

2 Peter

1

Summary: *Second Peter opens with a greeting from Simeon Peter, then immediately declares that God's divine power has granted everything needed for life and godliness through the knowledge of the one who called us. Through precious promises, believers may become partakers of the divine nature. Peter lists a chain of virtues to be cultivated — faith, virtue, knowledge, self-control, endurance, godliness, mutual affection, and love — and warns that neglecting these means forgetting one's cleansing from sin. He affirms the reliability of apostolic testimony as eyewitness, not cleverly devised myth, recounting the Transfiguration, and closes by affirming prophetic Scripture as divinely inspired.*

What Makes This Remarkable: *The 'divine power' passage (v. 3) and 'partakers of the divine nature' (v. 4) are among the most theologically distinctive statements in the New Testament, providing the biblical basis for the Eastern Orthodox doctrine of theosis (deification/divinization). The virtue chain (vv. 5-7) is a Greco-Roman literary form (sorites) adapted for Christian ethics. The Transfiguration account (vv. 16-18) is one of only two direct apostolic eyewitness claims to a specific event in Jesus's life found in the epistles.*

Translation Friction: *The relationship between 2 Peter and Jude is debated — significant material in chapter 2 parallels Jude closely. The Greek style of 2 Peter differs markedly from 1 Peter, which some attribute to a different amanuensis or to pseudonymous authorship. We render the text as presented without adjudicating the authorship question. The phrase 'partakers of the divine nature' (v. 4) uses language at home in Hellenistic philosophy (particularly Stoicism) but repurposed for a distinctly Christian and covenantal meaning.*

Connections: *The 'divine power' language (v. 3) connects to the power language throughout the New Testament (Romans 1:16, 1 Corinthians 1:18). The Transfiguration account (vv. 16-18) parallels Matthew 17:1-8, Mark 9:2-8, Luke 9:28-36. The prophetic inspiration statement (vv. 20-21) provides one of the New Testament's clearest declarations about the origin of Scripture, alongside 2 Timothy 3:16.*

¹Simeon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have received a faith equal in value to ours through the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ: ²May grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. ³His divine power has granted to us everything needed for life and godliness, through the knowledge of the one who called us by his own glory and excellence, ⁴Through these he has granted to us his precious and magnificent

promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire. ⁵For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, ⁶to knowledge add self-control; to self-control add endurance; to endurance add godliness; ⁷to godliness add mutual affection; and to mutual affection add love. ⁸For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹For whoever lacks these qualities is blind — nearsighted, in fact — having forgotten the cleansing from former sins. ¹⁰Therefore, brothers and sisters, be all the more diligent to make your calling and election certain, for if you practice these qualities you will never stumble. ¹¹For in this way, entry into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be richly provided to you. ¹²Therefore I intend always to remind you of these things, even though you know them and are established in the truth that you now have. ¹³I consider it right, as long as I am in this tent, to stir you up by way of reminder, ¹⁴Being aware that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, indeed as our Lord Jesus Christ has shewed me. ¹⁵And I will make every effort so that after my departure you may be able at any time to recall these things. ¹⁶For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. ¹⁷For he received honor and glory from God the Father when a voice came to him from the Majestic Glory, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" — ¹⁸This voice which arrived from heaven we listened to, when we were with him in the holy mount. ¹⁹And we have the prophetic word made more sure, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, ²⁰Being aware this foremost, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. ²¹For no prophecy was ever produced by human will, but people spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

