

THE EPISTLE OF

Second Peter

WITH INTRODUCTION

AND

CHAPTER QUESTIONS

By: Reg Ginn



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CHAPTERS 1- 3

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INTRODUCTION

THE BOOK-- This letter, like the first, identifies the apostle Peter as its author. Here, he adds “Simon” to his identification. In chapter 3, verse 1, the writer states that this is the second epistle to these recipients, so we may safely conclude that this letter is a followup to the earlier one. The letter was probably written a short time after the first one, between 61-65 AD.

THE THEME-- The theme of this letter has to do with remembering things already taught. Chapter 1:12 uses “remind”; 1:13, “reminding”; 1:15, “reminder”; 3:1, “reminder”; 3:2, “mindful”; 3:5, “willfully forget”; 3:8, “do not forget”; 3:17, “you know these things beforehand.”

THE RECIPIENTS-- The recipients are apparently the same saints “dispersed” in Asia Minor as in 1Peter. (See 1Peter 1:1,2.) Peter manifests in this book an urgent need to remind them of critical truths, lest they forget and “fall from your own steadfastness” (3:17). Not only was opposition to religious error vital to their salvation, but further spiritual growth was also needed if they were to receive an “entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (1:11).

RELIGIOUS ERRORS ADDRESSED— Several pressing religious errors evidently were bothering these disciples, and these issues are addressed in the letter. Among them are:

- (1) The reality and implications of the deity of Jesus (1:16-21; 2:1);
- (2) The ungodliness of those who were teaching false doctrines (2:10-17);
- (3) The covetousness of these false teachers (2:15);
- (4) The empty promises made by these false teachers (2:18-22);
- (5) The lesson to be learned from the second coming of Christ (3:1-18).

THE OUTLINE OF THE BOOK-- A simple outline of 2 Peter might be:

Chapter 1— Faithful teachers and their certified gospel (See Gal.1:11).

[KJV]

Chapter 2— False teachers and their uncertified gospel

Chapter 3-- The unchangeable truth about the second coming of the Lord.

Chapter One-- "Faithful Teachers and Their Certified Gospel"

Webster defines "certify" as: "To attest authoritatively; to verify..." Even in the first century, "many false prophets have gone out into the world" (1John 4:1). It was easy for early disciples to be deceived by men who would pervert the apostles' teaching. Consequently, numerous warnings are given about accepting any doctrine that is unsubstantiated by "word or deed" by those who claim to be the messengers of God. Peter's letter stresses the urgency of heeding only a gospel that was "certified"-- endorsed clearly by the authority of Jesus Christ Himself. An "uncertified" gospel was no gospel at all and must be avoided at all costs.

Verses 1-4-- "Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ..." Peter's immediate identification of himself as an apostle is significant. He had heaven's authority to teach what he taught. They had every reason to accept that teaching, since his was a "certified" gospel.

The pronouns used by Peter in this passage are important to his emphasis on authority. "To those who...;" "with us...;" "to you...;" "to us...;" "you may be...;" all clearly differentiate between two distinct groups of people-- not Jews and Gentiles, since the recipients of this letter were likely of mixed nationalities-- but inspired teachers and uninspired readers. It was to God's chosen spokesmen that "great and precious promises" had been fulfilled when they had received a gospel that embraced "all things that pertain to life and godliness." (See John 14:26; 16:13.) Only when hearers received that teaching could they escape "the corruption that is in the world through lust." The transmission of the "certified" message was God's Part in salvation.

THE CERTIFIED GOSPEL PROVIDES EVERY SPIRITUAL BLESSING:

1. A precious faith like the apostles had, established on the same evidence. It was precious because it could provide righteousness to sinful men (verse 1). (See Romans 1:16,17.)
2. Grace and peace that will continue to multiply as the knowledge of God increases (verse 2). (See Colossians 1:9-12.)
3. All things that pertain to life and godliness (verse 3). Only knowledge of the truth can lead to salvation. (See Romans 10:1,2.)
4. Partaking of the divine nature (verse 4). (See Ephesians 4:15.) The "certified" gospel will make us like: (1) Christ (Ephesians 4:13); (2) God (Matthew 5:48-- "I say").
5. Escape from the corruption of the world (verse 4). (See John 8:32.)

