



Overview for 2 Peter

Purpose: In this second epistle to the scattered Christians of the Early Church, Peter addressed the distinction between true teachers and false teachers. He encouraged the believers to live holy lives as they waited in anticipation of Jesus' return.

Author: Simon Peter, one of the twelve Apostles.

Time Period Covered: Emperor Nero's extensive and intensive persecution of Christians took place from A.D. 64 through A.D. 68, a time when believers throughout the Roman Empire were tortured and killed for their faith. The epistle of 2 Peter was written during this period, shortly after the Book of 1 Peter. History indicates Peter was executed in Rome during this persecution.

Date Written: A.D. 64-67, approximately

History: Although Peter initially lacked understanding of the concept of the Gospel being preached to the Gentiles, God taught him about the equality of Gentiles and Jews. Not only did Peter accept the Gentiles as fellow believers, but he also proclaimed that "grace and peace" had been given to all.

A historical timeline of events in Peter's life:

- A.D. 26-27 Peter was called and followed Christ.
- A.D. 30 Peter denied knowing Christ before the Crucifixion; he later repented, and on the day of Pentecost, proclaimed with boldness that Jesus had risen.
- A.D. 40 The Lord revealed to Peter that salvation is for the Gentiles. Cornelius and other Gentiles with him were filled with the Holy Ghost.

A.D. 63-67 Peter wrote 1 Peter and 2 Peter.

A.D. 67-68 Peter and Paul were martyred in Rome.

Setting: Nero had made his official decree that believers in Jesus be attacked and persecuted. Many Christians were forced to flee for their lives, and the church in Jerusalem had been dispersed throughout the Mediterranean world.

Shortly after his first letter to these scattered believers, Peter had apparently received reports on the activities of false teachers among the congregations. Thus, his second letter, probably also written from Rome, was to provide a written warning of the effect that false teachers might have. Peter seemed to sense that the end was near for him (see 2 Peter 1:15), and this was, in fact, the last recorded communication from this great warrior of Christ. Soon after, he was martyred for the faith.

Summary: Second Peter is an alert written by an Apostle with the experience and commitment to make such a warning reputable. In chapter 1, after a brief greeting, Peter presented the believers with a call to spiritual growth, encouraging them to supplement their faith with Christian virtues. He reminded them of the certainty of the revelation they had received through Spirit-inspired Scriptures. In chapter 2, he warned of the danger of false teachers, exposing and denouncing the principles and conduct of those who undermined the very foundations of the Gospel. In the final chapter of the epistle, Peter encouraged the believers to stand fast in their hope of Christ's coming, and exhorted them regarding appropriate conduct in view of that anticipated event.

Timeline

Many of these dates are approximate, as reference materials differ slightly.

Jesus crucified; Pentecost; Church begun A.D. 30	Stephen martyred; Paul's conversion 35			Peter's ministry in Asia Minor 47	Jerusalem council 50	PAUL IMPRISONED (CAESAREA) 57-59	PAUL'S HOUSE ARREST 60-62	James (Jesus' brother) martyred 62	Peter & Paul martyred 67/68?	Jude martyred 72						
	PAUL IN CILICIA & SYRIA 35-46			PAUL'S MISSIONARY JOURNEYS 46-48 50-52 53-57			Paul's trip to Rome 59			Rome destroys Jerusalem 70						
			Holy Spirit falls on Gentiles 41	James (the apostle) martyred; Peter imprisoned 44	Galatians; James 49	1 & 2 Thessalonians 51/52	1 & 2 Corinthians 55	Romans 57	St. Mark 58/60	Ephesians; Colossians; Philemon 60	Philippians 61	St. Matthew; St. Luke 61/64	1 Timothy; Titus; 1 Peter 64	Jude 65	Acts; 2 Peter; 2 Timothy 66/68	Hebrews 68

Outline

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- I. Introduction: the writer and recipients (1:1)
- II. Call to spiritual growth (1:2-21)
 - A. The basis for growth (1:2-4)
 - B. The manner of growth (1:5-7)
 - C. The necessity of growth (1:8-11)
 - D. The means of growth (1:12-21)
- III. Call to awareness of error (2:1-22)
 - A. The fact and methodology of false teachers (2:1-3)
 - B. The destruction of false teachers (2:4-9)
 - C. The description of false teachers (2:10-22)
- IV. Call to reassurance in Christ's coming (3:1-18)
 - A. The denial of Christ's coming (the theological problem) (3:1-7)
 - B. The explanation of Christ's delay (the theological explanation) (3:8-10)
 - C. The conduct of the believer in view of His coming (the theological application) (3:11-18)