An Overview of the Book of 2 Peter

Writer Of The Second Letter Of Peter:

"Simon[1] Peter a bondservant and apostle of Jesus Christ," (2 Peter 1:1), who was with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration, saw Jesus glorified, and heard the Father declare from heaven that Jesus was his beloved Son with whom he was well pleased (see 2 Peter 1:16-18).

See the information provided about Peter in the Overview Of The Book Of 1 Peter in the Book of 1 Peter.

Recipients Of The Second Letter Of Peter:

"To those who have received an equally precious faith as ours[2] in the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ," 2 Peter 1:1.

The Second Letter of Peter gives no details about whom the recipients of the letter were or where they were located. 2 Peter 3:1, which states, "This now, beloved, is the second letter I am writing to you," appears to indicate the Second Letter of Peter was sent to the same recipients of the First Letter of Peter. This being true, the recipients were the Gentile Christians who were scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. For more information about these recipients, see the Overview Of The Book Of 1 Peter and its section entitled "Recipients Of The First Letter Of Peter."

Date Of The Second Letter Of Peter:

The time when the Second Letter of Peter was written appears to have been not long before Peter's death and martyrdom. He wrote that he knew the time of his death was imminent, because the Lord Jesus Christ had made it clear to him that he would soon die and depart from this earth (see 2 Peter 1:13-15).

Historical accounts indicate Peter died a martyr's death in Rome under the persecution of Emperor Nero about a year before Paul's martyrdom in Rome. Nero initiated the persecution of the Christians in Rome in A.D. 64 after the burning of Rome. It is thought that Paul suffered martyrdom in Rome in A.D. 68. Just where and when Paul was arrested is unknown. Nor is the length of his second imprisonment in Rome known. If Paul was arrested in A.D. 67 and suffered martyrdom in A.D. 68, and if indeed Peter was put to death the year before, the Second Letter of Peter was perhaps written around A.D. 66-67.

Place Where The Second Letter Of Peter Was Written:

Since it appears that Peter wrote his second letter shortly before his martyrdom in Rome, Rome was the likely city in which he wrote it.

Occasion For The Writing Of The Second Letter Of Peter:

No definitive information is given about any particular circumstance or event that prompted Peter to write his second letter. Peter's knowledge that his martyrdom was imminent (see 2 Peter 1:13, 14) would seem to suggest he wanted to write his second letter before his death.

Purpose Of The Second Letter Of Peter:

The internal evidence within the second letter indicates its purpose was to strengthen his fellow Christians in their faith born hope, so they would be on their guard and not carried away by the errors of false teachers (see 2 Peter 3:17, 18).

Theme Of The Second Letter Of Peter:

A Reminder To Remember the Word of Truth You Have Learned (see 2 Peter 1:12, 13, 15; 3:1,2).

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[1] Two early manuscripts have Simeon, which is the original Semitic name for the Greek name of Simon

[2] Lit. to us

2 Peter

Part 1: The Greeting 2 Peter 1:1, 2

1 ¶ Simon[3] Peter a bondservant and apostle of Jesus Christ;
To those who have received an equally precious faith as ours[4] in the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ:
2 Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the thorough knowledge of our God and Lord Jesus.

Part 2: Remember To Make Your Calling and Election Certain 2 Peter 1:3-11

A. By Sharing in His Divine Nature 2 Peter 1:3, 4

¶ 3 As his divine power has given to us all things pertaining to life and godliness by means of the thorough knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and moral excellence,
4 through which *glory and moral excellence* he has given his[5] precious and highly important promises to us, so that by means of these you have become sharers of *his* divine nature, having escaped from the moral corruption in the world in connection with evil desires.

B. By Maturing in His Divine Virtues 1 Peter 1:5-11

5 Now for this very reason also, having contributed on your part all eagerness begin to supply in connection with your faith moral excellence, and with moral excellence knowledge;
6 and with knowledge self-control, and with self-control patient endurance, and with patient endurance godliness,
7 and with godliness brotherly friendliness, and with brotherly friendliness love.
8 For if these things belong to you and are increasing, they make you neither useless nor unfruitful in the thorough knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.
9 For he who does not have these virtues[6] is blind, seeing only dimly, having forgotten the purification of his former sins.
10 For this reason, brothers, exert yourselves all the more to make your calling and election certain; for by practicing these virtues you will absolutely not stumble at some time or another;
11 for in this manner the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be richly supplied to you.