TRANSLATOR NOTES

1. The Greek *Symeōn* is the Semitic form of the name (cf. Acts 15:14), lending an archaic, Hebraic flavor to the greeting. The phrase *isotomon hēmīn lachousin pistin* ('having obtained a faith of equal value with ours') uses *isotimos* ('of equal honor/value') — the faith of these recipients is not second-class compared to apostolic faith.
1. The phrase *tou theou hēmōn kai sōtēros Iēsou Christou* ('of our God and Savior Jesus Christ') is grammatically most naturally read as applying both titles — 'God' and 'Savior' — to Jesus Christ (the Granville Sharp rule in Greek). This would be one of the clearest New Testament identifications of Jesus as God.
2. The greeting echoes 1 Peter 1:2 but adds the distinctive phrase *en epignōsei* ('in the knowledge'). The word *epignōsis* ('full knowledge, deep knowledge') is a key term in 2 Peter, appearing four times (1:2, 3, 8; 2:20). It is more than intellectual awareness — it is relational, experiential knowledge of God. Grace and peace grow as knowledge of God deepens.
3. The Greek *theias dynamēs* ('divine power') uses *theios* ('divine'), a word common in Hellenistic religious philosophy but rare in the New Testament (only here, v. 4, and Acts 17:29). Peter bridges Jewish-Christian theology and Greco-Roman vocabulary — communicating to a Hellenistic audience in their own conceptual language.
3. The phrase *ta pros zōēn kai eusebeian* ('the things pertaining to life and godliness') is comprehensive — 'life' (*zōē*) covers all of existence, and 'godliness' (*eusebeia*) covers all of religious practice. Together they leave nothing out.
4. The phrase *theias koinōnoi physeōs* ('sharers/partakers of the divine nature') is unique in the New Testament and has generated enormous theological discussion. In its Hellenistic context, 'divine nature' (*theia physis*) was philosophical language for the essence of deity. Peter claims that believers participate in this — not becoming divine in essence (as in pagan apotheosis) but sharing in God's moral character and eternal life.
4. The Eastern Orthodox tradition built its theology of theosis (deification) significantly on this verse. The Western tradition has generally interpreted it as moral transformation. The text itself supports both emphases without collapsing into either exclusively.
5. The Greek *epichorēgēsate* ('supply, furnish, provide generously') is from the theater — a *chorēgos* was a wealthy patron who funded a chorus. The word implies lavish, generous investment, not minimal addition. The *sorites* (chain-link) argument that follows (vv. 5-7) builds each virtue upon the previous one, creating an ascending staircase of character development.
5. The word *aretē* ('virtue, moral excellence') was the central concept in Greek ethics. Peter integrates it into the Christian framework, beginning with faith (*pistis*) and culminating in love (*agapē*).
6. The chain continues: *gnōsis* ('knowledge') leads to *egkrateia* ('self-control' — mastery over desires and impulses, a key virtue in Stoic ethics), which produces *hypomonē* ('endurance, steadfast perseverance under pressure'), which deepens into *eusebeia* ('godliness, piety, reverent devotion to God'). Each virtue both builds on and produces the next.

7. The chain culminates in agapē ('love') — the highest Christian virtue (1 Corinthians 13). Before agapē comes philadelphia ('mutual affection, brotherly/sisterly love'), which is love within the community. Agapē transcends philadelphia — it is the self-giving love that extends even beyond the boundaries of the Christian family. The progression from faith to love mirrors Paul's triad in 1 Corinthians 13:13, with the intervening virtues filling out the developmental path.
8. The Greek argous ('idle, useless, ineffective') literally means 'not-working' (a-ergos). Combined with akarpous ('unfruitful'), Peter warns against a faith that produces nothing. The knowledge (epignōsis) of Christ is not static information but a living relationship that bears fruit through the cultivation of these virtues.
9. The Greek myōpazōn ('being shortsighted, squinting') is found only here in the New Testament. The irony is deliberate: the person is not actually blind but has such narrow vision that they might as well be. They can see only what is immediately before them and have lost sight of the larger picture — specifically, the cleansing (katharismos) from sin that launched their Christian life. Forgetting their own salvation leads to moral stagnation.
10. The Greek bebaian ('firm, certain, reliable') applied to 'calling and election' (klēsīn kai eklogēn) does not mean that God's choice is uncertain and needs human help — rather, the cultivation of virtues provides subjective assurance and objective evidence that one's calling is genuine. The strong negation ou mē ptaiēte pote ('you will never, ever stumble') guarantees stability to those who pursue these virtues.
11. The verb epichorēgēthēsetai ('will be richly supplied, lavishly furnished') echoes the same root from verse 5 — believers who generously supply the virtues (epichorēgēsate) will receive a generous entry (epichorēgēthēsetai) into the eternal kingdom. The word plousiōs ('richly, abundantly') pictures not a bare-minimum entry but a triumphal welcome.
12. Peter acknowledges that his readers already know these truths and are established (estērigmenous, 'firmly planted') in them — yet he considers repeated reminders essential. The phrase tē parousē alētheia ('the truth that is present/that you have') may mean 'the truth now present among you' or 'the truth that has come to you.' Knowledge and stability do not eliminate the need for reinforcement.
13. The Greek skēnōmati ('tent, tabernacle, temporary dwelling') refers to Peter's body — a metaphor for the temporary nature of physical life. The image echoes Paul's tent metaphor in 2 Corinthians 5:1-4. Peter sees his earthly existence as a temporary encampment, not a permanent home, and uses the remaining time to reinforce essential teaching.
14. The Greek tachinē ('swift, soon, imminent') indicates Peter expects death in the near future. The phrase kathos kai ho kyrios hēmōn Iēsous Christos edēlōsen moi ('as our Lord Jesus Christ made clear to me') likely refers to Jesus's prediction of Peter's death in John 21:18-19, where Jesus told Peter that in old age he would be led where he did not wish to go — traditionally understood as a prediction of crucifixion.
15. The Greek exodon ('departure, exodus') for death is the same word used in Luke 9:31 for Jesus's 'departure' (death) that he discussed with Moses and Elijah at the Transfiguration — a connection Peter would have witnessed firsthand. The word carries overtones of the great Exodus from Egypt — death as a liberation journey. Peter's concern is for the church's ongoing memory after he is gone, which may explain the writing of this letter itself.
16. The Greek sesophismenois mythois ('cleverly devised myths, fabricated stories') uses sophizō ('to make clever, to contrive') — the apostolic message is not a skilled human invention. The word epoptai ('eyewitnesses') is a technical term — in the Greek mystery religions, an epoptēs was one who had seen the sacred rites at the highest level of initiation. Peter co-opts the term: the apostles are the true 'initiates' who witnessed Christ's glory firsthand.
16. The word parousian ('coming, presence, arrival') refers to Christ's second coming — a topic that will dominate chapter 3. Peter grounds the future hope in past eyewitness experience.
17. Peter recounts the Transfiguration (Matthew 17:1-8, Mark 9:2-8, Luke 9:28-36). The title megaloprepous doxēs ('the Majestic Glory') is a circumlocution for God — a reverent avoidance of the divine name, referring to God's visible, overwhelming presence. The divine voice repeats the baptismal declaration (Matthew 3:17) with the demonstrative houtos ('this one') — pointing to Jesus as the unique, beloved Son.
17. Peter's version of the heavenly voice matches Matthew's account more closely than Mark's or Luke's, which may reflect Peter's own memory since Matthew's Gospel draws on Petrine tradition.
18. The emphatic hēmeis ('we ourselves') stresses the eyewitness character of the testimony. The 'holy mountain' (hagiō orei) is not named — tradition identifies it as Mount Tabor or Mount Hermon — but Peter's point is not the geography but the experience. The mountain is 'holy' because God's presence sanctified it, as Sinai was holy when God descended upon it (Exodus 19:23).
18. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Exodus 19:23 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
19. The phrase bebaieron ton prophētikon logon ('the prophetic word made more sure') can be read two ways: (1) the Transfiguration experience confirms the reliability of Old Testament prophecy, or (2) prophetic Scripture is even more reliable than eyewitness experience. Either reading elevates the authority of Scripture.
19. The metaphor of a lamp (lychnō) in a dark (auchēmō, 'murky, squalid, dry') place portrays the present age as dark and Scripture as the light that guides through it. The 'morning star' (phōsphoros, literally 'light-bearer') is Christ himself (cf. Revelation 22:16), whose full appearing will make the lamp of prophecy no longer necessary — the sunrise replaces the lamp.

