore. Stories with very little to no truth in them. Peter did not make up exciting and interesting stories about Jesus. They spoke truthfully about what they had heard and seen.

Coming: This is referring to Yeshua’s first coming. God (Emmanuel) took on human flesh and He visited His people. Yeshua demonstrated God’s *power* while He was here – miracles, healings, etc are demonstrations of the power of God.

The majesty of that One: The triune God, who is One (Deuteronomy 6:4), manifests Himself in three distinct persons - God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. These all share the same divinity or majesty. Yeshua showed mankind, at His coming, the majesty of God. Yeshua demonstrated, at His coming, that He was the Son of God, that He was God.

Verse 17: *“For He received from God the Father honour and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Majestic Glory: “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”*

He received: Yeshua received

Received...honour and glory: Paul tells us, in Philippians 2:6-8, that Yeshua did not equate equality with God as something to be grasped. He did not come to earth trying to prove that He was God – powerful and glorious – but, even though He never ceased to be God, He came as a humble servant, willing to be obedient even to death on the cross. Paul continues to reveal to us, in Philippians 2:9-11, that Yeshua (the Son of man, the Son of God) has inherited glory, honour and a Kingdom from His father. Peter had witnessed a glimpse of Yeshua’s glory when He was on earth (Luke 3:21-22, Luke 9:28-36) and is attesting to this here.

The Majestic Glory: This is referring to the Majesty of God the Father.

Well pleased: The Greek word used here is the word for ‘good’. God the Father thought well of Yeshua. Yeshua was approved by God.

Verse 18: *“And we heard this voice which came from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain.”*

Note: See Luke 9:28-36

Holy mountain: The Mount of Transfiguration. On this mountain Yeshua did not reflect the glory of God – He was seen to be the very glory of God. God’s glory emanated from within His very being, as He is the source of divine glory. God’s glory does not originate or emit from us human beings. Through obedience, God’s glory can be reflected through us (For example: like us, the moon does not create its own light. The reason the moon can be seen at all is because of the sun reflecting off its surface).

Verse 19: *“And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a lamp that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.”*

Confirmed: Made certain. We can be sure of this.

You do well to heed: This is an admonition or warning. We need to hold on to prophecy.

Until the day dawns: A reference to the Kingdom that is coming.

Morning star: This is referring to Yeshua (Revelation 22:16).

Note: When Yeshua and His Kingdom come, we are going to know Him in a perfect way – He is going to *rise in our hearts*.

Verse 20: *“This first knowing, that all prophetic Scripture one’s own interpretation it is not.”*

This first knowing: This is the main thing or the primary thing that we need to know.

Prophetic Scripture: Referring to the prophetic writings found in Scripture.

One’s own interpretation it is not: Prophecy does not originate, and nor should it be interpreted, through our own wants or desires. Prophecy is not there to be used for our own personal benefit.

Verse 21: *“For prophecy never came by the will of man, but through the Holy Spirit holy men of God spoke as they were moved.”*

Prophecy never came by the will of man: Prophetic truth is never going to agree with our human wills. When prophetic truth, which is Biblical truth, is revealed, it leads to us understanding who we are in Messiah and, in turn, this leads to our human wills undergoing a change. Embracing prophetic truth, not of our own interpretation or will, causes us to become a new creation - old things passing away, we have become new (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Through the Holy Spirit: Prophecy comes by means of the Holy Spirit. One of the primary purposes of the Holy Spirit is to bring God’s order out of chaos – an order that is rooted in the purposes of God.

Spoke: The Holy Spirit gave these holy men of God utterance so that they could reveal prophetic truth.

Note: We desperately need prophetic truth. Prophetic truth does not agree with our fallen human will so we need our will to be crucified, dead and buried (Galatians 2:20). When we have been ‘crucified’ with Messiah we are given a new will – God’s will becomes the foundation for our lives and the purpose for which we live.

