

Books of The Bible A Survey of Second Peter

- b) Is God so pathetically anemic that He has to use a forgery to teach the truth?

For myself, I believe Peter wrote the book for the following reasons:

- a) God does not need a deceiver to write a book on Christian ethics by passing himself off as an apostle.
- b) Peter is named as the author (ch. 1:1; 1:14 with Jn. 21:18-19). Incidentally, the conjunction of these references in 2 Pet. 1:14 and Jn. 21:18-19 indicate that Peter was an old man when he wrote this.
- c) He refers to this as: "this second epistle . . . I now write unto you" (ch. 3:1)
- d) He was one of the three who were with the Lord on the Holy mount at the transfiguration, referring to himself and the others as "eyewitnesses" (ch. 1:16; Matt. 17:1-5; Mk. 9:2-9; Lk. 9:28-36).
- e) With Peter being an old man he is taking stock of life and what the priorities were that he must focus on. There is nothing here about business, family, etc., for that which is his focus is the care for the saints after his decease. The consciousness of the temporariness of life should cause us to take stock of what we've done with our lives and how that which we have presented to others is going to be used by God in the future.
- f) If we accept that First Peter is the letter referred to in Second Pet 3:1, then the first readers are the same for both epistles. They were:
 - i) "The strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia." (1 Pet. 1:1)
 - ii) "To them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ." (2 Pet. 1:1)
- g) The last recorded words of an individual are always solemn and God takes particular notice of the last words and writings of certain individuals. Jacob (Gen. 49:1-33); David (2 Sam. 23:1-7); Paul (2 Tim., the entire book); Peter (2 Pet., the entire book).

The Recipients

This is a general letter to all saints, irrespective of time, place, or culture; a matter which is seen by to whom he addresses this letter.

- a) "To them that have obtained like precious faith with us" (ch. 1:1)
- b) Brethren, chosen and called (ch. 1:10)
- c) Those who appreciated the truth previously taught and now put into written form (ch. 1:12)
- d) Those who were afflicted with false teachers (ch. 2:1)
- e) "The beloved" (ch. 3:1, 8, 14, 17)

In this way it is similar to the letter written to the church at Corinth. It is open to all the saints of Christian communities (1 Cor. 1:2).

The Background and Theme For His Writing

It is against a triplet of bad doctrines that Peter writes to the saints.

- 1) The determined attitude of false teachers who were intent on causing as much damage as possible. There were three particular groups of false teachers:
 - a) **Gnostics** taught that along with believing in Christ, one must also receive the gnosis or esoteric knowledge. Peter refuted this teaching by stressing the fact that they had already received the true knowledge (2 Pet. 1:16-21).
 - b) **Antinomians** taught that since salvation was by grace alone, therefore, the requirements of the moral law were irrelevant. To answer this Peter devotes the second chapter.
 - c) A third group were the **skeptics** concerning the coming of the Lord and the end of the world. To their teaching he devotes the third chapter.
- 2) Perhaps his great purpose was to strengthen the believers in their faith and hope, so they would be on their guard and not carried away by the errors of false teachers (cf. 2 Pet. 3:17, 18).

Key Words

- 1) Know (2 occurrences, ch. 1:12; 3:17)
- 2) Knowledge (7 occurrences, ch. 1:2, 3, 5, 6, 8; 2:20; 3:18)
- 3) Remembrance (4 occurrences, ch. 1:12; 13, 15; 3:1)
- 4) Longsuffering (2 occurrences, ch. 3:9, 15)
- 5) Diligence (2 occurrences, ch. 1:5, 10)
- 6) Corruption (3 occurrences, ch. 1:4; 2:12, 19)
- 7) Shall (12 occurrences, ch. 1:8, 10, 11; 2:1, 2, 3, 12, 13; 3:3, 10, 11, 12)

Key Concepts

- 1) Never be contented with your level of spirituality. Always be adding to it, that is, becoming more spiritual.
- 2) Do not take everyone at face value. There are false prophets and teachers who seek under the energies of Satan to destroy the saints.
- 3) Live in the consciousness that there is another world and this one is going to pass away.

