

## PETER'S EPISTLES

### **2 Peter: Spiritually Maturing Opposite Apostasy**

#### **II. Getting Settled On Scripture's Divine Inspiration And Authority (2 Peter 1:12-21)**

##### **I. Introduction**

- A. In A. D. 66, the year before his martyrdom, Peter was concerned that fellow believers might mature in the Christian faith in order to combat the rising opposition of heresies that the Church already faced. (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, "Introduction to the Second Letter of Peter," p. 1765; Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 862)
- B. Peter thus wrote this epistle to call believers to spiritual growth in preparation for apostasy, and 2 Peter 1:12-21 addressed the need to be settled on God's inspiration and authority of Scripture. We view it for our insight:

##### **II. Getting Settled On Scripture's Divine Inspiration And Authority, 2 Peter 1:12-21.**

- A. In view of the challenge of coming apostasy to the Church (2 Peter 2:1; 3:3-4), in view of his soon martyrdom that Christ had predicted (2 Peter 1:14) and in view of the growing threat of the persecuting Emperor Nero's rise to power (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, "Intro. to the First Letter of Peter: Circumstances of Writing," p. 1757), Peter desired that his readers would always recall his instructions to them, 1 Peter 1:12-15b.
- B. To get his readers to be firmly settled in the Christian faith, Peter added a section in his epistle on the validity of the divine inspiration and authority of Scripture that undergirds the entire Christian faith, 1 Peter 1:16-21:
  1. Peter affirmed that he and the other apostles did not "obey, follow" (*exakoloutheo*, Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 271) "subtly concocted" (*sophizo*, Ibid., p. 767) "fables" (*muthos*, Ibid., p. 530-531) when they made known to his readers the power and coming of their Lord Jesus Christ, but rather (*alla*, strong adversative; U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 806) they became "eyewitnesses" (*epoptes*, Ibid., Arndt & Gingrich, p. 305) of His "majesty" (*megaleiotes*, Ibid., p. 498), 2 Peter 1:16.
  2. That experience of being an eyewitness of Christ's Messianic majesty was Christ's transfiguration on the mount that Peter, James and John witnessed, Matthew 17:1-2. God the Father there honored and glorified Christ by revealing Him in His future Messianic glory, and the Father told the three disciples, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him," 2 Peter 1:17-18 with Matthew 17:5.
  3. As a result of this dramatic transfiguration event, Peter added that we Christians have the word of Scripture prophecy about Christ's coming and Messianic Kingdom made "altogether reliable" (*bebaios*, Ibid., p. 137-138), 2 Peter 1:19a.
  4. Peter then asserted that his readers would thus do well to pay attention to such Scriptures as unto a light that may currently be shining in a currently dark world, but which will one day be outshone by the reality of that prophecy of Christ's coming and Messianic reign being fulfilled and our hearts greatly exceeding in understanding what had once been merely predicted, 2 Peter 1:19b; Ibid., Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 869.
  5. Peter then gave a strong description of the divine inspiration and authority of Scripture, 2 Peter 1:20-21:
    - a. When he wrote that we should know something "first," the Greek term *protos* here meant "foremost, most important" (*protos*, Ibid., Arndt & Gingrich, p. 732-734), an item of priority, 1 Peter 1:20a.
    - b. That truth of utmost priority is that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the Bible prophet's own "interpretation" (*epilusis*, Ibid., p. 295), and in view of what Peter wrote in 2 Peter 1:21, he meant that those "prophecies did not originate with the prophets themselves," Ibid., B. K. C., N. T.; 2 Peter 1:20b.
    - c. Using a play on different meanings of the Greek verb *phero*, Peter added that the prophecies of antiquity were not "produced, brought" (*phero*, Ibid., Arndt & Gingrich, p. 862-863) by the will of man, but rather (*alla*, strong adversative again, Ibid., U. B. S. Grk. N. T.) holy men from God spoke as they **themselves** were "borne or carried along" (*phero*, Ibid., Bible Know. Com., N. T.) by the Holy Spirit, 2 Peter 1:21!
    - d. Thus, Peter clarified that the "Scriptures' human authors were controlled by the divine Author, the Holy Spirit," that when they wrote Scripture, it was **not man's word, BUT God's inspired, authoritative Word!**

***Lesson:*** *In handling the threat of the weakening of their faith by the trials of apostasy, the loss of the apostles in martyrdom and severe persecution by Rome, Peter wanted his readers to recall not only what he had taught them of God's truth, but to realize that Scripture was divinely inspired and authoritative, that the men of God who wrote it were so superintended by God in its production that what resulted from their writings was God's very Word.*

***Application:*** *May we be firmly convinced of the full divine inspiration and authority of all written Scripture for stability amid the trials to our faith that we face.*