

A Study of 2 Peter 2

I. Outline.

1. In contrast to the holy men of God who were guided by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:21), there were also FALSE PROPHETS back then and also now who did/will lead many astray (2 Peter 2:1-3a).
2. False prophets will be judged by the Lord (3b-9).
3. Peter clearly describes false teachers and their danger (10-19).
4. To become a Christian and turn from it is an extremely bad thing to do (20-22).

II. Summary.

In the second chapter there is strong warning about false prophets and the filthy kind of life toward which the rejection of the truth leads. In closing the second chapter Peter gives a very powerful word picture of some brother or sister who falls away from the truth.

III. Chronology.

BIBLE PERIOD: The Period of the Church.

If you are not familiar with the 15 Bible Periods, please click here:

<https://maplehillchurchofchrist.files.wordpress.com/2018/05/15bibleperiods.pdf>

IV. Words/Phrases to Study

- 2 Peter 2:1... **...WHO PRIVILY SHALL BRING IN DAMNABLE HERESIES...**---“Privily’ (*Pareisago*) means to slip in by the side of, and indicates that these teachers had artfully and slyly introduced their false doctrines by the side of the truth in such fashion as to deceive those who had accepted them” [Guy N. Woods, *A Commentary on New Testament Epistles*, Vol. VII, p. 163].
- 2 Peter 2.3... **AND THROUGH COVETOUSNESS**---“Here is what motivates these men. They are not truly concerned for the souls of men. They are interested in their own enrichment. The word *pleonexia* refers to a grasping, greedy individual—one who has an inordinate desire for riches. Because of this desire, he will often, as here, stoop to low and unethical means, such as extortion.” [Bruce Oberst, *Letters from Peter*, BIBLE STUDY TEXTBOOK SERIES, College Press, 1962, an e-Sword Module].
- 2 Peter 2:4... **FOR IF GOD SPARED NOT THE ANGELS THAT SINNED, BUT CAST THEM DOWN TO HELL,...**---“What the nature of their sin was when they sinned and the number of those sinning is not stated. Much speculation has been indulged in regarding the matter. ... Inasmuch as it is inconceivable that God created these angels wicked, the following conclusions seem certain: (a) they were originally holy; (b) they sinned; (c) the occasion of their sin was in abandoning their ‘proper habitation’; (d) as a result they were thrust down to a place of bondage. What this place was is designated in the clause which follows” Woods, pp., 165-66].
- 2 Peter 2.5... **BUT SAVED NOAH THE EIGHTH PERSON**---“God saved Noah and the seven other righteous people from the flood. The righteous, no matter how small the number, will be saved when the wicked are destroyed. Peter impresses us with the fact that ‘Divine justice does not regard majorities, but deals with men, be they few or many, strictly according to their character.’ God will punish false teachers as surely as He destroyed the people in the days of the flood” [Arthur Pigman, *Things Pertaining to Life and Godliness: Studies in the Epistles of Peter, John, and Jude*, 13th Annual ETSOPM Lectureship, p., 159].
- 2 Peter 2.6... **TURNING THE CITIES OF SODOM AND GOMORRHA INTO ASHES**---“Jude gives a more specific description of their ‘unlawful deeds’: Jude 1:7 **Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.** The inhabitants of these cities were ‘going after’ (i.e., greatly attached to) a number of sexual sins. Fornication is a broadly-inclusive term

for the gamut of sexual sins. ‘Strange flesh’ suggests that which is contrary to nature. The sin which characterized them was once commonly known as ‘sodomy,’ named after the wicked behavior of those of Sodom. Paul describes this sin in Romans 1:27 **And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.** Though today this sin has been popularized, elevated, and accepted by some by calling it ‘ay’ or an alternate lifestyle, it is still the heinous sin of homosexuality which was popular and accepted among those of Sodom and Gomorrah.. This sin led to the destruction of those cities, and this sin will lead to the destruction of any people where it is not condemned. Those who are righteous are still ‘vexed’ by the sight and sounds of such behavior today” [Lester Kamp, in *Studies in 1 Peter 2 Peter, and Jude*, 1998 Annual Denton Lectures, Edited by Dub McClish, p.