Every promise about salvation made by God was dependent on the transmission of His “certified” gospel to sinners. The hope of both Jews and Gentiles could only be realized in hearing, believing, and obeying “good news” that could not be denied by honest hearts.

Verses 5-11-- “But also for this very reason...add to your faith...” The Sinner’s Part in the salvation offered through the “certified gospel” involved not only his initial obedience to gospel commands but also his continued and constant efforts to grow into the “image of Christ” by discarding old practices of unrighteousness and adopting new ways of righteousness. (See Colossians 3:9,10.) The “list” of “Christian Graces” that follows is vital to the growth and development of every convert. The cultivation of these traits will ensure that disciples will not remain “barren or unfruitful” by failing to practice the principles of godliness contained in the “certified” gospel which they had first received in “faith.” By building on their faith in this gospel, they would make their “calling and election sure” and would eventually receive a grand entrance into heaven.

THE CERTIFIED GOSPEL REQUIRES CONTINUAL GROWTH

1. Faith is just the beginning point for a new convert. The faith that first comes by hearing the gospel (Romans 10:17) is immature and vulnerable to attack unless strengthened by the intense exercise of that faith to “discern both good and evil” (Hebrews 5:14). Hence, to initial faith in the gospel must be added other essential characteristics.
2. Virtue is courage and commitment to persevere. Without a clear purpose there will be no substantial spiritual growth by the “babe in Christ.”
3. Knowledge is always the vehicle of growth. Study will lead to a comprehension of the “fulness of God” that we may strive to be “perfect as He is perfect” (Ephesians 3:17-19; Matthew 5:48).
4. Self-Control (“temperance”) takes responsibility for achieving the growth expected of us and does not allow anything to divert us away from the goal of perfection. (See Philippians 2:12.)
5. Perseverance (“patience”) recognizes the danger of growing weary from the constant and unending need to improve as Christians. It impels us to “keep on keeping on.”
6. Godliness is that quality of reverence and awe toward God that motivates His children to place nothing above doing just what will please Him.
7. Brotherly kindness is the highest form of love. It fosters a deep affection toward others of “like precious faith” and begets a concern for them that is greater than any we can entertain for unbelievers. (See Galatians 6:10.)
8. Love for all men reflects the very nature of God (1John 4:8) who loves even the unlovely. A desire to serve our fellowman springs from such love (Romans 5:8).

A PROPER RESPONSE TO THE CERTIFIED GOSPEL ENSURES GROWTH

1. We will be neither barren nor unfruitful toward God (verse 8). Perhaps Peter had in mind the lesson taught by Jesus in the parable of the barren fig tree (Luke 13:6-9). If one does not progress in gospel development, he will regress!
2. We will enjoy the blessing of spiritual foresight (verse 9). We will be able to “see” the end of our faith, the salvation of our souls (1Peter 1:9). When the reward of faith is real to us, it is much easier to persevere in the face of trouble.
3. We will accept the responsibility for our own salvation and for the development of a “new life” in place of the old (verse 9). (See Romans 6:4.) Only our personal behavior can impact our relationship to God.
4. We will be able to make our calling and election “sure” (verse 10). “Continuing steadfastly” in all good things will fulfill the part of salvation for which we are responsible (Acts 2:42).
5. We will never stumble (verse 10). Opening our eyes to our duty will make it possible to find our way from earth to heaven. Spiritual blindness to that duty will prove fatal. (See 1Corinthians 10:12.)
6. We will receive the ultimate blessing-- a glorious entrance into the heavenly mansions (verse 11). This prospect is conditional- “so”-- only by “adding” and growing. This is the “roadmap” for moving from earth to heaven. And as wonderful as life in the kingdom on earth (the church) may be, there is a place far better— the eternal kingdom! (See Philippians 1:23.)

Verses 12-15-- “Therefore I will not be negligent to remind you always...” Peter apparently agreed with the old preacher who said about his preaching “technique”: “I tells ‘em what I’m gonna tell ‘em; then I tells ‘em; and last I tells ‘em what I told ‘em.” There was no room for error or misunderstanding. And so, Peter was “careful to ensure that you always have a reminder of these things,” to guide them in their lives even after he had died. This is the goal of every teacher worthy of an audience for his teaching. The “certified” gospel requires an unrelenting diligence on the part of those who teach it to others. Much of a teacher’s task consists in “reminding” people of things they already know (verse 12). Peter labeled any teacher “negligent” who failed to “remind” as well as to “mind.” Reminders serve to “stir us up” to practice what has been preached to us.

