

2 Peter

1:1. It is standard that the New Testament Epistles open with both God and Jesus Christ, and there is no reason to understand that there would be a difference here. The translation, “God and our savior Jesus Christ” is perfectly legitimate and to be preferred.

“**Simon.**” The Greek text has “Simeon,” which is the Hebrew form of “Simon,” Peter’s Jewish name. Peter’s first-century audience would have understood that immediately and not have been confused, but modern readers might easily be confused and wonder why “Simon Peter” is suddenly being called, “Simeon Peter.” See note on Acts 15:14.

1:4. “Corruption,” see on Galatians 6:8.

1:10. “choosing you.” The Greek is *eklogē* (#1589 ἐκλογή), and is best translated “choosing” rather than “election.” The term *election* comes with undesirable Calvinist connotation—the meaning here cannot be election in the Calvinist sense. If we were to take Calvin’s view, *how then could you do anything to make your election sure?* You could not. Supposedly, it is wholly in the hands of God whether you are part of the elect or not, so it does not make sense to speak of “making one’s election sure.”

1:11. “kingdom... in the Age to come.” The translation “in the Age to come” is from the *aionios* (#166 αἰώνιος), which most versions render “eternal.” However, although *aionios* can mean “eternal,” this verse is not speaking of the *eternal* kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, but of his kingdom *in the Messianic Age*. For more on this distinction see commentary on John 3:16. Most Jews did think of the coming age as being eternal, however God has revealed that it will come in two phases, the 1000 year millennial reign of Christ on earth, and the eternal kingdom of God on earth. Strictly speaking, the kingdom of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ, which this verse speaks of, is not eternal. It only lasts 1000 years, and then Christ is specifically said to become subject to God (1 Cor. 15:28). Christ will co-reign with the Father in the eternal kingdom, and in that sense, his kingdom is eternal; however, we felt it best to translate the phrase with the emphasis on the Age to come rather than its eternal nature.

1:19. For the parenthesis, see Bullinger, *Figures*, “Parenthesis,” p. 470.

2:2. “defamed.” The Greek verb *blasphēmeō* (#987 βλασφημῶ) means showing disrespect to a person or deity, and/or harming his, her, or its reputation. (For more on *blasphēmeō*, see commentary on Matt. 9:3).

2:4. “when they sinned.” One of the times they sinned was in the days of Noah, while the ark was being built (1 Peter 3:20). What happened was that some angels joined Lucifer and rebelled against God. They became what we know from the NT as demons. In the days between Adam and the Flood, they cohabited with women (there was a type of genetic manipulation that occurred) and formed a race known as the Nephilim, which is Hebrew for “Fallen Ones” (Gen. 6:2-4). This tainted race was wicked, and so polluted the world that God had to save the genetic line to Christ by the Flood. After the Flood the demons again tried to produce this wicked race (Gen. 6:4 “after that”), but gradually they were killed off, many by the Israelites coming into the Promised Land from Egypt. For more on this, see, Bullinger, *Companion Bible*, Appendix 23 and 25, and audio tape, “The Sons of God of Genesis Six,” from STF.

“Tartarus.” The Greek is *tartaroo* (#5020 ταρταρόω). Many translations say “hell,” as if the Greek word were *Hades* or *Gehenna*, generally believing it would be confusing to add another Greek word for the place where the demons are imprisoned. However, that reflects fuzzy theology. *Hades*, was the Greek word used to represent the Hebrew word *Sheol*, which was the state of being dead. *Sheol* was not the physical grave itself, but the state of being dead. Thus dead people are said to be in *Sheol*. Demons are not now, and have never been, in *Sheol* or *Hades* because they have never been dead (for more on *Hades* and *Sheol*, see Bullinger, *Lexicon*, “hell”). In contrast to *Sheol* (*Hades*), *Gehenna* is the lake of fire, where in the future unsaved people will be thrown and burned up (Rev. 20:15), and the Devil and his demons will also be thrown and eventually destroyed (Matt. 25:41; Rev. 20:10). No one is in *Gehenna* at this time.

In contrast to *Sheol* (*Hades*), the state of being dead, and to *Gehenna*, the lake of fire that will destroy the enemies of God, Tartarus is a prison where gods (demons) who have sinned are kept, as this verse says, “to be held for judgment.” Interestingly, 1 Peter 3:19 says God put the demons in “prison,” using the standard word for prison, *phulake* (#5438 φυλακή). It makes sense that God has a prison for the demons who committed specific sins. In Greek mythology, Tartarus was the deepest region of the world, placed beneath the Underworld itself. According to the Greek legends, the powerful gods locked away enemy gods in Tartarus. There would be a kernel of truth in these legends, as there are in most legends, because by the time they were formed, God had indeed locked away some demons in Tartarus so they could sin no more, but just await judgment in prison. Gradually Tartarus became identified in Greek legend as a place where serious criminals were tortured, but there is no reason to believe God tortures the demons in prison. (Pierre Grimal: *The Dictionary of Classical Mythology* (Basil Blackwell Publisher Limited, New York, 1986), “Tartarus.”).

“chains.” The Greek texts are divided, with some reading *seira* (#4577 σειρά), a chain or rope, and others having *sirois*, (σιροις; no occurrence in the NT), which is a pit, specifically for storing grain. Scholars favor *seira*, a chain, because it has the oldest and widest breadth of textual witnesses, nevertheless, a number of modern versions read something such as “pits of darkness.” We have no knowledge of what kind of “chain” (or for that matter, what kind of prison) would hold a demon. The spiritual world is completely different from our physical world, but nevertheless there are spiritual realities that are as completely real to spirit beings as our physical realities are real to us. The Bible mentions many things that exist in the spirit world. They dress in clothing, have weapons (swords), worship at a Temple, sit on thrones, and much more.