Chapter 2

Part 1: 2 Peter 2:1-9

We need to understand things from a Biblical perspective. According to the prophets in the Old Testament, but also according to individuals like Messiah himself, the Apostle Paul and Simon Peter, it is very clear that the last days are going to be a very difficult time for this world. As believers we are going to go through persecution and tribulation (Matthew 24:9) – the source of which is the devil and his antichrist empire – but as believers we are not going to experience the wrath of God (1 Thessalonians 5:9) – depicted by the trumpet and bowl judgments in Revelation 8 – 9 and 16.

In this chapter Peter is speaking primarily to believers – warning us about what we can expect in the last days.

Verse 1: *“But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, the Lord who purchased them they deny, and bring on themselves quick destruction.”*

But: This is a conjunction of contrast. Chapter 1 concluded with Peter teaching us about the prophetic Word of God – how it neither originates in the will of man and nor is it open to private or personal interpretation. The prophetic Word of God was brought through the Holy Spirit who enabled holy men to speak it. In the last days these facts about prophetic truth are going to be disregarded by many. False teachers, not inspired by the Holy Spirit, will twist prophetic truth to suit their own desires.

False prophets ... false teachers: False prophets led Israel astray in the past. God did send Israel true prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah) but they were in the minority and were highly persecuted (Matthew 23:37). Many, many false teachers will attempt to lead the world, and many who claim to be believers, astray in the last days. We need to be aware of this, expecting this and preparing ourselves and others for this – holding fast to the word of truth (Philippians 2:16). A little bit of arsenic can ruin a perfectly good meal. A little bit of heresy, a little bit of false teaching, can bring about a disaster for people – for non-believers as well as for true believers. The Bible does not teach us that things are going to get better in this world in the last days. The Bible does not teach that the church is going to be successful in converting the world and setting it in order before the return of Messiah. People who are teaching these things are false teachers. As we move closer to the last days, we should expect an increase of false teachers and an increase in their popularity. Peter is warning us (believers) not to be surprised or discouraged by this.

Secretly: They bring in their destructive heresies in a subtle, covert, hidden kind of way. Some of what they teach is truth, but they slip their lies in between the truth – coating the lies to look like truth. It is so important for us to be Biblically literate so that we can recognise these lies for what they are (Acts 17:11) and so that we are not deceived by them.

The Lord: The word used here refers to a Master – someone who has absolute authority.

Purchased them: Redeemed them. Yeshua purchased or redeemed us from our sin (and therefore death) with His blood.

Bring on themselves quick destruction: God’s judgment on them may be delayed but when it does begin to fall on them it is going to come in a fast or swift way.

Destruction: This destruction is eternal.

Verse 2: *“And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed.”*

The way of truth: In these two verses we see a connection between our Master (our Redeemer who purchased us with His blood – Messiah Yeshua) and the way of truth.
Blasphemed: Blasphemy is against God, therefore, once again, proving the divinity of Messiah.

Verse 3: *“By covetousness they will exploit you with fabricated words; for that judgment of old is not idle, and their destruction is not slumbering.”*

Covetousness: Greedy for the things of this world – possessions, finance, etc
Judgment of old: A long time ago, God revealed this judgment.
Not idle...not slumbering: Destruction is going to come upon those who fabricate words, those who exploit and lead others astray.

Verse 4: *“For since God did not spare the angels who sinned but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment.”*

Since: This word is best translated ‘since’ as the word ‘if’ introduces doubt into a text. There is no doubt about this – God will not spare His angels that sinned.
Cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness: God delivered sinful angels, angels who had rebelled against God’s instructions, over to judgment.

Verse 5: *“And the ancient world He did not spare, but saved Noah, one of eight people, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly.”*

The ancient world He did not spare: The flood was a testimony of God’s judgment falling upon individuals – humans. God takes it seriously when His truth is rejected.
Noah: God spared Noah, a righteous man living in an unrighteous world, from judgment.
The ungodly: Those who practice the things which are in conflict with the truth of God.

Verse 6: *“And He condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah and burned them to ashes, He condemned them to destruction, making them an example to those who afterward would live ungodly.”*

He condemned them...making them an example: Sodom and Gomorrah were not only condemned for their wickedness and sinfulness – although they were wicked and sinful. God condemned them as an example to the ungodly of what is coming in their future if they do not repent (Sodom and Gomorrah are a picture of God’s judgment which will be outworked on a global scale).

