

*A Study on
the Book
of II Peter*

Jesse C. Jones

Table of Contents

Preface

<i>Bible Study Guides for the New Testament</i>	3
--	----------

Introduction

<i>A Study on the Book of II Peter</i>	10
---	-----------

Chapter 1

<i>The Promises of God</i>	11
-----------------------------------	-----------

Chapter 2

<i>False Teachers</i>	16
------------------------------	-----------

Chapter 3

<i>Destruction of Heaven and Earth</i>	18
---	-----------

Appendix

<i>Questions on 2 Peter</i>	21
------------------------------------	-----------

<i>Links to Other Books Available</i>	23
--	-----------

<i>Bible Study Guides for the New Testament</i>	24
--	-----------

Bible Study Guides for the New Testament

Writing a book was not on my mind when this effort was initiated some years ago. In fact, it began when a member of my Sunday School class commented that his son had talked about committing suicide the previous week. As a result, I felt an urge to see what the Bible had to say about hope, with a view toward helping his son cope with his suicidal feelings. The result of that effort was an article entitled: “Hope and the Miraculous Three Pound Computer,” located in Chapter 6 of the book [After the Big Bang](#). My next writing endeavor was a fallout from a Sunday School class discussion about temptations, or trials, and their purpose in our lives. An article entitled “The Trials of Job” located in Chapter 7 of the same book resulted from that effort. After this I began to feel a prodding from the Lord to continue studying and writing. The chapters in this book document what I subsequently learned about two of God’s greatest and most marvelous creations: earth and mankind, who He made to exercise dominion over it.

Some of the material presented in these New Testament Bible Study Guides conflicts with commonly held viewpoints, and differs as well on the definitions

of some words used to explicate them. One thing I have learned through this effort is that the meaning of many of the words used in the Bible is not uniformly agreed to by expositors, and in many cases, not agreed to by the various versions of the Bible. For example, in the KJV of the old testament (OT), the word “soul” is used over 780 times. Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words notes that in over 400 of these uses, the Hebrew word used is misinterpreted. I mention this not to heap criticism on the KJV, for it is my personal Bible, and I love it dearly, but to point out the importance of consulting Hebrew and Greek sources, and good conservative lexicons, when trying to understand difficult scripture. The meaning of some words is not absolutely clear even then. Nevertheless, this is the process I have followed in this effort.

I am a retired engineer: my education and work experience sparked a great interest in details. I found that to understand the technical difficulties and problems that arise in the operation of complex machines, a good understanding of the details of the design is absolutely necessary. What is presented herein is an analysis of important details in God’s creation of the earth and man: his habitat and milieu. However, no description is completely

adequate to portray the unbelievable complexity and efficacy of tripartite man. Scientists and engineers have tried to duplicate the various subsystems in God's design of man for years, with limited success. Part of the problem is that we do not understand many of the operational details, but the greatest impediment is probably the fact that man is composed of three parts: spirit, soul, and body, two of which (spirit and soul) are immaterial, and are thus largely beyond the scope of scientific and medical analysis. The third part, the highly complex body, is strongly influenced by these two immaterial parts. God has given mankind a great challenge in trying to understand tripartite man. What better model could we find for our study than our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ: spirit, soul and body in perfect relationship. When Jesus came to earth He emptied Himself, and was formed in the likeness and fashion of a man. Like us, He was a tripartite being, but without a sin nature. Thus, He was the perfect man, the ideal for all to emulate.

I read a book several years ago by Watchman Nee in which he made the observation that one of the primary ways God speaks to us is through our intuition. After that I began to try to follow the guidance I received in this manner, and what is presented herein is largely a result of that attempt. I

hasten to add that all readers will not agree with my conclusions. I have learned much about God's creation, and His design of man through this effort: that may be the primary purpose He had in mind. My hope is that readers will find new ideas in these words that drive them to the absolute authority: God's Word - the Bible.

As references I have used the King James Version (KJV), the New International Version (NIV), the New Living Translation (NLT), the Revised Version (RV), and Recovery Versions of the bible, as well as the Interlinear NIV Hebrew - English Old Testament (OT), and the Interlinear Greek - English New Testament (GNT). I have also used Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words, Vincent's Word Studies in the New Testament, Moulton's Analytical Greek Lexicon, the Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon, and Webster's New World Dictionary for word interpretation. Unless otherwise noted, scripture passages quoted are from the KJV.