20. The Greek idias epilyseōs ('one's own interpretation/explanation') is debated. The KJV takes it as a statement about how prophecy should be interpreted (not privately but communally/ecclesially). However, the context of verse 21 suggests it is about the origin of prophecy — no prophetic Scripture arose from the prophet's own devising or interpretation of events. The prophet did not generate the message; it came from God. We render it in the origination sense, which fits the flow into verse 21.
21. The Greek pheromenoi ('being carried, being borne along') is a nautical metaphor — like a ship driven by the wind. The prophets were not passive instruments (they spoke, using their own faculties and personalities) but neither were they autonomous authors. The Holy Spirit was the driving force; the prophets were the vessels carried along by that force.
21. The phrase apo theou ('from God') identifies the origin of the prophetic message — it came from God, through the Spirit, and was spoken by human beings. This verse, alongside 2 Timothy 3:16, forms the New Testament's clearest statement about the divine inspiration of Scripture.

2

Summary: *Peter warns that false teachers will arise among the believers, just as false prophets arose in Israel. He draws on three Old Testament examples of divine judgment — the fallen angels, the flood, and Sodom and Gomorrah — to assure that God knows how to rescue the godly and punish the unrighteous. The chapter provides a vivid portrait of the false teachers: they exploit with fabricated words, follow the way of Balaam, are like waterless springs and mists driven by a storm, promise freedom while being slaves of corruption, and are ultimately worse off than before they knew Christ.*

What Makes This Remarkable: *This chapter shares extensive material with Jude (compare 2 Peter 2:1-18 with Jude 4-16). The literary relationship is debated — whether Peter drew on Jude, Jude drew on Peter, or both used a common source. Peter's version notably omits Jude's references to the Assumption of Moses and 1 Enoch, possibly adapting the material for a more Hellenistic audience. The Balaam tradition (vv. 15-16) includes the talking donkey episode, one of the most memorable stories from Numbers 22.*

Translation Friction: *The reference to angels who sinned being cast into Tartarus (v. 4) uses tartarōsas, a word drawn from Greek mythology (Tartarus was the deepest abyss of Hades) found nowhere else in the Bible. Peter adapts pagan cosmological vocabulary for theological purposes. The strong language describing the false teachers is some of the harshest in the New Testament. We render it faithfully without softening.*

Connections: *The three judgment examples (angels, flood, Sodom) parallel Jude 5-7. The Balaam material connects to Numbers 22-24 and is also referenced in Jude 11 and Revelation 2:14. The 'dog returns to its vomit' proverb (v. 22) quotes Proverbs 26:11. The 'waterless springs' imagery echoes Jude 12-13.*