Verse 7: *“And delivered righteous Lot, who was oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked.”*

Note: Neither Noah nor Lot participated in the ungodliness which was present in their generations. God spared them both from judgment. These two men are an example to us of how we are to live in a Godly way in an ungodly generation.

Verse 8: *“(for that righteous man, dwelling among them, tormented his righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing their lawless deeds)—”*

Righteous man: Referring to Lot.

Tormented: The unrighteousness that Lot saw and heard was a great burden to his soul.

Lawless deeds: Lawlessness refers to deeds which are against the commandments of God. 2 Thessalonians 2:8-9 identifies the antichrist as one who is lawless – he is against the commandments of God (specifically against love and righteousness – the two primary characteristics of the law of Moses).

Verse 9: *“Then the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations, but the unrighteous ones for the day of judgment are being kept for punishment.”*

Knows: The Lord knows perfectly. This means that He has known how to do this in the past, He knows how to do it now, and He will still know how to do it into the future.

The day of judgment: This Day of Judgment will reach its fullness, the final outpouring of God’s wrath, when Yeshua comes to earth for His second coming (at the end of Daniel’s 70th week, i.e. at the end of the final seven years of this epoch – Revelation 19:11-21). It is at this time that Yeshua is going to bring about a total annihilation, an absolute defeat, of the enemy.

Chapter 2

Part 2: 2 Peter 2:10-15

The God of Scripture (although He is a God of love) is a God of vengeance/wrath. This simply means that God will judge sin. The cross is a great example of how serious God is about judgment. On the cross, God's judgment fell upon Messiah, who took the sins of the world upon Himself. Judgment is no longer relevant for all those who accept Messiah and His death upon that tree. Believers, those who have received grace and who are in a New Covenant relationship with God through His Son Messiah Yeshua, are not going to experience the wrath or judgment of God. Although we are not going to experience judgment, we still desire to live a praiseworthy life. We do not want to stumble and nor do we want to embrace those things that are not pleasing to God.

Verse 10: *“But especially the ones having gone after the flesh in unclean desires and authority they despise. They are bold, self-willed. They do not tremble before that which is glorious, they blaspheme.”*

Unclean: Corrupt, impure or polluted. As believers, if we do not guard ourselves (if we are not in the Word and if we are not walking in obedience) our desires will be conformed to the things of this world and not to the things of God. David’s prayer in Psalm 139:23-24 should be a prayer that echoes in our hearts: “Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my anxieties; see if there is any wicked way in me and lead me in the way everlasting.” Even though we are not going to be recipients of God’s wrath, if we live incorrectly or disobediently, we are going to experience God’s discipline – which is not pleasant. God disciplines those He loves so that He can bring about a change in their lives.

Authority they despise: These are rebellious people. They want what they want, no matter the cost to others. Rebellious people will reap God's punishment.

Bold: They are full of pride. Their desire is to be the centre of attention, people who are prominent in society.

Self-willed: These ones are only about pleasing themselves.

They do not tremble: The hearts of these people are not moved before that which is holy and righteous.

They blaspheme: They blaspheme authority and those things which belong to God.

Blasphemy is another characteristic of the antichrist (end day) empire – Daniel 11:36, Revelation 13:5-6. Blasphemy is rooted in rebellion. The antichrist is going to rebel against the law of God, and His Empire is going to be very opposed to the character of God – they will be against those things which are pleasing to God.

Verse 11: *“Whereas angels, who are stronger and more powerful, do not bring against them a blaspheming judgment before the Lord.”*

Angels: These are righteous and submissive angels, angels who are serving the purposes of God – not the sinful angels spoken about in 2 Peter 2:4.

Them: These ones who are deceived, blasphemous and rebellious.

Do not bring against them a blaspheming judgment before the Lord: These angels show restraint before the Lord. They desire to speak in a holy and modest manner before the Lord – speaking only of that which is rooted in righteousness. A sense of retribution – even though it may be righteous retribution – should not provoke us to speak in a way that is not in line with the character of God. These angels did not allow their righteous indignation to cause them to speak or behave in a way that was not in agreement with the character of God.