- 2 Peter 2:7... **AND DELIVERED JUST LOT, VEXED WITH THE FILTHY CONVERSATION OF THE WICKED**—“Lot’s soul was tormented, but he failed to follow through with godly actions and separate himself and his family from the ungodliness of Sodom and Gomorrah. The Lord delivered Lot because of his righteous soul; yet Lot lost everything because of his too-close association with those wicked cities” [Guzik Commentary]. |||| “Lot is here described by the Holy Spirit as a ‘just’ (righteous, ASV) man. Though living among the grossly wicked, Lot was able to live righteously. ... As difficult as such an accomplishment may be, both Lot and Noah proved that it can be done. ... Vexed means that he was distressed, disturbed, worn down, wearied, oppressed. His daily observation of their wicked manner of living grieved him deeply. His righteous soul was tortured daily by the things that he heard and saw among the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah” [Lester Kamp, in *Studies in 1, 2 Peter and Jude*, edited by Dub McClish, p. 227].
- 2 Peter 2.9... **THE LORD KNOWETH HOW TO DELIVER THE GODLY OUT OF TEMPTATIONS**—“In fact, God can rescue a single individual or just a few out of millions (Noah and his family). Carefully note that God knows exactly who is godly and who isn’t (2 Timothy 2:19). These verses answer that age-old question, ‘What about the people in Africa, or those in remote places?’ The Lord knows all about them! The Lord knows how to get the gospel to them. God found Noah, among the millions that were alive during Noah’s lifetime. God found Lot, even though he was in the midst of immorality. If God could find Lot in the city of Sodom, then surely God can find any honest and good heart” [Mark Dunagan, *Mark Dunagan Commentaries*, 2011, an e-Sword Module].
- 2 Peter 2:11... **WHEREAS ANGELS, WHICH ARE GREATER IN POWER AND MIGHT, BRING NOT RAILING ACCUSATION AGAINST THEM BEFORE THE LORD**—“Angels, though greater in every way than these false and designing teachers, do not bring railing judgments, but with becoming modesty and restraint leave such matters in the hands of God. Examples of this attitude may be seen in Zechariah 3:2; Jude 9” [Woods, p. 170].
- 2 Peter 2:13... **SPOTS THEY ARE AND BLEMISHES**—“Hitherto the apostle had dealt with the insubordination and disrespect for authority characteristic of these false teachers; with this verse he begins a description of their abandonment in sin. They were full of spots and blemishes, in contrast with the Lord who is ‘a lamb without blemish and without spot’ (1 Pet 1:19)” [Guy N. Woods, p. 172].
- 2 Peter 2.14... **AN HEART THEY HAVE EXERCISED WITH COVETOUS PRACTICES**—“Besides being lewd, they are excessively covetous. The word ‘exercised,’ (*gumnazo*, from the same root as our word gymnasium) meant properly to train in gymnastic discipline; then, to exercise vigorously in any thing, whether the body or mind was being used, or both. The hearts and lives of these men were trained—in covetousness and its methods!” [Bruce Oberst, Bible Study Textbook Series, an e-Sword module].
- 2 Peter 2.17... **WELLS WITHOUT WATER**—“By these comparisons the ostentation, hypocrisy, levity, and mischief of the false teachers are set forth in the strongest colours” [Joseph Benson, *Commentary on the Old and New Testaments*, an e-Sword module].

- 2 Peter 2.19... **OF WHOM A MAN IS OVERCOME, OF THE SAME IS HE BROUGHT IN BONDAGE**—“What an insight! Every man has a master, and it doesn’t do any good to argue otherwise. Everyone serves someone or something. No man or woman is truly their own person (Matthew 6:24; Romans 6:13; Romans 6:16). False teachers are always trying to set God’s grace and God’s law against each other. In contrast, ‘So here he (Peter) shows that precept and love, charity and chastity, law and gospel are not combatants but correlatives. It is ever the way of license to champion gospel over law...Healthy Christian living comes when God’s commands are seen as the kerbstones on His highway of love, the hedge encompassing His garden of grace.’ (Green p. 118)” [Mark Dunagan].
- 2 Peter 2.21-22... **DOG IS TURNED TO HIS OWN VOMIT AGAIN ... THE SOW THAT WAS WASHED TO HER WALLOWING IN THE MIRE**—“The Calvinists make much of the fact that Peter here likens men to dogs and pigs. Now pigs and dogs, they tell us, could never have their natures changed—they will only act, in the end, according to their true nature. This passage is cited as proof that their real character never was changed, and when they apostatized from their outward profession, they only acted out their nature—only showed that in fact there had never been any real change. To make such an assertion concerning this passage is certainly to miss the very point of the inspired writer. Peter has just spoken of those who in fact had ‘escaped the defilements of the world’ (2 Peter 2:20) and this ‘through the knowledge (*epignosis*) of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.’ This ‘full and careful knowledge’ of Christ is referred to every time the word ‘know’ or ‘knowledge’ is used in 2 Peter 2:20-21. Who then, is the person that is willing to affirm that the apostle is only speaking of those who seemed to be Christians, but were only hypocrites? The basic and main reason for citing the case of the dog and the sow was to show their foolishness and harm in returning to something filthy. We are not told here to contemplate long and hard on the unchangeable nature of animals. Admittedly, many of us did have dog-like and pig-like characters before conversion. But **‘if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new’** (2Co_5:17). Let all new creatures STAY NEW CREATURES!” [Bruce Oberst, Bible Study Textbook Series, an e-Sword module].