Part 3: Remember the Testimony of the Apostles and Prophets 2 Peter 1:12-21

A. I, Peter, Remind You To Stir You Up 2 Peter 1:12-15

¶ 12 For this reason I will always be ready to keep reminding you about these things, although you *already* know *them* and have been strengthened in the truth that *is* present *with you*.
13 Moreover, I think *it* right, as long as I am in this earthly body,[7] to stir you up by means of a reminder,
14 knowing that the laying aside of my earthly body is coming soon, as indeed our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me;
15 and I will indeed make every effort to enable you to recall these things at any time after my departure.[8] [9]

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[3] Two early manuscripts have Simeon, which is the original Semitic name for the Greek name of Simon

[4] Lit. to us

[5] Lit. the

[6] Lit. things; likewise v.10

[7] Lit. tent; likewise v.14

[8] Lit. going out; meaning his death

[9] Lit. to make remembrance of these things

B. We Apostles Were Eyewitnesses of Jesus' Divine Majesty 2 Peter 1:16-18

¶ 16 For we did not make known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ by having followed cleverly invented fables, but *rather* by having been made eyewitnesses of his majesty.
17 You see, when he received honor and glory from God *the* Father a voice came[10] to him, such as this by the majestic glory, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased!"[11]
18 And we ourselves heard this voice from heaven *that* came[12] *to him* while we were with him on the holy mountain.

C. We Have the Prophetic Word Concerning Jesus As Even More Certain Now 2 Peter 1:19-21

¶19 And we have the prophetic word as *even* more certain *now*, to which you do well by paying attention *to it* as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until *the* day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts;
20 and by realizing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is of one's own interpretation;
21 for no prophecy at some time or another was brought forward by the will of man; on the contrary, men spoke from God while being carried along by the Holy Spirit.

Part 4: Remember False Prophets Will Come Among You 2 Peter 2:1-22

2 ¶ But there were also false prophets among the people, as there will also be false teachers among you – such ones as will craftily bring in destructive heresies, even denying their[13] Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves.
2 And many will follow their unbridled lusts, on account of whom the way of truth will be slandered;
3 and in greediness they will exploit you with made up teachings[14] – they for whom condemnation is not lingering a long time, and their destruction is not napping!
¶ 4 For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but casting them down into hell[15] in chains of blackness, handed them over to be kept[16] for judgment,
5 and *if* he did not spare the ancient world and brought a flood upon the world of godless people,[17] but protected Noah, a preacher of righteousness, and seven others,[18]
6 and *if* he condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to destruction by reducing them to ashes, setting up an example for those who would live ungodly lives in the future,
7 and *if* he rescued righteous Lot, who was being oppressed by the way of life of lawless men in unbridled lust;
8 (for that[19] righteous soul used to be tortured day after day by the lawless deeds he saw and heard while living among them) –
9 *then* the Lord knows how to go on rescuing godly persons out of temptation and to keep wicked persons for the day of judgment while being punished,
10 and especially those who go on indulging[20] the flesh in corrupting lust and despising authority.[21]
¶ Daring, self-pleasing men,[22] who[23] do not tremble when slandering glorious angelic beings,[24]

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[10] Lit. was brought
[11] Lit. "My Son, my beloved One, this is, with respect to whom I was well pleased"
[12] Lit. was brought
[13] Lit. the
[14] Lit. made up words
[15] Lit. Tartarus
[16] Lit. being kept
[17] Lit. godless ones
[18] Lit. protected the eighth *person* Noah, a preacher of righteousness
[19] Lit. the
[20] Lit. go on following after
[21] Lit. lordship, or, ruling power
[22] Lit. ones