Verse 12: *“But these, like irrational beasts, born naturally, made to be captured and destroyed, in their ignorance they blaspheme the things they do not understand, in their own corruption they will be corrupted.”*

These: Referring to those who follow after the flesh, those whose desires are impure.

Born naturally: They are born into this world and live for this world's desires (fleshly). They are not born spiritually – i.e. they are not born again (John 3:3-12) and nor do they desire to be born again.

Ignorance: They are against knowing. They could learn, but they have chosen to be ignorant. They have chosen not to submit nor to know anything about anything related to God.

Blaspheme the things they do not understand: They blaspheme the things which are good, holy and righteous – the things which are related to God Himself and to His glorious Kingdom.

Corrupted: This word is closely related to the word for destruction. That which is corrupted serves no purpose. It is worthless and has no value. Corrupted things are thrown away.

Verse 13: *“They will receive the commission of unrighteousness, as those who esteem pleasure in the day of pleasure. They are spots and blemishes, carousing in their own deceptions while they feast with you.”*

Commission: Some people work for wages. These wages are usually set, and it is difficult to tell how well or how badly a person works by looking at their wage. Other people, however, work for a commission. Those who receive commission receive a wage that fluctuates. It is, therefore, easier to measure the success or lack of success of those who earn a commission. *They will receive the commission of unrighteousness:* Because they are unrighteous, they are going to suffer judgment. Those who behave unrighteously are going to reap the reward that is tied to unrighteousness – destruction. Those who behave righteously will reap the reward or commission associated with living righteously – the promises of God, an eternal hope and future.

Those who esteem pleasure in the day of pleasure: They saw an opportunity for themselves to live luxuriously and to feed their flesh. They seized this opportunity to indulge themselves with both hands.

Spots and blemishes: Living in luxury, with a self-indulgent spirit, caused them to grow corrupt.

Their own deceptions: Peter is teaching us a principle: when we pursue the things that we want, the things our flesh wants to indulge in, they will have a deceiving influence in our lives. This means that we will be easily deceived by the enemy.

They feast with you: The people that Peter has been talking about – the blasphemers, those who love pleasure, etc – are socialising within the body of believers. They are people who claim to be a part of our congregations. They are involved in our local communities and places of worship. What we need to understand is that in the last days the enemy is going to manifest himself not apart from us but from within us (1 John 2:18-19 – the fact that they went out from us proves that they were never of us, they were never true believers).

Verse 14: *“Having eyes full of adulteries and unceasingly sinning, enticing unstable souls. They have a heart trained in covetous practices, having children of the curse.”*

Adulteries: A word of spiritual idolatry – they may be physically impure, but within this context it is probably referring to spiritual impurity. Their desire is to satisfy and indulge their own wants.

Enticing: Deceiving, tempting or seducing.

Unstable souls: Unestablished souls. This refers to those that are either very young in the faith or those who are not even in the faith.

A heart trained in covetous practices: Peter very consistently emphasises that these people are ruled by their own desires.

Children of the curse: Cursed children. This is a reference to the next or future generation. They are not people who are setting their children or grandchildren up for spiritual success.

Verse 15: *“They have forsaken the straight way and have gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness.”*

Forsaken the straight way: John 14:6. They have left the path of truth.

Gone astray: Pursuing their own desires, blaspheming against the character of God etc has caused them to go astray – turning from God’s way to their own ways.

Balaam...loved the wages of unrighteousness: Numbers 22-25, Jude 1:11, Revelation 2:14. Balaam is an example to us of someone who was willing to compromise by doing unrighteous things - if the payment was high enough. The wages of unrighteousness allowed Balaam to live in a luxurious manner. He used these wages to exalt himself in an attempt to show others how glorious he was. Rather than wanting to exalt God, he blasphemed the Holy Spirit – stealing the praise, esteem and adoration that belonged to God alone. This is another characteristic that will be a mark of the antichrist.

Note: No true believer loves the wages (the outcome) of unrighteousness. A true believer is one who has accepted the gospel because of a desire to turn away from sin. True believers do sin, but they do not wilfully choose to sin. In fact, they are grieved and convicted by the Holy Spirit when they do sin. Repentance follows their sin – not joy.