The John A. Dickson New Analytical Bible and Dictionary, Authorized King James Version, Chicago 1950, was a primary reference source. This Bible was given to my wife and I in 1957, and is one of my dearest treasures. It has

been rebound once, and is in need of a repair job at the present time. Thus, the reader can appreciate the usage it has had over these 62 years, most of which has been during the last 25 years. The book introductions have been generally quoted from this source, with changes (mostly grammatical) made only when considered necessary.

Finally, I want to recognize the lady that takes everything I have written, and makes the necessary changes for placing it on the internet. Ms. Sandra Crosnoe is the daughter of two of my, and my deceased wife's, dearest friends, Ted and Jimmie Crosnoe (also deceased). When God moved us (my wife and I), to a Methodist Church in Pasadena, Texas, in 1962, Ted, Jimmie, and their two daughters were among the group of several families in the church that were touched by God in a mighty way that led to a weekly Bible study, that resulted in many changed lives. As the years passed by, and the families went in different directions, we were not able to maintain the close relationship we had in Pasadena. We settled in Lubbock, Texas, in 1982, and I got the call to start writing on the Bible. Sometime after that Sandra was in Lubbock and we got together for dinner. When she learned of my involvement in writing on the Bible she immediately volunteered to help in making it available by publishing

it on the internet. She may not have known what she was getting into, for God has not ceased from giving me Bible subjects to study and write about. This series on the New Testament has been our greatest undertaking, and Sandra's help (as always) has been essential. She has corrected my grammar, argued with me on interpretation, prepared the pictorial cover pages, and generally polished the appearance of the various books in ways that I could never have accomplished on my own. Without her help, this (and other) documents would never have been made available to the general public. I do so appreciate all her work. I believe Ted and Jimmie will give her a "well done" when she joins them in heaven. Her personal website is [Finding Gems and Sharing Them](#).

These bible study guides are available at no charge to read, print, download and share on a platform called Scribd (no membership is required to read/download). They are all listed and linked as a group in [Bible Study Guides by Jesse C. Jones on Scribd](#). Upon completion, most of them will contain study questions in the Appendix. Other works available are listed and linked with [Books for Believers and Seekers](#). If you hit a pop-up page on Scribd asking you to become a member to read free, simply click the 'x' in the upper right corner

to remove the pop-up and continue to our links on Scribd. My personal website is [Revealed by Fire - Jesse's Studies](#) if you wish to see my latest articles and updates.

It is my sincere hope that these works will guide you to a personal ongoing relationship with Jesus and a life led and anointed by the Holy Spirit.

JESSE JONES

A Study on the Book of II Peter

It is surmised that “The Second Epistle of Peter” was written shortly before Peter’s death, thought to be about 68 AD. Peter suffered a martyr’s death on the cross, and according to tradition he was placed on the cross in a head-down position at his own request: he did not consider himself worthy to die as his Lord did, in a head-upright position.

While the purpose of this epistle differs from that of the first, it is addressed to the same people. False teachings were prevalent, and heretics and scoffers were exercising a pernicious influence. This epistle was written to sound a word of warning against such teaching.

The Promises of God

In this second letter Peter addresses the same people he wrote to in his first letter, but his purpose in this letter is to warn believers about false teachers. He begins by pointing out that Jesus has given them all things that pertain to life and godliness. Through Him they may become partakers of great and precious promises, and by sharing in His divine nature they can escape the corruption in the world through lust. The world no longer has irresistible attraction to them, for lust and pride no longer reign in their lives.

2 Peter 1:5-10 in the Greek New Testament (GNT) says to “supply” in your faith virtue, and in virtue knowledge, and in knowledge self-control, and in self-control endurance, and in endurance piety, and in piety brotherly (phileo) love, and in brotherly (phileo) love, God’s (agape) love. If this is a hierarchical listing then we can interpret this as follows:

1. If we are in Christ and He is in us we should manifest honor and integrity in every aspect of our lives. Christians know that the only basis for morality is God, and the guidance He provides in His Holy Word. If we are enticed in

some way we should immediately sense being drawn by lust to leave our “safe” position of abiding in Christ. Satan’s goal is to separate us from God so that he has free access to begin his “devouring” process.

2. We need to supply knowledge with our virtue. I believe it is impossible to demonstrate virtue in all aspects of our lives without it being accompanied by knowledge of God’s Word. In the book of Romans Paul emphasizes the fact that until the law was given, the Jews did not recognize sin. It was the law that defined sin, and until the law came the Israelites were not held accountable. This highlights a very fundamental fact: mankind has no protection against evil within himself, our only hope is total dependence upon God.