¹But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who privily will bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. ²Many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of truth will be maligned. ³In their greed they will exploit you with fabricated words. Their condemnation from long ago is not idle, and their destruction does not slumber. ⁴For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into Tartarus and committed them to chains of deepest darkness, to be held for judgment; ⁵Spared not the old present age, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the present age of the ungodly; ⁶He condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah by burning them to ashes, making them an example of what will happen to the ungodly. ⁷Handed down just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked. ⁸Indeed, (For that righteous man dwelling in the midst of them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;). ⁹The Lord knows how to rescue the godly from their trials and how to hold the unrighteous for punishment on the day of judgment. ¹⁰However, chiefly them that conduct your lives following the physical nature in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities. ¹¹Whereas angels, which are greater in authority and might, bring not railing accusation opposed to them prior to the Lord. ¹²But these people, like irrational animals, creatures of instinct born to be caught and destroyed — blaspheming about matters of which they are ignorant — will also be destroyed in their destruction, ¹³Will accept the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves

with their own deceivings while they feast with you; ¹⁴They have eyes full of adultery, insatiable for sin. They entice unstable souls. They have hearts trained in greed. Accursed children! ¹⁵Forsaking the straight path, they have gone astray, following the way of Balaam son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness, ¹⁶However, was rebuked for his iniquity — the dumb ass speaking with man's voice forbad the madness of the prophet of old. ¹⁷These are waterless springs and mists driven by a storm. For them the gloom of utter darkness has been reserved. ¹⁸For by speaking bombastic, empty words, they entice through fleshly desires and sensuality those who are barely escaping from people who live in error. ¹⁹They promise them freedom, but they themselves are slaves of corruption. For whatever overcomes a person, to that he is enslaved. ²⁰For if, after escaping the defilements of the world through the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the last state has become worse for them than the first. ²¹For it would have been better for them never to have known the way of righteousness than, having known it, to turn back from the holy commandment delivered to them. ²²What the true proverb says has happened to them: "A dog returns to its own vomit," and, "A washed sow returns to wallowing in the mud."

TRANSLATOR NOTES

1. The Greek pseudodidaskaloi ('false teachers') parallels the pseudoprophētai ('false prophets') of Israel's history — the problem is not new. The verb pareisaxousin ('will secretly introduce, smuggle in') implies stealth — these teachings are not openly presented but infiltrated into the community.
1. The phrase ton agorasanta autous despotēn arnoumenoi ('denying the Master who bought them') uses commercial language: agorazō ('to buy in the marketplace') applied to Christ's redemptive work. The word despotēn ('Master, absolute Lord') emphasizes Christ's ownership claim over those he purchased.
2. The Greek aselgeiais ('sensuality, licentiousness, debauchery') indicates the false teachers' moral character, not just their doctrinal errors — the two are inseparable. 'The way of truth' (hē hodos tēs alētheias) is an early designation for the Christian movement (cf. Acts 9:2, 'the Way'). The public behavior of these teachers will cause outsiders to slander the entire Christian faith.
3. The Greek emporeuontai ('they will trade in, make merchandise of') portrays the false teachers as merchants who view believers as commodities to be exploited for profit. The word plastois ('fabricated, molded, invented') — from which English 'plastic' derives — describes their teaching as artificially shaped to serve their purposes.
3. The personification of judgment and destruction as active agents ('not idle,' 'does not slumber') is vivid — divine judgment is not sleeping or inactive but wakefully approaching.
4. The Greek tartarōsas ('having cast into Tartarus') is a hapax legomenon — it appears only here in the entire Bible. In Greek mythology, Tartarus was the lowest region of the underworld where the Titans were imprisoned. Peter uses this Greek cosmological term to describe the imprisonment of fallen angels, adapting pagan vocabulary for a Jewish-Christian narrative that draws on the tradition of Genesis 6:1-4 and the Book of 1 Enoch (cf. Jude 6).
4. The 'chains of deepest darkness' (seirais zophou) — some manuscripts read seirois ('pits') instead of seirais ('chains'). The SBLGNT reads seirais. Either way, the imagery is of imprisonment in complete darkness awaiting final judgment.
4. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Genesis 6:1-4. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
5. The Greek ogdoon Nōe ('Noah the eighth') means Noah and seven others — his wife, three sons, and their wives (Genesis 7:13, 1 Peter 3:20). Peter calls Noah kēruka dikaiosynēs ('a herald/preacher of righteousness'), a characterization not found in Genesis but present in Jewish tradition. The word kēryx ('herald, public announcer') portrays Noah as actively proclaiming righteousness during the ark's construction, not merely building in silence.
5. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Genesis 7:13 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
6. The Greek tephrosās ('having reduced to ashes') is found only here in the New Testament. The word katastrophē ('overthrow, destruction') — source of English 'catastrophe' — describes total demolition. Peter presents Sodom and Gomorrah as a visible, permanent warning (hypodeigma, 'example, pattern') of divine judgment — what happened to those cities illustrates what awaits all who practice ungodliness.
7. Peter calls Lot dikaios ('righteous'), a characterization that might surprise readers of Genesis 19, where Lot's behavior is morally ambiguous at best. Peter focuses on Lot's inner distress at the surrounding wickedness rather than his compromised choices. The word kataponoumenon ('being oppressed, worn down, distressed') suggests chronic psychological suffering from living among the immoral — Lot was ground down by constant exposure to depravity.
7. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Genesis 19. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.