Chapter 2

Part 3: 2 Peter 2:16-22

God cannot lie (Hebrews 6:18). Therefore, those who are true and wise believers are going to want to base their lives upon the Word of God - as they will neither doubt God, nor will they doubt His Word (1 John 5:13).

Verse 16: *“But he was rebuked for his iniquity: a mute donkey speaking with a man’s voice restrained the madness of the prophet.”*

He: Balaam

Iniquity: Transgression/sin.

A mute donkey speaking: Numbers 22:22-33. Balaam was a prophet, but he was not faithful to the Lord’s voice. The Lord, therefore, used Balaam’s donkey to rebuke him.

Restrained the madness (craziness) of the prophet: For a short period of time Balaam heeded what the donkey had said, but then he just went straight back to his old ways again.

Verse 17: *“These are waterless wells, clouds carried by a tempest, for whom is reserved the gloom of darkness forever.”*

These: Balaam, false prophets and false teachers.

Waterless wells: True wells have water in them. Waterless wells, although they have the shape of a well and the outward presentation of a well, have no life-giving water in them.

These false teachers are like these waterless wells. One cannot tell from their outward appearance and presentation that they aren’t true believers. However, a deeper look into their lives reveals that the doctrines that they are teaching are lifeless and empty.

Clouds carried by a tempest: These clouds do not rain lifegiving water on the parched lands, but they are driven away by the strong winds of the storm. These false teachers leave their listeners spiritually dry. Their doctrines or teachings do not quench the thirst of their listeners/followers.

For whom is reserved the gloom of darkness forever: These false teachers are not a blessing to others. They are dangerous. This is why darkness has been reserved for them for eternity.

Verse 18: *“For they are arrogant, and they utter words of futility, they entice with fleshly desires, through lewdness, the ones who have actually escaped from those who live in error.”*

Words of futility: Empty words. Words that are vanity (they amount to worthless babble).

Fleshly desires: Desires in sensuality.

The ones who have actually escaped from those who live in error: These false teachers entice those who have stepped away or tried to break away from those who live in sin. The false teachers go after these ones who have broken away from the sinful ones, these ones who have a desire to live differently, to live in truth. This shows us how wicked these false teachers are. They desire to see the downfall of others.

Verse 19: *“Being proclaimers of liberty to them, but they themselves are slaves of corruption; for to what one submits to, by him also he is brought into bondage.”*

Proclaimers of liberty: Proclaiming liberty or freedom is very important to these false teachers. However, true Biblical liberty and freedom can only be found in redemption. The best example of this is Passover. The Israelites, through the blood of the lamb, were spared from death. They were then freed from bondage, being led into the wilderness and Mount Sinai where God gave them the commandments. The Israelites were set free in order to serve God (Exodus 9:1). These false teachers proclaim a totally different kind of liberty. They attempt to entice people with sensuality and in the desires of the flesh.

What one submits to, by him also he is brought into bondage: Those who submit to sensuality and the desires of the flesh go into bondage (i.e. become a slave) to these things.

Verse 20: *“For if, fleeing the pollutions of the world through recognising the Lord and Saviour Messiah Yeshua, they are again entangled in them and submit, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning.”*

For if: This word is used as a conditional conjunction. It expresses a thought – whether real or hypothetical (i.e. an assumption). It is a word that is frequently used for the sake of presenting an argument (in colloquial terms we would say: ‘playing devil’s advocate’) or making an illustration. In this verse, Peter is introducing us to a hypothetical situation. He is assuming something for the sake of argument so that he can teach us a principle – looking at it from all angles of argument.

Recognising: The word used here, in the Greek, is not the word for knowledge, but it is a word for recognising something. James 2:19 tells us that even the demons recognise that there is one God. This does not regenerate the demons (the false teachers) or make them believers. Recognising something does not mean we accept it or believe it to be true.

They: The false teachers.

Them: The pollutions of the world.

Submit: They are once again overcome by the sinful influences and the worldly desires of the flesh.