3. Once we have gained knowledge of the Word we should exercise self-control in ministering and teaching others. I believe this says we should be sensitive to others and not come across as being a “know-it-all.” The minister or teacher needs to walk a fine line here: being sensitive but yet willing to defend even difficult truths. God’s gifts can be misused, and using good judgement through the guidance of the Holy Spirit will bring spiritual life into our ministering.

4. We must learn to wait on God’s timing and not depend on our own. Patience is a priceless trait, and God has a lot more of it than we do.

5. Most importantly we must manifest Christ in our relations with others.

If we minister in holiness, our ministering will be Christ's ministering through us. Holiness comes when we allow the sanctification process to work freely in our lives.

6. Phileo love is brotherly love manifested as affection, or hospitality. This is affection that comes from our hearts that reflects genuine love for others. Without brotherly love, the attributes described above will have little chance of being shared, so phileo love is extremely important to our role within the body of Christ.

7. Finally, we must let God's love (described in 1 Corinthians 13) be manifested through us. There is no power on earth that can withstand God's agape love, so if we want to be effective as witnesses for Jesus Christ we must let this love, that comes from the Holy Spirit within, be operative in our lives. It is by (agape) love that the world recognizes us as Christians.

If we have these things in us Peter says we will not be barren, nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. If you lack these things you are blind, and unaware that you have been cleansed of sin for a reason: to be a witness for Jesus Christ.

2 Peter 1:13-18 discusses the need that Peter felt to remind first century Christians of the teachings of Jesus. He talks about his own death, which Christ had told him about in John 21:18-19. Peter may have known that he was soon to be crucified. He asked to be hung on the cross with his head down. He did not consider himself worthy to be crucified like Christ, with his head up.

Peter then goes on to justify the guidance in his letter by reminding them of the fact that he witnessed the majesty and glory given to Jesus by the Father on the Mount of Transfiguration, when a voice out of a bright cloud said, “*This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*” Peter adds that he, John and James, who accompanied Jesus to the Mount, also heard this voice. This same phrase was used in Matthew 3:17, at Jesus’ baptism, when the voice came from heaven. Here it is not clearly stated that others heard the voice, although it is mentioned that Jesus saw the Spirit of God descending upon Him like a dove.

2 Peter 1:20-21 introduces a phrase that has been the subject of some controversy, “. . . *no prophecy of scripture is of any private interpretation.*” The GNT gives this phrase as, “. . . *not any prophecy of scripture is of its own interpretation.*” The Greek word interpreted “*private*,” in this verse actually means “one’s own.” John MacArthur’s Study Bible says “Peter’s point is not so much about how to

interpret Scripture, but rather how Scripture originated, and what its source was.” Vincent’s Word Studies in the new testament (NT) says this phrase literally means loosening or untying, as of the hard knots of scripture. Peter goes on in verse 21 to say that no scripture (prophecy) came by the will of man: but prophets spoke as moved by the Holy Ghost. I believe the correct interpretation we get here is that Bible prophecy originated from the Holy Spirit, and not from individual men writing out of their own will and understanding. To fully grasp the meaning of prophecy in scripture we must have the Holy Spirit within. As stated in I Corinthians 2:11-12, “. . . *even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the spirit which is of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.*”

False Teachers

Chapter 2 is a severe castigation of false teachers who bring in destructive heresies, denying our Master and Lord, Jesus Christ. Many follow their destructive ways, and the truth of the gospel will be evil spoken of as a result. They win people over with covetousness, and well-turned words, with the purpose of using their converts for gain. But Peter gives examples of sinning angels that were chained in darkness in the pit; of delivering the ancient world of the ungodly by bringing the flood; and by burying Sodom and Gomorrah in ashes as examples to men living an ungodly lifestyle. The judgment of these false teachers will not linger for long, nor will their destruction slumber.

2 Peter 2:6-9 tells about Lot's delivery from Sodom. God calls him righteous, so He must have imputed righteousness to Lot based on his faith and obedience. We might have difficulty referring to Lot as righteous, but God gave him this as a gift, based on his standing in faith, in spite of the filthiness with which he was surrounded. God knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust until the day of judgment. These unjust are those that are morally polluted through the enticement of lust. They are