8. The Greek *ebasanizen* ('was tormented, tortured') is a strong word — the same verb used for physical torture (Matthew 8:6, Revelation 9:5). Lot's exposure to lawless behavior was not mere discomfort but soul-level anguish. The phrase *hēmeran ex hēmeras* ('day after day, day from day') emphasizes the relentless, cumulative nature of this torment — it never stopped.
9. This verse provides the resolution to the extended conditional that began in verse 4. The three examples (angels, flood, Sodom) all demonstrate the same dual principle: God rescues the righteous (Noah, Lot) and punishes the wicked. The word *kolazomenous* ('being punished') is a present participle — the unrighteous are already under punishment while awaiting the final judgment, not merely stored in neutral waiting.
10. Peter now turns from the historical examples to the present false teachers. They are characterized by two traits: indulging corrupt desires (*opisō sarkos en epithymia miasmou*, 'pursuing flesh in defiling desire') and rejecting authority (*kyriotētos kataphronountas*, 'despising lordship'). The 'glorious ones' (*doxas*) likely refers to angelic beings — the false teachers show contempt for the spiritual hierarchy.
10. The adjectives *tolmētai* ('bold, daring, presumptuous') and *authentai* ('self-willed, arrogant, stubborn') describe people who recognize no authority beyond their own will.
11. The argument is from greater to lesser: if angels — who are vastly more powerful than any human — do not presume to slander spiritual beings before God's tribunal, how much more outrageous that these human false teachers do so. Compare Jude 9, which provides the specific example of Michael the archangel refusing to pronounce a slanderous judgment against the devil regarding Moses's body.
12. The comparison to *aloga zōa* ('irrational animals, brute beasts') is harsh — these teachers operate on instinct (*physika*, 'natural, by nature') rather than reason or revelation. The wordplay on *phthora/phtharēsontai* ('corruption/they will be corrupted') creates a grim symmetry: they will be destroyed by the very corruption they promote. Ignorance and arrogance combine to produce destruction.
13. The Greek *misthon adikias* ('wages of unrighteousness') is ironic — they pursued profit through unrighteousness and receive unrighteousness as their payment. Carousing *en hēmera* ('in daytime') was considered especially shameful in the ancient world, where respectable people reserved evening hours for banqueting.
13. The words *spiloi* ('blots, stains') and *mōmoi* ('blemishes') contrast sharply with the 'without spot or blemish' language applied to Christ in 1 Peter 1:19 — these teachers are the opposite of Christ. The phrase *syneuōchoumenoi hymin* ('feasting together with you') indicates they are still participating in the community's shared meals, probably including the Lord's Supper.
14. The Greek *ophthalmous mestous moichalidos* ('eyes full of an adulteress') is literally 'eyes full of an adulteress' — every woman they see is seen as a potential partner in adultery. The participle *deleazontes* ('enticing, luring with bait') is a fishing metaphor — they bait and hook vulnerable believers. The phrase *kardian gegymnasmenen pleonexias* ('a heart trained/exercised in greed') uses the athletic training metaphor (*gymnazō*, from which 'gymnasium' derives) — they have disciplined themselves in the art of greed as an athlete trains for competition.
15. Balaam (Numbers 22-24) is the paradigmatic example of a prophet motivated by money. Despite being hired by Balak to curse Israel, God forced him to bless them instead. Yet Jewish tradition (and the New Testament: Jude 11, Revelation 2:14) consistently portrays Balaam as a negative example — a man with genuine prophetic gifts corrupted by greed. The false teachers follow his 'way' (*hodon*) — the path of using spiritual authority for financial gain.
15. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Numbers 22-24 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
16. The story is from Numbers 22:28-30 — Balaam's donkey saw the angel of the LORD blocking the path when Balaam could not, and God opened the donkey's mouth to speak. The Greek *paraphronian* ('madness, insanity') is a strong word — a prophet so blinded by greed that a donkey had better spiritual perception. The irony is devastating: the wordless animal speaks while the speaking prophet is senseless.
16. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Numbers 22:28-30. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
17. Two nature metaphors: waterless springs (*pēgai anydroi*) — promising refreshment but delivering nothing — and storm-driven mists (*homichlai hypo lailapos elaunomenai*) — appearing to promise rain but blown away before delivering. Both images describe people who promise much and deliver nothing. The false teachers' promised 'freedom' (v. 19) is as empty as a dry well.
17. Compare Jude 12-13, which has 'waterless clouds' and 'wandering stars' — the imagery is parallel but not identical.
18. The Greek *hyperonka mataiotētos* ('swelling things of emptiness, bombastic vanities') describes speech that sounds impressive but is empty — inflated rhetoric with no substance. The targets are people *oligōs apopheugontas* ('barely escaping, just recently escaping') — new converts still vulnerable, who have only just begun to separate from their former way of life. The false teachers target the weakest members of the community.
19. The irony is pointed: the false teachers promise *eleutherian* ('freedom, liberty') while being themselves *douloi* ('slaves') of corruption. The principle *hō gar tis hēttētai, toutō dedoulōtai* ('by whatever someone is defeated, to that person they are enslaved') expresses a universal truth — the conqueror becomes the master. Those who are defeated by corruption become its permanent slaves. The promise of freedom through moral license actually produces deeper bondage.
20. The language echoes Jesus's parable of the unclean spirit that returns with seven others (Matthew 12:43-45, 'the last state of that person is worse than the first'). The word *emplagkentes* ('entangled') pictures someone caught in a net or snare — the defilements they once escaped have recaptured them. The knowledge (*epignōsis*) of Christ provided real escape, making the return to corruption inexcusable and the final condition