Verse 21: *“For it would have been better for them not to have recognised the way of righteousness, than having recognised it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them.”*

It would have been better for them not to have recognised: James 3:1. The judgment against false teachers will be great. Like Chorazin, Bethsaida, Sodom and Capernaum (Matthew 11:20-24) these false teachers were given the truth, but like these cities the false teachers rejected truth.

Having recognised it: Having understood it.

The holy commandment: Possibly a reference to the gospel. The gospel had been delivered (given) to them – they had heard it. These false teachers recognised the way of salvation. They knew how to share it with others. However, although they recognised the Way of salvation, they never embraced Him.

Verse 22: *“But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: “A dog returns to his own vomit,” and, “a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire.”*

Them: The false teachers

A dog returns to his own vomit: This dog ate something that made him sick. He vomited it out, but then went straight back and ate it again. Dogs are consumed with eating. They are in bondage to their stomachs. It is in their nature to eat everything they see – even if it is not good for them, even if it makes them sick.

A sow: an adult, female pig.

Having washed, to her wallowing in the mire: A pig does not appreciate the fact that she has been cleaned. Being clean has no impact upon her. It is part of her nature to go right back to wallowing in the filthy mud.

Note: What Peter is teaching us here is that a false teacher can be confronted with the truth. He can recognize it, understand it, and teach about it. However, in the end, he goes back to his sin. This shows that he was never truly saved. He has demonstrated that he is not a new (supernatural) creation, but like this dog and pig he quickly defaults back to his natural nature – he enjoys his filth.

Chapter 3

Part 1: 2 Peter 3:1-8

God is going to judge this world. The prophets have made it very clear that this world will not escape the wrath of God. The last days are going to be very difficult days - first for believers and then, after that, for Israel and the nations. God has a plan of salvation. He provided His only begotten Son – Messiah Yeshua – to redeem us with His blood when He died on the cross. Believing in Yeshua and making Him the Lord of our lives is the only way that we can be saved and escape God’s judgment. Unfortunately, the majority of people in this world are going to reject God’s plan of salvation (Matthew 7:13-14).

Verse 1: *“Beloved, a second epistle to you I write in which I stir you up in remembrance of the pure mind.”*

Second epistle: The first epistle that Peter wrote to them is now called ‘1 Peter’.

I stir you up: Peter is wanting to motivate the people. He wants them to understand how important this call to purity is for humanity.

Pure: Purity is a very important word Biblically. There is an inherent relationship between purity and blessing. When we live in purity we are inviting God’s blessing into our lives. That which is impure is defiled and unclean. Impurity is all of that which falls outside of God’s standards of morality and justice. Those who live impure lives invite the judgment and curse of God into their lives. Impurity empowers the enemy.

Verse 2: *“And to remind you of the words which were spoken previously by the holy prophets and apostles, the commandment of our Lord and Saviour.”*

Holy: The word ‘holy’ is related to the purpose of God.

Holy prophets: Prophecy reveals to us the purposes of God – the ability to see or hear things from God’s perspective or vantage point. God told these men His purposes and they revealed God’s purposes to us. Prophecy not only reveals future things to us, but it is also usually accompanied by a call to repentance.

The commandment: 2 Peter 2:21 speaks of this commandment as being a holy commandment. This is possibly a reference to the gospel – to redemption. The gospel had been delivered (given) to the people – through the prophets and through the apostles – and the people had no excuse as they had heard it.

Lord and Saviour: Through the gospel we learn that Yeshua is both Saviour and Lord (Romans 10:9-10, Philippians 2:9-11).

Verse 3: *“This first knowing: that will come in the last days scoffers, according to their own desires following after.”*

This first knowing: There is an emphasis on the word ‘first’.

Scoffers: The word ‘scoffing’ is related to doubt. These people are going to doubt the prophetic Word of God. They are going to disagree with what the holy prophets and the apostles taught regarding the end days. We need to have God’s perspective in regard to the end times – His judgment is coming. We need to see this as a reality.

We need to see that the only way to escape this wrath of God is through His holy commandment - the gospel.

Their own desires: They are not going to walk according to truth or according to the revelation of God given to us through His prophets or apostles. They will walk according to their own desires. Their own desires will lead them astray.