THE CERTIFIED GOSPEL REQUIRES CONSTANT DILIGENCE BY ITS TEACHERS

1. Teachers must remind frequently (“always”) of lessons not to be forgotten (verse 12). They must not grow weary of teaching about the same topics. Of course, fresh approaches always make old topics more appealing.
2. Teachers must teach indiscriminately lessons that are needed (verse 12). Even though hearers may be “established” in a topic, everyone needs reminding about its importance from time to time. The “whole counsel of God” is the diet for

- disciples who are trying to grow toward perfection.
3. Teachers must teach their lessons motivationally (verse 13). Students must be “stirred up” if they are to benefit to the fullest from what they are taught. Teachers need to make clear applications of their lessons to the life-situations of their hearers.
 4. Teachers must be persistent in teaching things that are needed (verses 13,14). No teacher ever “pays his dues” so as to be relieved of this responsibility.
 5. Teachers must teach their lessons prospectively (verse 15), realizing that the influence of a gospel message is not only intended for immediate benefit but also for the future. The “certified” gospel must be passed from generation to generation in its purity and completeness (2Timothy 2:2).

Verses 16-21-- “For we did not follow cunningly devised fables...” God did not leave the reception of His gospel to chance. That is why he “certified” it with infallible proofs. (See Mark 16:15-20; Hebrews 2:4.) It is necessary first to trust the teacher; then we can place our trust in what he teaches. Peter is determined that these saints have confidence enough in the gospel message to shape their lives by its precepts.

THE CERTIFIED GOSPEL IS TO BE TAUGHT BY TRUSTWORTHY TEACHERS

1. Peter and other apostles were eyewitnesses of the things they reported to confirm the gospel which they preached (verses 16,17). Their gospel consisted of firsthand information. They depended on no man for the accuracy and truthfulness of what they had seen for themselves.
2. The apostles were also earwitnesses of God’s affirmation of Jesus’ divinity and dependability (verse 18). No man had told them of these things. God Himself had spoken in their hearing about the Sonship of Jesus.
3. The doctrine that Peter declared was harmonious with other religious truths long accepted as having a divine origin (verse 19). Other prophets in the past had been “moved” by the Holy Spirit to proclaim God’s will to men. It should not be thought strange that in these “last days” the same phenomenon would occur to transmit His New Testament to lost men. “By faith,” knowledgeable men would accept the facts that (1) the “moving” of the Holy Spirit was genuine, and (2) the report given by those who were moved was accurately reported.
4. The apostolic witnesses were accessible to any who would receive their witness. They had a personal experience to relate and could be cross-examined and tested in any way that skeptical men might choose. They had nothing to hide from inquiring minds. Also, they had personal powers to demonstrate that were not to be denied. They could unquestionably serve as dependable foundations upon which faith in Christ could be built!

1. What remarkable thing had ordinary Christians obtained, and through what means had it been made available to them? (vs. 1)
2. In what way had God's power been exerted to provide necessary knowledge to these saints? (vs. 3)
3. How extensive was the knowledge that such divine power had provided? (vs. 3)
4. By taking advantage of "great and precious" promises in the gospel, Christians might attain to what exalted state in this world? This would follow what change in their lives? (vs. 4)
5. Partaking of the divine nature depended on their adding what to their personal faith? List the things necessary to be added. (vs. 5-7)
6. A failure to add to our faith will result in three negative conditions. What are they? (vs. 8,9)
7. What action on our part will prevent apostasy and ensure salvation? (vs. 10,11)
8. What was Peter's goal for these disciples, and what personal responsibility did he feel about helping them to attain this goal? (vs. 12-15) What made this action urgent? (vs. 13,14)
9. Give details of the memorable event referred to in verses 16-18. See Matthew 17.
10. What use does Peter make of this event in this letter? (vs. 16-19--especially vs. 19)
11. How should these disciples regard O.T. prophecy about Jesus? Why would the "day dawn and the morning star rise in their hearts"? (vs. 19)
12. Where did O.T. Prophecy originate? Why is this important? (vs. 20,21) [Most Bibles carry a footnote on the word, "interpretation." Use the footnote in your answer.]