The Manifestation of Divine Persons

1) God

- a) Throughout his epistle Peter brings to the saint's attention the attributes, abilities, and relationships of God.
 - i) Attributes
 1. He is righteous (ch. 1:1); powerful for He gives such great promises (ch. 1:4); divine (ch. 1:4)
 - ii) Abilities
 1. Provides enablement (ch. 1:4); gave the scriptures through "holy men of God" (ch. 1:21); is unflinching in His execution of judgment (ch. 2:4-6); can deliver His own (ch. 2:9); His creative, maintaining abilities and removal rights (ch. 3:5-6); His perspective on time (ch. 3:8).
 - iii) Relationships
 1. He is God the Father (ch. 1:17)

2) Christ

- a) It is interesting to observe that in contrast with 1 Peter where the sufferings of the Lord are mentioned in every chapter, in 2 Peter the only reference to His earthly sojourn is His transfiguration (ch. 1:16-18).
- b) Descriptive names of Christ
 - i) Our Saviour Jesus Christ (ch. 1:1)
 - ii) Jesus our Lord (ch. 1:2)
 - iii) Lord Jesus Christ (ch. 1:8)
 - iv) Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (ch. 1:11; 2:20; 3:18)
 - v) Beloved Son (ch. 1:17)
 - vi) Lord (ch. 2:1)
 - vii) Lord and Saviour (ch. 3:2)

3) The Holy Spirit

- a) There's only one reference the Holy Ghost (ch. 1:21)

Some Of The Characteristics Of The Epistle

While it is small (only sixty-one verses), it deals with catastrophic themes such as:

- a) The flood (ch. 3:5-6)
- b) The overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah (ch. 2:6)
- c) The end of the world (ch. 3:7, 10-12)

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- d) The new heavens and earth (ch. 3:13)
- e) The Day of the Lord (ch. 3:10)
- f) The Day of God (ch. 3:12)

It is the only epistle which speaks of the transfiguration of our Lord, and unlike the 1st epistle, it never mentions His sufferings or death which leads to the question, “What is the significance of the transfiguration?”

2 Peter and The Old Testament

There are a number of Old Testament quotations in First Peter such as: (ch. 1:24–25 with Isa. 40:6; ch. 2:6 with Isa. 28; ch. 2:7 with Psa. 118:22; ch. 2:8 with Isa. 8:14; ch. 2:24 with Isa. 53:5; ch. 2:25 with Isa. 53:6; ch. 3:10-12 with Psa. 34:12-16; ch. 4:8 with Prov. 10:12; ch. 5:5 with Prov. 3:34)

By contrast I can only find three quotations in Second Peter which are:

- a) The dog returning to it's vomit (2 Pet. 2:22 and Prov. 26:11)
- b) The judgment of God in the death of all because of the flood (2 Pet. 3:6 and Gen. 7:21)
- c) The new heavens and a new earth (2 Pet. 3:13 and Isa. 65:17; 66:22)

There are a number of allusions or similarities of thought between 2 Peter and the Old Testament.

They are:

- a) The waters on the earth before the work of remodeling the earth (2 Pet. 3:5–6, and Gen. 1:1)
- b) The reference to the flood (2 Pet. 2:5 and Gen. 8:1–22)
- c) The destruction of Sodom and Gommorah (2 Pet. 2:6 and Gen. 19:1–38)
- d) The mention of Balaam (2 Pet. 2:15–16 and Num. 22:1–41)
- e) A thousand years as a day (2 Pet. 3:8 and Psa. 90:4)
- f) The removal of the earth and heavens (2 Pet. 3:10 and Psa. 102:26)

Words Peculiar to 2 Peter

There are at least forty-seven words peculiar to this epistle, that is, they are found nowhere else in the New Testament.

Word	Reference	Word	Reference	Word	Reference
Like Precious	Ch. 1:1	Privily bring in	Ch. 2:1	Madness	Ch. 2:16
Exceeding great	Ch. 1:4	Feigned	Ch. 2:3	Rebuked	Ch. 2:16
Cannot see afar off	Ch. 1:9	Now a long time / old	Ch. 2:3; 3:5	Pollutions	Ch. 2:20
Having forgotten	Ch. 1:9	Lingereth	Ch. 2:3	Vomit	Ch. 2:22
Swift	Ch.1:14; 2:1	Chains	Ch. 2:4	Sow	Ch. 2:22
Always	Ch. 1:15	Hell	Ch. 2:4	Mire	Ch. 2:22
Remembrance	Ch. 1:15	Ashes	Ch. 2:6	Wallowing	Ch. 2:22
Eye witnesses	Ch. 1:17	Seeing	Ch. 2:8	Overflowed	Ch. 3:6
Such	Ch. 1:17	Dwelling	Ch. 2:8	Slackness	Ch. 3:9