Verse 4: *“And saying, “Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation.”*

Where is the promise of His coming: Those who say this are trying to place doubt in the minds of their hearers or those who are around them. God has said prophetically that Messiah is coming (both His first coming and second coming have been spoken about through the prophets and the apostles). His first coming was proved true. His second coming will also be proven true.

The fathers: The patriarchs.

Fell asleep: Died. Falling asleep implies that they are going to wake up again (experience resurrection).

All things continue as they were from the beginning of creation: People who make this statement are not telling the truth. The patriarchs would not recognise this world if they had to come to life today.

Verse 5: *“For this having escaped their knowledge: that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the land from water and through water came into being.”*

Having escaped their knowledge: Their own desires have blinded them. They do not want to think about what God has said because God’s plans are contrary to their own.

The land from water and through water came into being: Peter is talking about water in a unique way. God used water in regard to His creating. When God created the earth there was water above and below it (Genesis 1:6-10). Through God’s spoken Word He separated these waters from each other, and the heavens and earth came into being. The heavens and earth have a unique relationship with water.

Verse 6: *“By which the world that then existed was destroyed, being flooded with water.”*

Note: This is talking about the flood in the days of Noah – Genesis 7.

Verse 7: *“But the heavens and the earth by the same Word are stored up, they are reserved for fire for the day of judgment and the destruction of ungodly men.”*

The same Word: The Word of God that spoke creation into being is the same Word that is holding the heavens and the earth together – even right now (Colossians 1:16-17).

Reserved for fire for the day of judgment: If we do not believe that a day of judgment is coming then we do not believe the revelation of Scripture. The wrath of God is even now approaching this earth. God is not going to change His mind. He is going to do to this world exactly what prophecy has revealed. All of God’s prophetic revelation will be fulfilled.

Ungodly men: These are men who reject the gospel (that holy commandment that is rooted in the redemption of God, through grace - not by works, but through faith believing what God has done on our behalf).

Verse 8: *“But, beloved, do not forget this one thing: that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.”*

Beloved: Peter is talking to fellow believers.

Note: God is the Master of time. He can bring things about very abruptly or He can slow things down. Things we think could not happen in a thousand years God can bring about in one day. Things we think God could do quickly or imminently (ie in one day) God could delay for a thousand years.

Chapter 3

Part 2: 2 Peter 3:9-18

Most people assume that God judging the earth is a bad thing. However, everything that God does is good, and all He does He does in order to bless His people (Psalm 145:17). The outcome of God’s judgment is glorious – the establishment of His Kingdom!

Verse 9: *“The Lord’s promise He does not delay, as some consider delaying, but He is patient toward us, not wanting anyone to perish but all to repentance to come.”*

The Lord’s promise: When we submit to Messiah’s Lordship we are inviting His promises into our lives. He is mighty. He is all-powerful. He is Sovereign. He works according to the things that He has promised (one of God’s promises is that He is going to judge this world).

He does not delay, as some consider delaying: He is not slow as some consider slowness. God has a purpose for every action that He takes. His promise may seem slow or delayed from our perspective, but God has a reason for this.

Not wanting anyone to perish but all to repentance to come: This verse has some serious theological implications. God is Sovereign and He can do all things. Yet He chooses to work within the boundaries (framework) that He has created – ie free will. Without free will, we could not love, we could not worship, we could not choose the things that bring about blessings in our lives. Without free will, we could not agree with God. God’s desire is that every person will repent, but, under this law of free will, God would never force anyone to repent. The vast majority of people will not turn away from sin and turn towards God. They are going to remain in disobedience - rejecting the revelation of God and, therefore, becoming recipients of God’s wrath. God’s will is that none perish but that ALL come to repentance. God’s will is overridden by most of humanity’s free will. This in no way negates the Sovereignty of God.

Anyone: In Greek this is written in the plural. It refers to all people.

Verse 10: *“But the day of the Lord comes 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; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.”*

The day of the Lord: This is not referring to the rapture but is referring to the day of God’s judgment/wrath. The rapture would have already taken place before this day (1 Thessalonians 5:9).