Chapter Two-- "False Teachers and Their Uncertified Gospel"

Having encouraged his readers in chapter one to maintain their confidence in the message first preached to them by the apostles and other inspired teachers, and having emphasized the importance of submitting only to teaching that was "certified" by God, Peter now turns to the grave dangers involved in following "uncertified" teachers and their teaching.

Verses 1-3-- "But there were also false prophets among the people..."

The dangers of false teachers and their teaching.

1. False teachers have always competed with authorized teachers for the loyalty of the people (verse 1).
2. False teachers will spread "destructive heresies" (false doctrines) and display "destructive ways" (evil behaviors) (verses 1,2).
3. Their motivation for seeking the favor of others is "covetousness." They have a desire for money or power, or both. (verse 3).
4. Their methodology is centered in "deceptive words." They teach doctrines of men, rather than the "certified" gospel (verse 3). (See Matthew 15:9; Galatians 1:6-9.)
5. Their influence is widespread. "Many" are misled by their falsehoods. The peril that they present to the faith of young Christians is real. The truth will be "blasphemed" by some because of their efforts (verse 3).
6. Their pernicious work has been going on for a "long time." The damning influence they have exerted on unsuspecting listeners is very active and is deadly to saving faith.

Verses 4-22-- "For if God did not spare the angels..."

The certainty of retribution to false teachers.

1. Even sinful angels were punished by God for their sin (verse 4). This "sin(s)" is unspecified. Perhaps it was the sin cited in Jude 6, not "keeping their own place." Maybe it was a "reviling accusation" that usurped the authority of God (verse 11). At any rate, even spiritual beings are held accountable for their behavior.
2. God's dealings with men also affirm the prospect of punishment for disobedience and blessing for obedience. Noah (verse 3), Lot (verse 7), and the godly (verse 9) were all delivered from harm (verses 5, 7,9). On the other hand, the ungodly (verses 5, 6), the wicked (verse 7), the lawless (verse 8), and the unjust (verse 9) are condemned to destruction (verse 6), made an [negative] example (verse 6), reserved under punish-

- ment (verse 9), caught and destroyed (verse 12), utterly perish (verse 12), receive the wages of unrighteousness (verse 13-- See Romans 6:23), and inherit the gloom of darkness forever (verse 17). Not a pretty picture!!
3. The world of the ungodly (verse 5), the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah (verse 6), and Balaam (verse 15) are cited as specific examples of God's wrath being poured out on the wicked.
 4. Special retribution is given to those who openly defy God in word and life, as these false teachers had done (verse 10). Even obedient angels (as opposed to some that were disobedient-- verse 4) do not "dare" to "accuse" men (even false teachers) in the way that false teachers had "accused" God through their deceitful teaching (verse 10). (See Luke 12:47,48.)
 5. Peter's harsh descriptions of false teachers highlights God's justice (fairness) in His purpose to dispense severe consequences to false teachers.
 - a. They are *brute beasts* who do not understand the truth, speak "evil" of the truth, and spread false doctrine instead of the truth (verse 12).
 - b. They are *spots and blemishes*, displaying destructive words and vile lifestyles, even as they "feast" (profess to share in righteous activities) with unsuspecting saints (verse 13).
 - c. They are *adulterers* (verse 14). They certainly "sell themselves" to the devil for gain as they lead others into sin, thus committing spiritual adultery. (See James 4:4; 2Timothy 3:6.) Perhaps they were guilty also of physical adultery as they persuaded the innocent that there is no necessary connection between godly doctrine and godly living. (See Titus 2:10.)
 - d. They are *accursed children* (verse 14). They were not God's children as they claimed. The devil was their father and their motivator. (See John 8:44.)
 - e. They are *covetous* (verse 15). They will do anything to achieve their goals. They will even deliberately contradict the "certified" gospel and seek to displace it with doctrines that advance their own selfish purposes. Balaam is mentioned to warn us against such choices. (See Numbers 22; 31:8.)
 - f. They are *wells without water* and *clouds without rain* ("carried by a tempest") (verse 17). They are quick to promise great rewards to their followers, but they display no positive results in the lives of their converts.
 - e. They are *slaves of corruption* (verse 19). They proclaim freedom to sin, which always enslaves the sinner! Once enslaved, their victims find it very difficult to exercise any freedom to quit sin.
 - f. They are *backslidden disciples* (verse 20). They had once escaped the tentacles of iniquity, but they had allowed themselves to become entangled again and now were completely overcome in destructive behavior,
 - g. They were *spiritual "dogs"* and *"sows"* (verse 22), exhibiting despicable personal conduct while professing to lead their disciples to a higher plane of existence.