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Word	Reference	Word	Reference	Word	Reference
Excellent	Ch. 1:17	Uncleanness	Ch. 2:10	Great noise	Ch. 3:10
Dark	Ch. 1:19	To be taken	Ch. 2:12	Melt	Ch. 3:12
Dawn	Ch. 1:19	Blemishes	Ch. 2:13	Unlearned	Ch. 3:16
Daystar	Ch. 1:19	Sporting	Ch. 2:13	Hard to be understood	Ch. 3:16
Interpretation	Ch. 1:20	Unstable	Ch. 2:14; 3:16	Wrest	Ch. 3:16
False teachers	Ch. 2:1	Cannot cease	Ch. 2:14	Steadfastness	Ch. 3:17

Comparisons

Comparison between 1st and 2nd Peter

From the use of the word “both” (2 Pet. 3:1) it is clear the Holy Spirit is indicating a similarity of purpose between the first and second epistles. That in capsule, is to remember the “words spoken before by the holy prophets” whether they had to do with the “salvation . . . that should come unto you . . . the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when It (He, the Holy Spirit) testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow” (1 Pet. 1:10-11) and “That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets” (2 Pet. 3:2). The considerations then are:

- a) Just as the predicted sufferings of Christ were prophesied and came to pass and had a practical effect (1 Pet. 1:10-16) so the prophecies concerning evil men among the saints also came to pass.
- b) He also wrote to remind them of Jesus' commandment. While there is no reference to a specific commandment I would understand this to be that of Matt. 28:19, “To make disciples of all nations”.

1st Peter	Refs.	2nd Peter	Refs.
The key thought is sympathetic association and exemplary conduct when suffering	Ch. 2:21; 3:18	The key thought is to live beyond the present for the other world is not only beyond us, but is just beyond our present vision.	Ch. 1:16-18
To a persecuted church to encourage them to stand against an external foe	Ch. 3:14	To persecuted gatherings and encourages them to stand against an internal foe, the false teachers	Ch. 2:1-3; 10-20
He presents himself as Peter, an apostle	Ch. 1:1	He presents himself as Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle	Ch. 1:1
Multiple references to the sufferings of the Lord	Ch. 1:11; 2:21; 3:18; 4:1; 5:1	No references to His sufferings but one to His transfiguration	Ch. 1:17-18
The characteristics of the false teachers	Ch. 3:14	The characteristics of the false teachers	Ch. 2:1-18

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1st Peter	Refs.	2nd Peter	Refs.
Written to encourage	Ch. 5:12	Written to warn and remember	See Keywords
Lessons from the flood	Ch. 3:20-21	Deals with the flood	Ch. 2:5

Comparison between 2 Peter and Jude

Because of the similarity between 2 Peter and Jude it has been an ongoing question, “Which was written first?” It is my understanding that 2 Peter was written first for the following reasons:

- a) From the change of tense and wording between Jude 18 and 2 Peter 2:1.
 - i) Peter writes: “There shall be false teachers among you”, that is, they are future (2 Pet. 2:1); whereas Jude writes of such writings as past tense (Jude 18), “How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time.”
 - ii) Another observation is that Peter was an apostle but Jude speaks of the apostles and their words in the past tense. “The words which were spoken before of the apostles . . . how that they told you (Jude 17-18).

While it is true that 2 Peter and Jude are almost identical to each other, the key word is “almost” for they are not totally identical. There are a number of similarities but there are also significant contrasts. The similarity between 2 Peter and Jude is very evident as shall be shown. However, one remarkable difference is that while both are synchronized in order of material, yet when it deals with chronology, only 2 Peter is chronologically correct.

Peter uses Noah and then speaks of Lot (2 Pet. 2:5-9) with (Gen. 6 and 19), whereas Jude speaks of the deliverance of the children of Israel and the result through disobedience, then goes back to the angels which sinned, and then forward again to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah hundreds of years before the release from Egypt (Jude 5-7).

