2 PETER

2 PETER
Key Verse:

INTRODUCTION TO 2 PETER

In 3:1 Peter says, "This now my second letter to you. I have written both of them as reminders to stimulate you to wholesome thinking." Wholesome thinking is disciplined thinking, based on the word of God.

In his first letter, Peter encourages Christians who have been scattered by persecution. In this second letter he writes to give them directions for dealing with enemies within the church. God has given us all we need to live as his people (1:3). He has given us the Bible. We do not need any other authority. In the Bible are God's great and wonderful promises. The believer needs to hold God's promise in his heart, so Peter writes to remind us of God's promises and to remind us of the truth which we already know.

Peter wrote this letter with a sense of urgency, for he wrote just before he died a martyr's death at the hands of Nero. He wanted his sheep to be firmly established in the truth, so that they could stand even after his death. He warns of God's certain judgment on the ungodly, and assures us of the Lord's return. In the light of these things, we must live faithful lives.

HIS GREAT AND PRECIOUS PROMISES

2 Peter 1:1-11 (Wed.) March 8

Key Verse: 1:4

1. Believing the promises (1-4)

God is righteous; he makes promises, and he keeps them. Faith is believing God's promises and living by them. God has given us everything we need for life and godliness. His great and precious promises are given so that we may participate in his divine nature and escape the corruption of the world. He promised forgiveness of sins, eternal life and the kingdom of God through faith in Jesus. He promised that Jesus would come again. Through believing these promises we can be united with Christ, and he will enable us to overcome our sinful human desires. God's promises are our true hope.

2. Growing in faith (5-11)

We are called to belong to Jesus, so we must grow in him. The crown of Christian growth is love. If we grow in Jesus, we become loving and fruitful. If we are growing, we have assurance about our calling and election.

Prayer: Lord, I believe your promises. Help me to hold them in my heart and grow in Jesus' love.

One Word: Hold on to God's promises

THE MORNING STAR RISES

2 Peter 1:12-21 (Thur.) March 9

Key Verse: 1:16

1. We were eyewitnesses of his majesty

Peter remembered Jesus' words about his own death (Jn 21). He remembered Jesus' transfiguration on the mountain, when Jesus was glorified by God and God's voice confirmed his identity and his mission (Mt 17). He knew that Jesus would come again in power and glory. This vision and the hope of his coming was like the morning star in Peter's heart. He wanted all Christians to have this glorious hope.

2. The word of the prophets

God keeps his promises. He had promised through his prophets in the Old Testament that the Christ would come and suffer and die to save sinners. God promised through the word of the prophets recorded in the Bible that Jesus would come again in glory. The Bible is God's word to us. It is the only solid basis of our faith. God's promises in our hearts are like the morning star that rises at dawn.

Prayer: Lord, put the morning star of your promise in my heart.

One Word: The morning star

GOD'S SALVATION AND JUDGMENT

2 Peter 2:1-12 (Fri.) March 10

Key Verse: 2:9

1. Those who deny God's sovereignty

There have always been false teachers who try to lead people away from God. A false teacher despises God's authority and tells people to do what they feel like doing. False teachers deny the authority of God's word. Many people follow the shameful ways of such teachers, and bring the way of truth into disrepute. These false teachers, in their greed and arrogance, exploit God's people with lies and half-truths.

2. God of judgment and salvation

God is just. He punished even the angels who sinned and cast them into hell; he brought a flood on the ungodly people of the ancient world, but he saved Noah, a preacher of righteousness. He

made the wicked Sodom an example of his coming judgment on the ungodly world. He showed his mercy when he rescued Lot from Sodom. He will punish those who despise authority and who follow the desires of the sinful nature.

Prayer: Lord, help me to acknowledge your lordship and not live by my sinful desires.

One Word: God's word or my feelings?

NO TURNING BACK

2 Peter 2:13-22 (Sat.) March 11

Key Verse: 2:20

1. Springs without water (13-19)

People who entice believers to live a pleasure-seeking life are waterless springs. Those who seek to quench their thirst in material things or in a worldly life will become more thirsty. False teachers promise freedom while they themselves are slaves of sinful desire. Such greedy persons are as foolish as Baalam, whose donkey was smarter than he! (Nu 22)

2. A dog who returns to its own vomit (20-22)

Our worldly friends and family boast of their so-called freedom and try to entice us to go back to a worldly life. But if we have escaped the corruption of the world, been set free by Jesus, and tasted the joy of knowing him, we are very foolish if we listen to enticements that pull us back to the world. It would be better not to have known the way of righteousness at all than to become like dogs that return to their own vomit.

Prayer: Lord, I don't want to live like a dog or a sow. Renew my joy in Jesus today and help me to grow up in him.

One Word: Don't go to a waterless spring

GOD'S PROMISES ARE SURE

2 Peter 3:1-9 (Sun.) March 12

Key Verse: 3:9

1. Remember God's promises and commands

Peter wrote this letter to plant God's word in our hearts. When we hold God's promises and commands in our hearts, our thinking becomes wholesome--healthy and whole.

2. Jesus will surely come again

Some people scoff at this because they want to follow their own evil desires. But Jesus promised that he would come again. Those who scoff at God's word are deliberately forgetting that God created the heavens and the earth by his word. By that same word, the heavens and the earth are reserved for a fiery judgment.

3. God wants all men to repent

Why has Jesus waited so long to come again? It is because God is merciful and patient. He wants the gospel preached to all nations, so that all people may have a chance to repent, believe and be saved.

Prayer: Lord, help me to hold your promise in my heart and serve your redemptive purpose until Jesus comes again.

One Word: God wants all people to repent

THE HOME OF THE RIGHTEOUS

2 Peter 3:10-18 (Mon.) March 13

Key Verse: 3:13

1. The heavens will disappear with a roar

The day of the Lord will come suddenly, without any warning, like a thief in the night. The elements of heaven and earth will be burned up. It is the day of God's judgment on all unrepentant sinners. God has promised to those who believe in his word a new heaven and a new earth, the home of the righteous.

2. Make every effort to be blameless

Since we believe God's promises, we must make every effort to be one of the righteous--those who are spotless and blameless and at peace with God. Only a repentant heart, washed in the blood of Jesus, can have such purity and peace. God is not slow in keeping his promises. His patience gives all men a chance to be saved. Peter points out that he is in full agreement with Paul's writings, which, like some other Scripture, are hard to understand. We must not distort the Scripture--even if we don't fully understand it.

Prayer: Lord, help me by your grace and tender mercy to be ready when the day of the Lord comes.

One Word: The home of the righteous