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They were poor examples *spiritually* and *physically*, fit to be avoided rather than followed!

Verses 1-22-- Distributed throughout the chapter are warnings about the terrible outlook for those who would dare to corrupt the “certified” gospel of God and deceive people into accepting false doctrine.

The **awfulness of the punishment** of false teachers and other wicked persons:

1. Swift destruction (verse 1);
2. Judgment (verse 3);
3. Reserved under punishment (verse 9);
4. Caught and destroyed (verse 12);
5. Utterly perish (verse 12);
6. Receive the wages of unrighteousness (verse 13);
7. The gloom of darkness forever (verse 17);
8. Brought into bondage (verse 19);
9. Latter end worse than the beginning (verse 20);
10. Complete rejection and revulsion (verse 22).

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QUESTIONS-- CHAPTER TWO

1. Who were “the people” among whom false prophets had appeared in the past? (vs. 1) Cite one or two instances in the O.T. where this had happened.

2. What extreme position would false teachers assume in the future? What punishment could they expect to receive for their false doctrine? (vs. 1)

3. Despite the extremity of their errors, how much influence would false teachers have? (vs. 2)

4. What effect does the teaching of error have on the truth of the gospel? (vs. 2)

5. _____ often underlies the *deliberate* teaching of false doctrines. (vs. 3)

6. *Three* examples proving that God *will* punish adherents of false doctrines are (vs. 4-8):
a. _____; b. _____; c. _____.

7. O.T. examples send *two* distinct messages to the present world (vs. 6,9): a. _____
_____; b. _____.

8. *Two* heinous practices by false teachers are highlighted by Peter. (vs. 10). They are:
a. _____; b. _____.

9. What are some evil practices by false teachers? (vs. 12-17)
a. “Speak _____”
b. “Receive _____”
c. “Carousing _____”
d. “Having eyes _____”
e. “Beguiling _____”
f. “A heart trained _____”
g. “Having forsaken _____”

10. Who were especially vulnerable to the “great swelling words” of false teachers? (vs. 18).

11. Give the contrast of “liberty” and “slavery” used by Peter and the consequences suffered by people deceived by false teachers. (vs.19-21) What proverb illustrates this situation? (vs.22)

Chapter Three-- “The Unchangeable Truth-- The Second Coming”

False teachers take strange positions in order to advance their pet theories and doctrines. Those of whom Peter wrote were no different. They had invested all their efforts in generating a following for their particular ideologies, and their personal reputations were at stake as they tried to defend those teachings against the “certified” gospel of the apostles. Certain truths were especially inadmissible in any discussion of their differences with authorized teachers. Chief among these was the doctrine that Christ will come again to judge all men (false teachers included) and will exact severe punishment on those who are judged guilty of such things as these men had practiced. So, they challenged the reality of the judgment and the end of the world. They downplayed the importance of any religion with strict requirements and harsh repercussions for lawbreakers. The “certified” gospel was far too restrictive to suit their loose lifestyle and their free-wheeling doctrines of permissiveness.

Verses 1,2-- “I write...that you may be mindful of the words...” All truth is harmonious. Truth supports truth wherever truth is found. What the apostles had taught these disciples, all disciples had been taught. If particular teachings were important to some Christians, they were important to all Christians. The prophets (Old Testament and/or New Testament-- See Ephesians 3:5.) and the apostles spoke alike about Jesus’ return and judgment of the world. Their resounding endorsement of this event should not be ignored by thoughtful people.

Verses 3-9-- “...scoffers will come in the last days...” Some have always scoffed at truths intended for their good (e.g., in Noah’s time; in Sodom and Gomorrah; in the days preceding the captivity, etc.). God’s admonitions about the end of earthly things are given that men might prepare themselves for that eventuality. This doctrine, however, was condemning of false teachers who sought to attract followers by preaching tolerance and permissiveness in everything. Judgment was an idea foreign to their agendas.