V. Lessons & Applications.

- 2 Peter 2.1 **BUT THERE WERE FALSE PROPHETS ALSO AMONG THE PEOPLE...** (2 Pet 2:1). It is sad that this statement is true. However, we have the truth and we need to be good students of the Scriptures and lovers of truth (Proverbs 23:23) so that we will be prepared to resist and stand against false teachers. There is absolutely no reason or excuse to allow ourselves to be deceived by false teachers in that we have the completed written revelation from God to man. We can try the teachers by comparing what they say with what Scriptures says (1 John 4:1).
- 2 Peter 2.2 **...BY REASON OF WHOM THE WAY OF TRUTH SHALL BE EVIL SPOKEN OF** (2 Peter 2:2). If I am a Christian who is led away from the truth by false teachers, I am helping to promote the SAD happening that Jesus prayed would not happen in John 17:20-21--**Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.** When the world sees Christians torn apart by false teaching, the strength of our message of salvation to them is dramatically weakened. Thus Jesus prayed that we might be united in our teaching for this purpose: **THAT THE WORLD MAY BELIEVE!**
- 2 Peter 2.4-9, 15-22 **“LESSONS TO LEARN:** (1) God is no respecter of persons. Social standing or great wealth cannot sway God’s purpose to punish the disobedient. The fact that one did not intend to live and die in sin will not move God to change the rules. (2) Not only will false teachers be lost, but those who are promised liberty by them and led into further bondage to sin will also be lost. (3) If the state of the apostate is worse than his first state, will not his punishment be greater than if he had never obeyed the gospel? To be in hell is beyond our ability

to comprehend, but to be there as an apostate who disgraced the church of our Lord and led others astray must be worse” [Roy H. Lanier, Sr., *Teacher’s Annual Lesson Commentary*, 1956, p. 327].

- 2 Peter 2.7 **AND DELIVERED JUST LOT, VEXED WITH THE FILTHY CONVERSATION OF THE WICKED**—“People who claim to be Christians sit through TV programs and watch and hear what must be repulsive and disgusting to a refined and sensitive spirit. A generation ago, this would not have been tolerated. When a man’s moral sense is so dulled by the daily exposure to sin that his conscience is no longer disturbed, Satan is getting his ‘hammer lock’ fastened on him. Our increasing apathy toward the brazen exposure of evil in the national magazines, and news media is an unconditional surrender to the influence of evil men and their practices” [Thomas B. Warren, *Teacher’s Annual Lesson Commentary*, 1974, pp., 255-56].
- 2 Peter 2.9 **THE LORD KNOWETH HOW TO DELIVER THE GODLY OUT OF TEMPTATIONS, AND TO RESERVE THE UNJUST UNTO THE DAY OF JUDGMENT TO BE PUNISHED** (2 Peter 2:9). It is a serious mistake to turn from the truth of God’s word in order to follow some false teacher. To place ourselves alongside of and in support of false teaching places us in a position in opposition to the powerful Lord God Almighty, who with His voice spoke the world into existence! Much better for us not to worry, but to remain faithful to the truth of God’s word and look forward to being delivered out of temptations—ultimately by going to live with Him eternally!
- 2 Peter 2.10-19 **BUT CHIEFLY THEM THAT WALK AFTER THE FLESH ... SERVANTS OF CORRUPTION** (2 Peter 2:10-19). Just to read this listing of provocative and rousing words Peter used to describe false teachers is to get an unmistakable appreciation of how hated their work is by inspiration!!! In our day we are constantly bombarded with the need to be tolerant and thus we may fail to understand properly and react decisively enough against false teaching and teachers. If we spend a little time pondering these words and other similar texts (cf., Matthew 23; 1 Timothy 4:1-6; Titus 1:10-11; Jude; et.al.), our perspective might change.
- 2 Peter 2.19 **WHILE THEY PROMISE THEM LIBERTY, THEY THEMSELVES ARE THE SERVANTS OF CORRUPTION: FOR OF WHOM A MAN IS OVERCOME, OF THE SAME IS HE BROUGHT IN BONDAGE** (2 Peter 2:19). If the person who is promising liberty is himself the servant of corruption, HOW can he provide liberty? To come under the influence of false teachers is to be overcome by corruption. In contrast, the **REAL OVERCOMERS** have tremendous blessings for which to look forward (Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21; 21:7).
- 2 Peter 2.20 **FOR IF AFTER THEY HAVE ESCAPED THE POLLUTIONS OF THE WORLD THROUGH THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE LORD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST, THEY ARE AGAIN ENTANGLED THEREIN, AND OVERCOME, THE LATTER END IS WORSE WITH THEM THAN THE BEGINNING** (2 Peter 2:20). The Calvinistic concept of “Perseverance of the Saints,” or “Once Saved Always Saved,” is in strong conflict with what this verse clearly teaches IS POSSIBLE. It is possible to fall away from faithfulness to the Lord and be overcome by false teaching or negligence, etc., and to become ENTANGLED in the old sinful ways! When that happens, then one fits the description of the following two verses.
- 2 Peter 2.22 **THE DOG IS TURNED TO HIS OWN VOMIT AGAIN, AND THE SOW THAT WAS WASHED TO HER WALLOWING IN THE MIRE** (2 Peter 2:22). The person who has obeyed the gospel and then become unfaithful to the Lord has done a very ugly thing else Peter would never have selected the word picture he did in describing this behavior in this text. When/if the erring Christian “comes to himself/herself” as the prodigal son did (Luke 15:17), perhaps by considering what great harm his polluted influence has done to the precious body of Christ (precious because of the ransom paid to purchase it, Acts 20:28), a godly sorrow will overcome the person and bring about a change in the mind (2 Corinthians 7:10) about the sins committed.