worse than the original state of ignorance.

- 21.** The 'way of righteousness' (tēn hodon tēs dikaiosynēs) and 'the holy commandment' (tēs hagian entolēs) both describe the Christian life as a path with clear moral direction. To know this path and then deliberately abandon it is worse than never having found it at all. The word hypostrepsai ('to turn back, to return') implies a conscious reversal — not gradual drift but deliberate retreat.
- 22.** The first proverb quotes Proverbs 26:11 ('As a dog returns to its vomit, so a fool repeats his folly'). The second about the washed sow is not from the Old Testament but from a wider proverbial tradition (possibly from the Story of Ahikar or common Hellenistic wisdom). Both images are deliberately revolting — the animal's nature reasserts itself despite temporary cleaning. Peter's point is severe: the false teachers' return to corruption reveals that their nature was never truly transformed.
- 22.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Proverbs 26:11. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.

3

Summary: *Peter addresses scoffers who mock the promise of Christ's return, arguing that the delay demonstrates God's patience, not his unfaithfulness. He reminds them that God's sense of time differs from humanity's — a thousand years is like a day. The day of the Lord will come unexpectedly like a thief, and the heavens and earth will be dissolved by fire. Yet Peter's hope looks beyond destruction to the promise of new heavens and a new earth where righteousness dwells. He closes by referencing Paul's letters and urging steadfastness.*

What Makes This Remarkable: *The 'new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells' (v. 13) is one of the great eschatological hopes of the New Testament, drawing on Isaiah 65:17 and 66:22 and anticipating Revelation 21:1. The reference to Paul's letters as Scripture (vv. 15-16) is one of the earliest witnesses to the collection of Paul's correspondence and its elevation to scriptural authority. The 'day equals a thousand years' passage (v. 8) draws on Psalm 90:4 and has profoundly shaped Christian thinking about time, eternity, and divine patience.*

Translation Friction: *The cosmological language of dissolution by fire (vv. 10-12) has been interpreted literally (cosmic conflagration), figuratively (radical transformation), and ecologically. We render the Greek without imposing any particular scientific or theological framework. The reference to Paul writing things 'hard to understand' (v. 16) is remarkably candid and has been treasured by exegetes who find Paul difficult.*

Connections: *The 'new heavens and new earth' draws on Isaiah 65:17, 66:22, and anticipates Revelation 21:1. The 'day of the Lord as a thief' echoes Jesus's teaching (Matthew 24:43, Luke 12:39) and Paul (1 Thessalonians 5:2). The Psalm 90:4 quotation (v. 8) connects to the Mosaic prayer tradition. The fire cosmology may connect to Stoic ekpyrosis (cosmic conflagration) concepts familiar to Peter's Hellenistic audience.*

¹This is now, dear friends, the second letter I am writing to you. In both of them I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, ²So you can become mindful of the words which were spoken prior to by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour. ³Knowing this first, that there will come in the last days scoffers, walking following their own lusts, ⁴Declaring, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the start of creation. ⁵For they deliberately overlook this fact: that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God, ⁶Whereby the age that then was, while overflowed with the waters, perished. ⁷But by that same word the present heavens and earth are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly people. ⁸But do not overlook this one fact, dear friends: that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day. ⁹The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some consider slowness, but is patient toward you, not wanting anyone to perish but everyone to come to repentance. ¹⁰But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be dissolved with intense heat, and the earth and the works done on it will be exposed. ¹¹Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, ¹²Indeed, looking for and hasting to the coming of the day of God, wherein the sky being on fire will be dissolved, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? ¹³But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. ¹⁴Therefore,

dear friends, since you are waiting for these things, be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace. ¹⁵And regard the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given to him, ¹⁶As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things. In which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, to their own destruction. ¹⁷You therefore, dear friends, since you know this in advance, be on your guard so that you are not carried away by the error of lawless people and lose your own stability. ¹⁸But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.