presumptuous, self-willed, and not afraid to speak evil of dignities (honor, glory, spiritual authority). They have eyes full of adultery, and cannot cease from sin, and beguiling unstable souls. They have hearts exercised with covetous practices; they have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam, who was rebuked for his iniquity by the dumb ass speaking with the voice of a man (Numbers 22). Verse 12 says that such people are made to be taken and destroyed. In verses 10 through 19 Peter gives a devastating description of these false teachers. He concludes this chapter by describing those that have escaped the corruption of the world, but once again become entangled by these false teachers. Peter says that their last condition is worse than the first. Verse 21 states that it would be better that they never knew the way of righteousness than to have fully known, and then turn away from the holy commandment given to them. Referring to these, he then gives the oft-quoted saying that they are like the dog that has returned to his vomit, or like the sow having been washed that returns to wallowing in the mud. See Hebrews 6:1-6 for further detail on the fate those that fall away, having once known the good word of God, and tasted the powers of the world to come.

Destruction of Heaven and Earth

In Chapter 3 Peter refers to the time described in Revelation Chapters 21-22, when the new heaven and earth are introduced. It is thought that 2 Peter was written shortly before his death, around 68-70 AD, whereas Revelation was written by John in about 95 AD. Peter's concern is about the believers, and he opens this chapter by referring to "*scoffers*," who ridicule those that believe in the soon return of the Lord. These "*scoffers*," are blind to the creation story and the subsequent flood through their own willingness, thus they do not believe in the coming destruction of the earth.

2 Peter 3:8-11 describes why the Lord has delayed His return. He is longsuffering, not wanting any to perish, but that all should come to repentance. We know that the Lord's return will be presaged by His return in the clouds, to gather His elect: this is known as the rapture/resurrection described in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17. This is followed by the Lord's return to earth described in Revelation 19:11-21, when He overcomes Satan's horde at Armageddon. After this Jesus Christ rules the earth from Jerusalem for a

period of 1,000 years: this is referred to in the Bible as the millennium (Revelation 20:6-7).

Finally, we get to the time Peter is referring to, when the earth will be consumed by fire, the heavens will pass away with a rushing sound, and the elements will be dissolved. A new heaven and a new earth will be created, and the holy city, the New Jerusalem, will descend from God out of heaven, as a bride prepared for her husband.

The Bible is not totally clear about the sequence of events during this time. At the end of the millennium those left on earth will be those not deceived by Satan in his final attempt at victory over Christ after he has been released from his prison (Revelation 20:2-3). Revelation 20:9 describes this final battle: *“And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.”* The devil that deceived them was then cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast (antichrist) and the false prophet are. After this final battle John, writing in the Book of Revelation, records seeing a great white throne, and Him that sat upon it, who was undoubtedly the Son of God, Jesus Christ. And books of judgment were opened, as well as the Book of Life, and the dead were judged by the things written in the books, according to their works.

Whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire. We assume that those that were left, plus those of the first resurrection including the saints from the old testament (OT), will then join God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit in the New Jerusalem.

Peter closes this chapter by encouraging the beloved to be diligent, spotless, and without blemish, remembering the long-suffering of the Lord. He cautions them about falling away through the error of the lawless, and tells them to grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The implication here is that they can prevent the tendency to fall away by knowing the Lord personally, spending time talking (praying) with Him, studying His Word, and following His guidance. As we get to know him better we become more like Him, and thus we grow in grace.

Questions on 2 Peter

Chapter 1

1. What are the “promises” that Peter refers to in Verse 4.
2. Explain how you have escaped the corruption in the world through lust.
3. Give the meaning of Verses 5-8.
4. Do you think that Verse 10 implies that if we do not do the things in Verses 5-7, we are susceptible to falling away? Explain.
5. What was the purpose of the encounter on the mount of Transfiguration?
6. What is the sure word of prophecy that Peter refers to in Verse 19?
7. Give your personal reasons or proofs that the Bible was written (or not written) through the direction of the Holy Spirit.

Chapter 2

1. How can we recognize false teachers?
2. Who is Peter referring to in verse 4 (see also Jude 6)?
3. Explain 2 Peter 2:11.
4. Explain 2 Peter 2:20-22. Does this conflict with “Once saved, always saved”?

Chapter 3

1. Explain why the NT writers all looked for Jesus to return imminently.
2. What does the phrase “The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night”, mean?
3. What is Peter referring to in verse 12?
4. Describe the ways in which believers can protect themselves from falling away.

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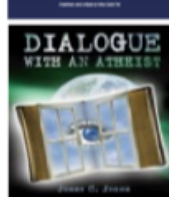
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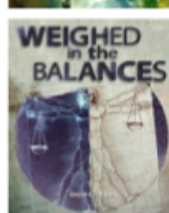
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