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Structural Analysis of 2 Peter via Outline

I. INTRODUCTION 1:1-2

A. Simon Peter

1. Bondservant of Jesus Christ

B. To those who have obtained

1. Like precious faith with us (other believers)

i. By the righteousness of Jesus Christ

Our God and Savior (Deity and source of Salvation)

There is a lot to unpack in this introduction. Why does Peter feel the need to identify himself by his pre-Jesus ministry name AND his name given by Jesus here? Jesus renamed him Peter/Cephas. He identifies as a slave of Jesus Christ, Christ referencing the Messiah of the Old Testament for the Jewish converts to recognize. Written to fellow believers. He identifies Jesus' deity and double-so as the true source of salvation (righteousness and salvation).

II. WHAT GOD HAS DONE 1:3-21

A. His divine power has given us all things 1:3

B. Through the knowledge of Him who called us

1. By glory and virtue (characteristics of God)

2. By which have been given to us exceedingly great promises

i. Partakers of divine nature

ii. Escaped corruption/lust

C. Because of this be diligent to add 1:5

1. Virtue, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love.

2. With these you will be fruitful in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ

3. Those lacking in these are short-sighted and blind to the past sins they were cleansed from

4. Be diligent to make your call and election sure

D. Though you know these things, I will remind you, 1:12 to stir you up as I will not be with you long.

E. Moreover I am taking steps to ensure you will always have a reminder of these things

F. I share my eyewitness account that God verified Jesus' authenticity.

G. No prophecy of Scripture came from man's mind, but was inspired by God – moved by the Holy Spirit. 1:20

Peter shares here that he knows he will not be with them much longer but that it is important to remind them of these things in order to stir them up into action, as long as he is alive he will continue to do so. He reminds them that salvation and new relationship they are now in with God is wholly of God's mercy and power and that they are to remain in it, being diligent to make sure they are not fooled, but that they have actually made a decision for Christ, escaping the corruption of the world. He also shares the he is making provision to ensure his testimony is preserved for them even in his future absence, this could be a reference to his letters. He also confirms that Scripture does not originate in man, but is the work of God and man is moved by the Holy Spirit and directed, instilling confidence in God's Word as to its true source.

III. FALSE PROPHETS AND TEACHERS 2:1-22

A. As in the past, false teachers will come now

1. With destructive heresies

2. Denying the Lord

3. Many will follow

- 4. They will exploit you – covetousness
 - i. with deceptive words

False teachers never seem to be that hard to discover when their fruits are weighed, that is, by true believers. The real risk then is that unbelievers might be falsely led into the idea that they are saved when in fact they are not. Those who are truly saved should be able to pick out a false teacher fairly easily based on these attributes if they avoid the downfall of allowing flattery to distort their perception of the situation.

B. God did not spare the angels who sinned or the ancient world

- 1. Angels – held for judgement
- 2. Sodom and Gomorrah – punished
- 3. These false prophets too will suffer His wrath in the end.

C. The Lord knows how to deliver the godly from temptation 2:9-10

D. The Lord knows how to deliver the unjust to punishment

E. The marks of false prophets/teachers: 2:11-22

- 1. They are presumptuous and self-willed
- 2. Like natural brute beasts they speak evil of things they do not understand
- 3. Their hearts are trained in covetous practices and are accursed
- 4. They are wells without water
- 5. Whom is reserved blackness of darkness forever (also quoted in Jude)
- 6. Lead astray those who are escaping those who live in error (dragging them back in)
- 7. Promising liberty but are slaves themselves
- 8. As a dog returns to its vomit, so they lead others back to their sin

Peter provides another great list marking out the character traits of false teachers. He also speaks to the fact that believers can rest assured in the fact that God knows how to deal with these people in the end. The problem is the damage that they can cause before that time, and to the detriment of the unbeliever who may not receive the true Gospel message.

IV. TRUE PROPHETS AND APOSTLES 3:1-8

A. Peter writes to stir up and remind of the former true prophets and Apostles from God

- 1. They warned that scoffers would come in the last days
- 2. Seeking their own lusts
- 3. Saying “Where is he? Things carry on as they always have”
- 4. But, they forget the same Word that spoke them into existence keeps them thus until the day of judgement. (The work isn’t yet finished) 3:7

Peter points out a remarkable reminder to these foolish false teachers. Their claim is that things continue on as they always have, but he reminds them that the same Creator who made it all, still persists and carries existence on as He always had. Their error is that they either do not believe He exists or that He continues on in the process. Peter points out that nothing would exist (in there here and now) without His active involvement, and that it will all end at His judgement. (Believers have hope in the judgment with new things to come, non-believers have only wrath).

V. GOD’S DELAY AND PROMISE 3:9-16

A. God’s timescale and timetable is different than mans.

- i. Man’s lifetime is far too short to see the entirety of God’s plan

- ii. He is eternal, man is finite. What's a day to God, what's a thousand years? Anything to Him? There's quite a difference to a man, not to Him.
- B. God tarries because He desires that more might be saved, He is not slack, He is merciful.
- C. The coming of the Lord is not scheduled or known by man – it's not a calendar event
 - 1. He will come like a thief in the night 3:10
 (likely because man's corruptible heart might take advantage of that knowledge and sin between now and that time)
- D. When that time does come 3:10
 - 1. The heavens will pass away
 - 2. The elements will melt with fervent heat
 - 3. The earth and all its works will be burned up
- E. Knowing this, what manner of persons ought you to be? 3:11
 - 1. Those in holy conduct and godliness.
- F. His promise 3:13-16
 - 1. Look for new heavens and a new earth
 - 2. Look forward to these things
 - 3. Be diligent, to be found in peace, spotless, blameless
 - 4. Remember Paul's writings about longsuffering with the end being our sure salvation
 - i. The end of our current suffering is our sure salvation

One often misused Scripture is that of "with the Lord a day is like a thousand years and a thousand years is like a day" in reference to 2 Peter and then Genesis in regards to the Creation account. They use it as a crux for their desire to minimize the miracle of God's Creation to fit it with a man-made evolutionary model of millions or billions of years in an effort to marry two ideas. It is always a danger to mesh God's plain explanation with man's desired outcome. Genesis goes to the pains of defining a day with sunrise and sunset, but still they press the issue. What is actually being said here is that God's timeline, His presence is so outside of the realm of time as it relates to man that it is truly incomprehensible to us. For a man, the difference between a day and a thousand years is monumental. To God, there is no gray hair that appears in that span for Him. This doesn't mean that He lies to us about His timescales He provides to use in writing. It simply means that man is finite, and He is infinite. Mankind once thought the world was flat... forcing that onto the biblical text (even though it was widely accepted by leading scientific minds of the day) would also have been wrong to do. Man's understanding and hypothesis change, but the Word of God is constant.

- VI. CONCLUSION 3:17-18
 - A. Now that you have been warned
 - 1. Do not be led away with the error of the wicked
 - 2. Grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord
 - B. To Him be the glory now and forever. Amen