11 where angels who are greater in strength and power do not bring slanderous judgment against them before the Lord.
12 But these *men*, like unreasoning beasts, *who* have[25] been born creatures of instinct to be captured and destroyed,[26] *who* slander[27] in matters they do not understand, in their moral corruption they will indeed perish,
13 and they will receive the wages for wickedness; considering self-indulgence during the day a pleasure, stains and blemishes carousing in their pleasures while they feast together with you,
14 having eyes that watch for an adulteress[28] and never cease from sin, enticing unstable souls, having a heart exercised in greediness, accursed children,
15 having abandoned the right path of life, they went astray, treading in the path of Balaam,[29] the son of Beor, who loved the wages of wickedness
16 but received[30] a rebuke for his own breach of law; for a donkey incapable of speech, by speaking in a man's voice, hindered the madness of the prophet.
¶ 17 These *men* are waterless springs and mists being driven by furious windstorms, for whom the outer darkness[31] has been and still is being kept.[32]
18 For speaking extravagant *words* of vanity they entice with desires of the flesh for unbridled lusts those who are barely escaping from those who conduct themselves in error,
19 promising them freedom, while they themselves are slaves of moral corruption; for by what someone has been overcome, by that he has been enslaved.
20 For if while fleeing from the shameful deeds of the world by the thorough knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are overcome by becoming entangled again in these shameful deeds[33], their last state[34] has become and is[35] worse than their first.
21 For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness than, after having begun to know *it*, to turn away from the holy commandment that was handed down to them.
22 The true proverb has come about in their case:[36]

"A DOG RETURNS TO ITS OWN VOMIT,"[37]

and,

"A sow, after washing, *returns* to rolling in the mud."

Part 5: Remember The End Is At Hand 2 Peter 3:1-16

A. Mockers Will Mock in the Last Days 2 Peter 3:1-10

3 ¶ This now, beloved, is the second letter I am writing to you, in which *letters* I am stirring up your pure way of thinking and feeling by means of a reminder
2 to remember the words that had been spoken beforehand by the holy prophets and the command of your apostles of the Lord and Savior;
3 realizing this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with *their* mockery, conducting themselves according to their own evil desires

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[23] Lit. they
[24] Lit. glories
[25] Lit. having
[26] Lit. for capturing and destruction
[27] Lit. slandering
[28] Lit. having eyes full of adulteress
[29] Lit. following out the path of Balaam
[30] Lit. had
[31] Lit. blackness of darkness; see Mt.8:12; 22:13; 25:30
[32] The Greek verb indicates a past action that continues to the present time
[33] Lit. these things
[34] Lit. things
[35] The Greek verb indicates a past action that continues to the present time
[36] Lit. to them
[37] Pro.26:11

4 and saying, "Where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers passed away,[38] all things remain as they were [39]from the beginning of creation!"
5 For it escapes their notice when they maintain this that the heavens existed long ago and the earth had been put together out of water and by means of water by the word of God,
6 by means of which *water* the world at that time was destroyed when it was submerged in water;
7 and now the heavens and the earth have been stored up by the same word for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and eternal destruction of the ungodly people.
¶ 8 Moreover, do not let this one thing escape your notice, beloved, that one day with the Lord is like a thousand years and a thousand years are like one day.
9 The Lord is not slow about his[40] promise, as some consider slowness, but is being patient toward you, not wanting anyone to perish but all to come to repentance.
10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, on which day the heavens will pass away with a crackling crash; moreover, the elements will be dissolved[41] by being burned intensely, and the earth and the works *of men* in it will be burned up.

B. Remember What Kind of People You Ought To Be 2 Peter 3:11-16

¶ 11 Since all of these things are going to be dissolved in this manner, what sort of people must you be in holy ways of life and godly acts,
12 while looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which *coming* the heavens will be dissolved by being burned with fire and the elements are melted by being burned intensely!
13 But in accordance with his promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.
¶ 14 Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things make every effort to be found by him spotless and blameless in peace,
15 and regard the patience of our Lord *to be* salvation, just as also our beloved brother Paul has written to you according to the wisdom that was given to him,
16 as also in all *his* letters speaking in them about these things, in which *letters* are some things hard to understand, which things ignorant and unstable men[42] twist as *they* also *do to* the rest of the Scriptures to their own eternal destruction.

Part 6: Concluding Encouragement 2 Peter 3:17, 18

¶ 17 As for you, then, beloved, knowing these things beforehand, continue to guard yourselves so that you do not fall from your own firm *faith*[43] by being carried away in the error of lawless *people*,
18 but keep on growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity! Amen!

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[38] Lit. fell asleep
[39] Lit. remain in the same manner
[40] Lit. the
[41] Lit. loosed; the united parts of the whole are loosened, broken up, and destroyed
[42] Lit. the ignorant and unstable
[43] Lit. firmness