

Key to II PETER

1. BACKGROUND:

Writer is the Apostle Peter (1:1) writing possibly from Rome. If I Peter was written during Nero's persecution (A.D. 65) and if Peter was killed in this persecution, then this letter was written about A.D. 67.

Occasion: Unlike most of the other epistles, there are no specific persons addressed. But because this is the "**second Epistle**" (3:1) we may infer that it was written to the same people as the first. The need is to meet current dangers.

2. THEME:

The churches in Asia Minor were being tried by severe persecutions, trials from without. To help them in this crisis Peter had written his first Epistle. Now, they are threatened by heresies and apostasies, perils from within. To meet this danger, Peter writes the second letter. The purpose is to warn and exhort (3:17, 18). The key word is "**knowledge**" (1:2, 3, 5, 6, 8; 2:20, 21; 3:18).

3. MAIN DIVISIONS:

The great Christian virtues (1:1-14);
exaltation of the Scriptures (1:15-21);
danger of apostate teachers (2:1-22);
coming of CHRIST and Day of the Lord (3:1-18).

4. SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS:

II Peter and II Timothy have much in common. Both foresee the coming apostasy. Paul sees the laity infected with this deadly virus; Peter warns of false teachers. Jude also views the same peril as he warns in all phases. But in none of these is to be found the note of pessimism or dejection. The promises of GOD are still wonderfully sufficient.

It is questioned if Peter was in Rome even at the time of Paul's death, as no mention is made of him in any of Paul's prison epistles. However, it could be possible that Peter arrived shortly following and that this letter was sent from there.

II Peter and Jude are much alike in certain passages. However, this is explained when we remember that the apostles often went on journeys together and listened to one another preach. Peter senses the nearness of his own death (1:15) and remembers that the Lord had foretold the manner (John 21:18, 19).

Some of the most scathing words in Scripture are devoted to the denunciation of false teachers (2:12, 17, 18, 22).

5. OUTLINE:

Introduction (1:1, 2)

Preservation (1:3-21)

Promises

Progress

Witness

Word

Peril - False Teachers (2)

Presence

Punishment

Perception

Perseverance (3)

Mockery

Mercy

Wrath

Watchfulness

6. OUTSTANDING TEACHINGS:

Seven divine qualities (1:5-11) are the fruits of the precious faith. They are steps from earth to Heaven.

An important principle of Scripture understanding is given (1:20, 21) where we are told that no Truth is of private (by-itself) interpretation but that Scripture is to be compared and fitted together with other Scripture.

The attitude of the world toward the doctrine of the coming of CHRIST is given in the opening of chapter 3. In the same passage is taught the reason why CHRIST has not yet returned (3:9). The high esteem of Paul in Peter's mind is shown by his words "**our beloved brother Paul**" (3:15).

The tremendous subject of the end of the world and the culmination of time is graphically portrayed in the end of chapter 3.

7. KEY:

This Epistle could well be labeled with the words: The warnings against false teaching in the light of the sure accomplishment of GOD's purpose.

~ end of II Peter ~

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