Comes as a thief in the night: This phrase tells us that although Peter is speaking to believers he is not speaking about believers. 1 Thessalonians 5:4 tells us that believers are not in darkness that this day will surprise them like a thief. Non-believers will be taken by surprise when this day comes upon them.

Verse 11: *“Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness?”*

All these things will be dissolved: The earth and every evil deed done within it will no longer exist.

What manner of persons ought you to be? How should we live and conduct ourselves in light of the fact that God is a wrathful God, a God who will judge?

Verse 12: *“Expecting and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat?”*

Hastening: This is a word of urgency, but it can also be a word of diligence.

The coming...day: As has already been established: this is not referring to the Rapture. The context tells us that this is referring to Judgment Day or the Day of God’s wrath (*fire...melt...fervent heat*) – which happens after the Rapture has taken place.

Verse 13: *“Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.”*

Note: It is for our good that God's judgment comes. He, who never makes a mistake and who is perfect in all of His decisions and actions, chooses the right timing for His judgment. His judgment will come when the fullness of the Gentiles has reached its completion and when He has redeemed the remnant of Israel ('Israel' refers to a remnant composed of both Jews and Gentiles – Kingdom people). After God’s judgment, He establishes His righteous Kingdom.

New heavens and a new earth: This is a Kingdom description. There will only be new heavens and a new earth after Messiah’s Second coming and after His millennial reign on earth. This is one of God’s promises. We need to expect that this is going to happen.

In which righteousness dwells: The righteousness of God should interest us. We should be people who are wholly committed to the righteousness of God. It is only through the commandments that we can truly understand what righteous or unrighteous behaviour is.

Verse 14: *“Therefore, beloved, these things be expecting, be diligent to be found blameless ones, without spots, being found by Him in peace.”*

Diligent: This is a word associated with haste, an urgency that demands diligence. In light of the things that Peter has been speaking of we should be diligent and have a sense of urgency.

Found by Him in peace: Peace is what we experience as an outcome of being in God's will. We need to be found by God to be doing His will (doing what is pleasing to God) – and to be reaping the fruit thereof (ie peace).

Verse 15: *“And the perseverance of our Lord consider for salvation—as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you.”*

The perseverance of our Lord consider for salvation: God is patient. He does not desire any to perish and so He is patient regarding pouring out His end-time wrath so that people have a chance and time to repent. He is also giving believers time to do the work of the Kingdom – sharing the gospel with people, bringing them to faith, being a blessing to others, teaching them, bearing witness of what true faith is like, etc. He is not slow in fulfilling His promises, He is patient.

Our beloved brother Paul: Although Peter and Paul did have differences of opinions at times, Peter still loved Paul and considered him a beloved brother.

Verse 16: *“As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which unlearned and unstable people distort to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures.”*

Some things hard to understand: God gave Paul great wisdom. Paul, inspired by the Holy Spirit, wrote down Scriptural truth for the church. This may be referring to the fact that these things that Paul wrote down were difficult to understand or grasp, or it could mean that people found these things difficult to apply to their lives.

Unlearned: This is a word that means ‘against learning’. These people were opposed to these truths and so they were against learning them or applying them to their lives.

Unstable people: Spiritually unstable people.

Verse 17: *“You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, keep them lest you are carried away by the error of lawlessness, falling from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked.”*

Keep them: Guard these words of Scripture. When we doubt or distort Scriptural truth it has an adverse outcome in our lives.

Steadfastness: Stability

Verse 18: *“But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Messiah Yeshua. To Him be the glory both now and in the eternal day. Amen.”*

Grow in the grace and knowledge: Grace produces knowledge of Messiah. Grace works in the lives of believers to bring them into obedience and to cause them to work out their faith and produce good works.

The grace of God is always connected to the will of God, and in the will of God we grow in our understanding of the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour – Messiah Yeshua.

Now: We are to bring glory to God in this world – while we are alive on this earth.

The eternal day: An idiom for the Kingdom of God. We are to bring glory to God for forever.

Amen: This is a word that reminds us to believe these things. We need to take them to heart and implement them in our lives – knowing that what Peter and Paul wrote (together with all the others who were inspired by God to write down the Scripture) is truth.