Contrasts

- 1) In 2 Peter it appears to be in the future tense. This is normally based on one instance of the word, and not its use throughout the book. Yet the words of ch. 2:10-20 apparently is in the present tense.
 - a) The use of the word “shall”
 - i) “But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them and bring upon themselves swift destruction” (ch. 2:1)
 - ii) “And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of” (ch. 2:2)
 - iii) “And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not” (ch. 2:3)
 - iv) “Shall utterly perish” (ch. 2:12)
 - v) “Shall receive the reward of unrighteousness” (ch. 2:13)
- 2) Present Tense - Chapter 2
 - a) The following words are all present active or present passive active indicating a continuous or repeated action:
 - i) Verse 10 - despise speak, or despising, speaking
 - ii) Verse 12 - speak
 - iii) Verse 13 - sporting
 - iv) Verse 14 - having, beguiling

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- b) The following words are all present passive indicating:
- i) Verse 10 - walk indicates walking, etc.
 - ii) Verse 13 - count
 - iii) Verse 17 - carried
 - iv) Verse 18 - speak
 - v) Verse 19 - promise
- 3) Furthermore, Peter mentions matters Jude does not write concerning. For instance, Jude does not mention:
- a) The Lord's delivering power relative to Lot (ch. 2:9)
 - b) Noah (2 Pet. 2:5)
 - c) The flood (ch. 2:5)
 - d) The end of the world (ch. 3:7, 10-12)
 - e) The new heavens and earth (ch. 3:13)
 - f) The Day of the Lord (ch. 3:10)
 - g) The Day of God (ch. 3:12)
- 4) Both 2 Peter and Jude refer to:
- a) The overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah (ch. 2:6; Jude 1:7)
 - b) A coming judgment on the ungodly (ch. 2:9; Jude 1:15)
 - c) The ancient fathers, 2 Peter refers to Noah whereas Jude refers to Enoch, and both specifically mention where they were in the order from Adam.

2 Peter	Jude
"Simon Peter, a servant" (ch. 1:1)	"Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ" (v.1)
"Grace and peace be multiplied" (ch. 1:2)	"Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied" (v.2)
"To them that have obtained like precious faith" (ch. 1:1)	"To write unto you of the common salvation" (v.3)
Peter stresses deliverance of people and the holy commandment (2 Pet. 2:4, 7, 9; 2:21)	Jude stresses the deliverance of the faith unto the saints (v.3)
"Having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (ch. 1:4)	The development of the corruption. (vv.4, 8, 16)
"I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things though ye know them". (ch. 1:12)	"Put you in remembrance" (v.5)
Uses historical cases to prove the point (ch. 1:16-17; 2:4-6)	Uses historical cases to prove the point (vv.5, 11)
"But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that brought them" (ch. 2:1)	"Ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ" (v.4)

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2 Peter	Jude
“For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgement” (ch. 2:4)	“And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgement of the great day” (v.6)
“And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly” (ch. 2:6)	“Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire” (v.7)
“But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities” (ch. 2:10)	“Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities” (v.8)
“Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord” (ch. 2:11)	“Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee” (v.9)
“But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption” (ch. 2:12)	“But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves” (v.10)
“They feast with you” (ch. 2:13)	“Feast with you” (v.12)
“Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness”. (ch. 2:15)	“Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core” (v.11)
“These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest” (ch. 2:17)	“Clouds they are without water, carried about of winds.” (v.12)
“If these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ” (ch. 1:8)	“Trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots” (v.12)
“Through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you” (ch. 2:3) “For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error” (ch. 2:18)	“These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men’s persons in admiration because of advantage” (v.16)

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2 Peter	Jude
“That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour” (ch. 3:2)	“But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ” (v.17)
“Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts” (ch. 3:3)	“How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts” (v.18)
“Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot and blameless” (ch. 3:14)	“Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy” (v.24)
“But grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen” (ch. 3:18)	“To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen” (v.25)

[Survey](#)

It is my understanding that the goal of Second Peter is to exhort the saints to know the Lord. With that perspective, I present the following survey.