2:8. “kept torturing *his* righteous soul.” The Greek verb *basanizo* (#928 βασανίζω) is in the active voice, imperfect tense. Lot kept torturing himself by his decision to live in Sodom. Some versions try to get Lot “off the hook” by translating the verb as a passive, saying something like, “Lot’s soul was tormented,” but that is clearly not the force of the text, nor is it historically accurate. Lot, when given the choice by Abraham, chose to live in Sodom. If he did not know what it was like before he moved there (he probably did), he certainly would have found out very quickly and could have moved elsewhere, even back near his Uncle Abraham. Instead, like so many people, he acted to his own hurt, and thus tortured himself. People would spare themselves a lot of hurt and pain if they would not make poor decisions that end up only hurting them.

“his righteous soul.” The Greek has no article and no pronoun, and thus would read, “a righteous soul.” Of course, the context makes it clear that the righteous soul is his own. The understatement makes the reality hit home harder.

2:9. “godly.” See Acts 10:2 note on “godly man.”

“while continuing their punishment.” The wicked are being punished now. There are demons in chains, and even the wicked who are “free” and “powerful” on earth experience the wrath of God (Romans 1:18; The wrath of God is *now* being revealed...). They have no love, or joy, or true peace, or a real hope, or anything else that makes life a blessing. Lenski, Meyer, and other commentators recognize that the verse is saying that the wicked are being punished now, and will also experience the Judgment (and eventual extermination). However, most orthodox Christian commentators think that the punishment referred to in this verse is the wicked dead being in Hell, even before the Day of Judgment. That is not the case. Even the wicked, when they die, are asleep waiting the resurrection.

2:10. “defaming.” The Greek verb *blasphēmeō* (#987 βλασφημῶ) means showing disrespect to a person or deity, and/or harming his, her, or its reputation. (For more on *blasphēmeō*, see commentary on Matt. 9:3).

“the glories.” The Word is not clear about what these glories are. Some commentators says they are God, Christ, or angels, Lenski says they are the glories of Christ. They may include any or all of the various glories of God’s creation, all of which are blasphemed by false teachers and ungodly people.

2:12. “defaming.” See “defaming” in verse 10.

“in their destruction will indeed be destroyed.” The ultimate meaning of this verse is that when unsaved people are thrown into Gehenna, they will be totally and finally destroyed. The “destruction” of the ungodly is not temporary. It is complete and final.

“indeed.” The use of the intensifying *kai* (usually “and”). Cp. Lenski.

2:14. “eyes full of an adulteress.” This is the literal Greek. Most versions read “full of adultery,” but the noun is concrete, “an adulteress.” This might have hit home more powerfully in the first century than it does now, because a contemporary saying was that a shameless man had harlots, not “*kora*” in his eyes (The Greek word *kora* (κωρα) was a homonym meaning “young girl” or “pupil of the eye” (Norman Hillyer, *New International Biblical Commentary*; and *Liddell and Scott Greek English Lexicon*) This verse speaks very powerfully to images that get implanted in the brain and are hard to remove. Men are visually stimulated, and pornography and other images of women stay in their mind and can be extremely hard to get rid of. A man who has been involved in sexual sin can literally have his mental eye full of an adulteress. The best way not to have to deal with that problem is not get involved in the first place.

2:18. “those who are just escaping from those who live in error.” (cp. Lenski; also *New International Bible Commentary*). The new converts are the special victims of the false teachers who entice by the flesh, the new converts are just in the process of escaping from the world. The rendering, “barely escaped,” as many versions have, is not as clear.

3:12. “earnestly desire.” The Greek word is *spēudō* (#4692 σπεύδω) and it can mean to hasten (transitive meaning) or to eagerly expect (intransitive meaning). Many translations say something such as the NIV, “and speed its coming,” or have a similar phrase that indicates that we humans can do something to speed the coming of the Day of God. Although many theologians support this translation, and think we can do something to make the Day of

God come faster, verses that are given in support of that belief (such as Matt. 6:10; 1 Pet. 2:12 and comparing those with verses such as Matt. 13:58 where unbelief hinders the work of God) do not in fact support that conclusion, but only indicate the Kingdom is coming sometime in the future. There is not, in fact, a single verse of Scripture that clearly says we can modify the timing of the Day of the Lord by our behavior. In fact, the Bible is clear that before the Day of the Lord, the situation in the world will get worse and worse, and many people will even turn from the faith (Matt. 24:14; 2 Thess. 2:3; 1 Tim. 4:1; 2 Tim. 3:1, 13; 2 Pet. 3:3; Jude 18). Lenski writes: “We question whether the holy conduct of Christians can hasten the day of judgment, whether this is the teaching of the Bible. The decline of faith and the coldness of love would have more of a tendency to hurry that day along. The verb [*speudō*] is widely used in the sense of “to be eager” (see Liddell and Scott for illustrations), which fits perfectly here as an intensifying synonym of ‘expecting.’” (R. C. H. Lenski, commentary on 2 Pet. 3:12). We agree with Lenski that it seems clear that it is things on earth getting worse as mankind gets more evil, and not that believer’s get more holy, that is the harbinger of the Day of the Lord.

3:16. “distort.” The Greek is *strebloo* (#4761 στρεβλόω), and it means to “torture” them, to “put them on the rack.” Thus it was used metaphorically of those who distorted or tortured language. Ignorant people constantly distort Scripture, but there is coming a day when God will vindicate both Himself and what He has said.

“The rest of the Scriptures.” Cp. Lenski and the NASB. That is the sense here. The word “Scriptures” is plural.