TRANSLATOR NOTES

1. The reference to a 'second letter' (deuteran epistolēn) identifies 1 Peter as the first. The word *eilikrinē* ('sincere, pure, unmixed') literally means 'judged by sunlight' — tested and found genuine. Peter's purpose is not to introduce new teaching but to activate (*diegeirō*, 'stir up, rouse from sleep') what they already know.
2. Peter places two sources of authority side by side: the Old Testament prophets and the apostolic witness. The phrase *tēs tōn apostolōn hymōn entolēs tou kyriou kai sōtēros* ('the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles') establishes a chain of authority: the Lord commands, the apostles transmit, the churches receive. This two-testament consciousness (prophets + apostles) anticipates the later canonical structure of the Christian Bible.
3. The Greek *en empaigonē empaiktai* ('with mocking, mockers') is a cognate construction — the mockers mock. Their behavior is driven by desire (*kata tas idias epithymias*, 'according to their own desires') rather than by truth — the mocking of Christ's return is not intellectual doubt but moral convenience. If there is no coming judgment, there is no moral accountability.
4. The scoffers' argument is what modern philosophy would call uniformitarianism — the assumption that natural processes continue unchanging, therefore no divine intervention (*parousia*) should be expected. 'The fathers fell asleep' (*hoi pateres ekoimēthēsan*) refers to the first generation of Christians who died without seeing the return — their death seems to disprove the promise.
4. The rhetorical question 'Where is the promise?' (*Pou estin hē epangelia*) echoes the Old Testament taunt pattern: 'Where is your God?' (Psalm 42:3, 10; Joel 2:17; Malachi 2:17).
4. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Psalm 42:3. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
4. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Joel 2:17. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
4. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Malachi 2:17. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
5. The Greek *lanthanei autous touto thelontas* ('it escapes them, this being willing' — i.e., 'they willingly ignore') marks their ignorance as deliberate, not innocent. Peter's counter-argument begins with creation: the world was not always as it is. It was formed by God's word (*tō tou theou logō*) out of and through water — referencing Genesis 1:2-9, where the primordial waters are separated and dry land appears at God's command.
5. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Genesis 1:2-9 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
6. The Greek *di' hōn* ('through which things') refers back to both the water and the word — the same elements that formed the world were used to destroy it in the flood. The uniformitarian argument ('everything continues unchanged') is refuted by history: there was a cataclysmic interruption. The word *kataklustheis* ('deluged, flooded') is the root of English 'cataclysm.'
7. The parallel is precise: as the ancient world was destroyed by water, the present world is reserved (*tēroumenoi*, 'being kept, guarded') for destruction by fire. The word *tethēsurismenoi* ('stored up, treasured') is ironic — the heavens and earth are 'treasured' for fire as one stores up valuables. The concept of cosmic conflagration by fire was also present in Stoic philosophy (*ekpyrosis*), which may have made Peter's argument accessible to Hellenistic readers.
8. Peter quotes Psalm 90:4 ('A thousand years in your sight are like a day that has just gone by'), but adds the reverse — not only does a millennium seem brief to God, but a single day can contain what seems like a millennium's worth of divine activity. The point is that God operates on a fundamentally different time scale. What seems like a 'delay' from a human perspective may be an instant in divine reckoning.
8. The verb *lanthanetō* ('let it escape, let it be hidden') echoes verse 5 where the same root described the scoffers' willful ignorance. Peter tells believers: do not make the same mistake of ignoring crucial facts.
8. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Psalms 90:4 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
9. This verse reframes the 'delay' of the *parousia*: what appears to be divine procrastination is actually divine patience (*makrothymeis*, 'is long-tempered, is patient'). The purpose of the delay is soteriological — God extends the time before judgment so that more people have opportunity for repentance (*metanoian*, 'change of mind, turning of life direction').