Second Peter		
The knowledge of Divine Persons and their encouragements	The Knowledge of Divine Persons and the opposition by Satan	The knowledge of Divine Persons and exhortation to look beyond the present
The divine provisions for growth: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • His divine power (ch. 1:3) • His divine promises (ch. 1:4) • A partaker of His divine nature (Ch. 1:4) 	False teachers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their doctrine defined (ch. 2:1a) • Their judgment assured (ch. 2:1b) • The evil results & motivations (ch. 2:2-2-3a) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The mockery of divine revelation because of spiritual blindness (ch. 3:1-4) • The mockery of men does not: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▸ nullify the lessons of history (ch. 3:5-6) ▸ Negate the pledge of coming judgment (ch. 3:7, 10-12) • The divine truth applied

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<p>The divine injunction to grow by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal diligence (ch. 1:5-10a) • Prophetic assurance (ch. 1:10b-11) <p>The divine provision for assurance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need for remembrance (ch. 1:12-15) supported by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▸ The written material (ch. 1:12-15) ▸ The pledge from the transfiguration (ch. 1:16-18) • The finality of the scriptures (ch. 1:19-21) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their assured judgment illustrated (ch. 2:3b-6) • The preservation of the saints (ch. 2:7-9) • Their description and doings (ch. 2:10-20) • Their assured judgment (ch. 2:19-22) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The divine injunction reiterated (ch. 3:14-18)
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Practical lessons

1) Thoughts concerning Lot

- a) Lot is an illustration of many saints who live in a situation in which they are deeply grieved. It would appear that Lot's wife was emotionally connected to Sodom, else she would not have turned back to take a last look at the place of memories, and was one of the reasons he had to stay there. However, to go there was his choice. Yet, in this sphere of corruption he lived in fellowship with God. The man was "vexed" and the word indicates there was something active on the part of Lot which produced this distress on account of the conduct he witnessed. He was a man who lived in the awareness that God must judge sin and it was only a time before the judgement fell. It was more than being vexed by their deeds, but also the sorrow he had to carry as he contemplated their condition before God. Why did he not leave? That we do not know but from him we can learn that for whatever reason or reasons, he stayed in Sodom, at that time the most corrupt place on the earth.
 - i) The use of the word "vexed" would seem to imply that there was something active on the part of Lot which produced this distress on account of their conduct. He was not merely troubled as if his soul was passively acted on. There were strong mental exercises of a positive kind, arising perhaps from anxious solicitude of how he might prevent their evil conduct; or from painful reflections on the consequences of their deeds to themselves; or from earnest pleadings on their behalf before God; or from reproofs and warnings of the wicked.
 - ii) He was compelled to live in this situation

2) Why did He not move?

- a) While one cannot say for sure, there are possible reasons:
 - i) Perhaps to endeavor to do them good
 - ii) Perhaps his wife refused to move

3) What can we learn from this?

- a) Lot, for whatever reason or reasons, lived in Sodom. At that time it was the most corrupt place on the earth.
 - i) An individual in fellowship with the Lord can maintain spirituality in his own life when surrounded by the wicked.
 - ii) It shows the effects which the conduct of the wicked will have on a man of true piety when he is compelled to witness it constantly.

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- iii) He will not be contaminated with their wickedness, or will not conform to their evil customs.
- iv) He will not become indifferent to it, but his heart will be more and more affected by their depravity. (Comp. Psa. 119:136; Lk. 19:41; Acts 17:16)
- v) He will have not only constant, but growing vexation from it. It will not only be at intervals that his mind will be affected by their conduct, but it will be a habitual and constant thing. True piety is not fitful, periodical, and spasmodic; it is constant and steady.
- vi) He will seek to do them good. We may suppose that this was the case with Lot. We are certain that it is a characteristic of true religion to seek to do well to all, however wicked they may be.
- vii) He will secure their confidence. He will practice no improper arts to do this. It will be one of the usual results of a life of integrity that a good man will secure the confidence of even the wicked. It does not appear that Lot lost that confidence, and the whole narrative in Genesis leads us to suppose that even the inhabitants of Sodom regarded him as a good man. The wicked may hate a good man because he is good; but if a man lives as he should, they will regard him as upright, and they will give him the credit of it when he dies even if they should withhold it while he lives.
- viii) Not just the conscious knowledge that men are sinful, and disgust at it, nor at times seeing it or hearing it, but day after day, persistently it was before him. The marvel is the man did not become hardened by it or used to it, but was tormented by it.

**May God grant us good understanding as He, by His Holy Spirit, deigns to guide us into all truth.
John 16:13**

Rowan Jennings, Abbotsford, British Columbia