1. Behind their criticisms of the “certified” gospel and its teaching about the second coming was the motivation of “lusts” (verse 3). They lusted for money, power, notoriety, and other selfish gain. Personal agendas often find their expression in the religious positions that people espouse. This is especially true where such positions clearly contradict the plain instruction of the scriptures.
2. False teachers rely on their own logic and experience rather than on the word of God (verse 4). How can human reasoning possibly possess all the information necessary to make such sweeping declarations as, “All things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation”? What we do not know, we cannot judge. Evidence causes us to depend

on a divine *knowledge* that transcends our own, and thus to *know* what we could not otherwise comprehend. This divine knowledge some “wilfully forget” (verse 5), lest they create a confrontation between God’s knowledge and their own ideologies.

3. God has always kept His word. When he declared in Genesis 6:7 that He would destroy man in the flood, human reason rejected any such possibility. But the flood came and executed God’s promise. Now, God’s promise is again to destroy wicked men, not by flood but by fire (verses 5-7). Why should anyone scoff at this promise which rests on the integrity of the same God who sent the flood? (See 2Thessalonians 1:9,10.)
4. False teachers have a tendency to measure God by themselves (Psalm 50:2 1). These men had the opinion that any passage of time would alter God’s intentions as expressed in His promise of fire and finish for the world (verses 8,9). His resolution, however, is not softened by time-- whether one day or a thousand years! *He will keep His promise!* (See Ecclesiastes 8:11.)
5. False teachers frequently misjudge God’s motives (verse 9). He has not yet destroyed the world and its wicked inhabitants, not because He cannot, but because He will not! He chooses to allow humanity additional time to reform ourselves simply because He loves His sinful creation. It is not slackness but concern that accounts for the earth’s survival.

Verses 10-17-- “But the day of the Lord will come...” Peter enumerates several truths about Jesus’ second coming that are intended to arrest the attention of saints who may be wavering in their commitment to a Lord who will return and hold them accountable for how they have treated the “certified” gospel. There are truths to be faced, and there are *consequences* attached to those truths.

<u>Truth</u>	<u>Consequence</u>
1. The Lord <i>will</i> come again (vs. 10)	1. Earthly things to be destroyed by fire (vs. 10)
2. All things will be dissolved (vs. 11)	2. We should have holy conduct (vs. 11)
3. A day of reckoning is ahead (vs. 12)	3. The heavens and earth will melt (vs. 12)
4. A promise of better things (vs. 13)	4. We look for new heavens and earth (vs. 13)
5. Judgment is ahead for all (vs. 14)	5. Make peace with God (vs. 14)
6. Judgment is delayed (vs. 15)	6. Use time to ensure salvation (vs. 15)
7. Harmony of scriptures (vs. 15,16)	7. Be doubly warned not to ignore truth (vs. 17)

Verse 19-- “...but grow in the grace and knowledge...” The ultimate defense against false teachers and their deceptions is as obvious to us as it should have been to the early church: **“Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen.”** We GROW through our study of and meditation on the word of God. (See Hosea 4:6; John 8:32; 2Thessalonians 2:9-14.)

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QUESTIONS-- CHAPTER THREE

1. What common goal did Peter have in writing both of his letters to these disciples? (vs. 1)
2. Two categories of truth should be respected by the disciples. What are they? (vs. 2)
3. What basic truth of the gospel would be challenged by false teachers? (vs. 4)
4. What basic truth of both scripture and nature was being ignored by deceived people? (vs.5,6)
5. What controls the ultimate judgment of evil--past and present? (vs. 7)
6. Remembering one key fact should prove helpful in avoiding discouragement about Jesus' coming to set all things right. What is that fact? (vs. 8,9)
7. Describe the events of the "day of the Lord" as revealed by Peter. (vs. 10)
8. What impact should the prospect of these events have on the saved? (vs. 11)
9. Looking beyond the termination of present things, what may the saved expect? (vs. 13)
10. "...and account that the _____ of our Lord is _____." (vs. 15)
11. What "critique" does Peter give of Paul's writings? What danger does he cite? (vs. 15,16)
12. What *blessing* from God is dependent upon what *action* by man? (vs. 17,18)