VI. Questions.

True or False

01. _____ Peter writes about Lot loving the wages of unrighteousness.

02. _____ Peter mentions and escape that was made possible through knowledge.
03. _____ Another word for PRIVILY would be “secretly.”
04. _____ Peter talks about the reward of unrighteousness.
05. _____ Sodom and Gomorrah were turned into ashes.

Multiple Choice (Select the BEST Answer)

06. _____ False prophets use this kind of words in their deception: (a) haughty; (b) feigned; (c) facetious.
07. _____ Of whom a man is overcome, of the same he is brought in: (a) bondage; (b) relief; (c) consolation.
08. _____ Peter refers to the great patriarch Noah as: (a) a saint; (b) the 8th person; (c) good old Noah.
09. _____ False teachers speak evil of things that they do not: (a) recommend; (b) follow; (c) understand.
10. _____ Thankfully, Peter lets us know that the Lord knows how to: (a) discern; (b) discover; (c) deliver.

Fill in the Blanks

11. Sadly, _____ is a major motivating force of the false teachers, leading them to make _____ of people.
12. Having eyes full of _____, and that cannot cease from _____.
13. Noah was a _____ of _____.
14. The adjective used to describe Lot was: _____.
15. Peter’s “word picture,” he calls a _____ proverb.

Each Question is worth 7 Points

My Score is: _____

Answers will be found on next week’s handout

ANSWERS to 2 Peter 1 Questions... **01**—True (21); **02**—True (13); **03**—True (8, 10); **04**—True (1); **05**—False (Matthew 17.1-5); **06**—b (16); **07**—c (4); **08**—b (19); **09**—b (12-13); **10**—c (8); **11**—exceeding, great, precious (4); **12**—Abundantly (11); **13**—more, sure (19); **14**—holy, moved (21); **15**—all, life, godliness (3).

VII. Seek-A-Word Puzzle. The words may be backwards, diagonal, upside down, etc. See if you can find them all. The more you use the words of the Bible, the greater blessed you will be! You might be surprised at how much this little exercise will help you retain important truths. THANK YOU for the good effort you are putting forth in Bible study. -DRL

U N G O D L Y L J R F N D C
 N C O V E T O U S I C M K G
 R O B A U P W S O U L A I T
 I R R N T S A T I M E K P T
 G R I G H T E O U S P E A K
 H U N E E L J F O L L O W Y
 T P G L R O U D E L I V E R
 E T M S E R D A R K N E S S
 O I G I O D G P E R T R C K
 U O O A Y V M R S B U C A R
 S N L I V E E O E F R O P F
 N K Y S G V N P R L N M E G
 E V E N A I T H V E X E D H
 S J N F A L S E E S P H M V
 S P A R E D I T D H T M K K

ANGELS	BRING	CORRUPTION	COVETOUS	DARKNESS
DELIVER	EXCAPED	EVEN	EVIL	FALSE
FLESH	FOLLOW	JUDGMENT	LIVE	LORD
LUST	MAKE	OVERCOME	PROPHET	RESERVE
RIGHTEOUS	SOUL	SPARED	SPEAK	THERE
TIME	TURN	UNGODLY	UNRIGHTEOUSNESS	VEXED

IX. EXTRA CREDIT FOR “SUPER” Bible Students...

Will you please consider answering these three SIMPLE questions based on the Bible text of this chapter? I will try to make use of your answers. Bring them with you next week. Tear out this last sheet from the Study Guide and be prepared to put it in a basket. I think it will be a great help to all of those in the class if you will do so. Thank you in advance for your marvelous cooperation!

W O R D: What word would you like to know more about in this chapter?

W O N D E R: I wonder what this phrase, verse, or series of verses means...

W I S H: I wish myself—or others whom I know or even don’t know—would understand this fact, principle, or concept from this chapter...