

2 Peter 3:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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:

Analysis

Chapter 3, verse 2 - Comprehensive theological analysis. Peter continues his urgent apostolic warning about the dangers facing the church. This verse contributes crucial insights to understanding false teachers' characteristics, God's judgment patterns, and believers' proper response. The Greek terminology reveals theological precision in Peter's argument, emphasizing both divine sovereignty in salvation and human responsibility in sanctification.

The immediate context connects to Peter's broader argument about maintaining doctrinal purity and moral integrity while awaiting Christ's return. Greek word studies illuminate the specific nature of the threats Peter identifies and the resources God provides for perseverance. This passage resonates with Old Testament prophetic warnings, Jesus' teaching about false prophets, and Paul's pastoral instructions, demonstrating biblical theology's consistency across testaments and authors.

Christ-centered interpretation reveals how this verse ultimately points to Jesus as the standard for truth, the source of power for godly living, and the coming Judge who will vindicate the faithful and condemn the wicked. The eschatological dimension reminds believers that present struggles occur within the larger framework of redemptive history culminating in Christ's glorious return and the establishment of the new heavens and new earth.

Historical Context

The first-century church faced unique challenges from both pagan Greco-Roman culture and Jewish opposition, while also contending with internal threats from false teachers who distorted apostolic doctrine. Peter writes in the shadow of Nero's persecution (AD 64-68) and his own approaching martyrdom, making this letter his urgent final testament to the churches. Early Gnostic influences promoting secret knowledge, antinomian ethics, and denial of Christ's physical return created the specific heresies Peter addresses.

Understanding the social, religious, and philosophical context of the Roman Empire illuminates Peter's concerns and arguments. The delay of Christ's parousia created pastoral challenges as expectations of imminent return gave way to questions about timing and certainty. Jewish apocalyptic literature, Greco-Roman moral philosophy, and mystery religions all influenced how different groups understood salvation, ethics, and eschatology, requiring apostolic clarification to maintain orthodox Christianity.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does this verse challenge compromises you might be tempted to make for cultural acceptance or personal comfort?
2. What practices would help you grow in discernment to recognize and resist false teaching in its contemporary forms?
3. How should the certainty of Christ's return and judgment shape your priorities, relationships, and use of time and resources?

Interlinear Text

μνησθῆναι τῶν προειρημένων ὥημάτων ὑπὸ τῶν
That ye may be mindful G3588 which were spoken before of the words by G3588
G3415 G4280 G4487 G5259

ἀγίων προφητῶν καὶ τῆς τῶν ἀποστόλων ἡμῶν
the holy prophets and G3588 the apostles of us
G40 G4396 G2532 G652 G2257

ἐντολῆς τοῦ κυρίου καὶ σωτῆρος
of the commandment of the Lord and Saviour
G1785 G2962 G2532 G4990

Additional Cross-References

Jude 1:17 (Word): But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ;

2 Peter 2:21 (Holy): For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.

Luke 1:70 (Holy): As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began:

Luke 24:44 (Word): And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.

Revelation 19:10 (Prophecy): And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

Acts 28:23 (Word): And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God,

persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening.

Acts 3:18 (Prophecy): But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.

Acts 3:21 (Holy): Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.

Acts 10:43 (Prophecy): To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.

Ephesians 2:20 (Prophecy): And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;

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