9. The phrase *mē boulomenos tinas apolesthai* ('not wanting anyone to perish') expresses God's desire for universal salvation, while the history of judgment in chapter 2 shows that this desire does not override human choice. The tension between divine patience and divine justice runs throughout the letter.
10. The thief simile comes from Jesus himself (Matthew 24:43, Luke 12:39) and is used by Paul (1 Thessalonians 5:2). The Greek *rhoizēdon* ('with a rushing sound, with a roar, with a loud noise') appears only here in the New Testament — it describes the sound of an arrow in flight, the hiss of a serpent, or the rush of a flame.
10. The Greek *stoicheia* ('elements, elemental substances, heavenly bodies') could refer to the four classical elements (earth, water, air, fire), the celestial bodies (sun, moon, stars), or the spiritual 'elemental forces' (cf. Galatians 4:3, 9). Given the cosmological context, 'heavenly bodies' is most likely.
10. A major textual variant exists in the final clause: some manuscripts read *katakaesetai* ('will be burned up'), others *heurethēsetai* ('will be found/exposed'). The SBLGNT reads *heurethēsetai*, which is the more difficult reading and likely original — the earth and its works will be 'found out,' 'laid bare,' 'exposed' before God's judgment.
11. Peter draws ethical implications from eschatology: if everything material will be dissolved (*lyomenōn*, 'being loosened, being destroyed'), then clinging to material things is foolish and investing in holy conduct is wise. The rhetorical question *potapous dei* ('what sort must you be') expects the answer: people of extraordinary holiness and devotion. The plural *hagiois anastrophais kai eusebeiais* ('holy conducts and godlinesses') emphasizes that holiness and godliness are expressed in multiple, varied ways.
12. The Greek *speudontas* ('hastening, speeding up') is striking — believers can actually hasten the day of God's coming. How? The traditional interpretation is through repentance, holy living, and proclamation of the gospel (cf. v. 9, where God waits for all to come to repentance). The rabbinical tradition also held that Israel's repentance could hasten the Messiah's coming.
12. The phrase *tēs tou theou hēmeras* ('the day of God') rather than 'the day of the Lord' (v. 10) shifts the focus from judgment to the full arrival of God's purposes.
13. Peter draws on Isaiah 65:17 ('I am about to create new heavens and a new earth') and 66:22. The adjective *kainous* ('new') denotes newness of quality rather than mere chronological succession — not 'another' world but a 'renewed, transformed' world. The verb *katoikei* ('dwells, inhabits permanently') is present tense, vividly placing the reader in the future reality where righteousness is not visiting but residing.
13. This verse is the theological climax of the letter — beyond the dissolution of the present order lies not annihilation but renewal. The fire of judgment is the means to the end of a world where righteousness is the permanent atmosphere.
13. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Isaiah 65:17 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
14. The adjectives *aspiloi kai amōmētoi* ('without spot and without blame') echo 1 Peter 1:19, where Christ is described as a lamb 'without defect or blemish' (*amōmou kai aspilou*). Believers are to mirror the character of their redeemer. The phrase *en eirēnē* ('in peace, at peace') describes both internal serenity and relational harmony — the opposite of the agitation produced by false teachers.
15. Peter reframes the delay as salvation: God's patience (*makrothymian*, cf. v. 9) is not weakness but redemptive opportunity. The reference to Paul as 'our dear brother' (*ho agapētos hēmōn adelphos Paulos*) is warm and collegial, despite the confrontation between them recorded in Galatians 2:11. Peter acknowledges Paul's wisdom as divinely given (*kata tēn dotheisan autō sophian*, 'according to the wisdom given to him').
16. The phrase *en pasais epistolais* ('in all the letters') implies Peter knows of a collection of Paul's letters — an early stage of the Pauline corpus taking shape. The candid admission *dysnoēta tina* ('some things hard to understand') is remarkable — an apostle acknowledging that another apostle's writing is difficult. This honesty has comforted generations of readers who struggle with Paul.
16. The phrase *hōs kai tas loipas graphas* ('as they do the other Scriptures') is momentous: it places Paul's letters in the same category as *graphai* ('Scriptures') — one of the earliest attestations of Paul's correspondence being regarded as Scripture alongside the Old Testament.
16. The verb *streblousin* ('twist, distort, torture on the rack') is violent — these false interpreters put Scripture on the rack and twist it until it says what they want.
17. The warning is practical: foreknowledge of these dangers should produce watchfulness (*phylassesthe*, 'guard yourselves'). The Greek *synapachthentes* ('carried away together with, swept along') pictures being caught in a current — the error of the lawless has momentum and can pull the unsuspecting along with it. The word *stērigmou* ('stability, steadfastness, firm standing') connects to the stable foundation language throughout the letter (1:10, 12).
18. The letter closes where it began — with grace (*charis*) and knowledge (*gnōsis*) of Jesus Christ (cf. 1:2). The imperative *auxanete* ('grow, increase') is the final command: not merely maintain but advance. The phrase *eis hēmeran aiōnos* ('to the day of eternity') is unusual — it combines temporal ('day') and eternal ('of eternity') language, pointing to a moment that opens into endless duration.
18. The doxology attributes glory (*doxa*) to Jesus Christ — both now and for eternity — a strong affirmation of his divine status, consistent with the letter's opening identification of Jesus as 'our God and Savior' (1:1).