

## The Second Letter of Peter

### Chapter 1

From Simon<sup>a</sup> Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who've received faith as precious as ours, through the justice<sup>b</sup> of our God and Savior Jesus Christ. <sup>2</sup>May grace and peace be multiplied for you, though your knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

<sup>3</sup>After all, his<sup>c</sup> divine power has given us everything we need for life and reverence for God. We're given all this through the knowledge of the One who has called us to<sup>d</sup> his own glory and virtue.<sup>e</sup> <sup>4</sup>Through them, the greatest and most precious promises have been given to us. Because of them, you can escape from the corruption<sup>f</sup> that's in the world through lust, and be partners in the divine nature.<sup>g</sup> <sup>5</sup>And that's why you should do your very best to fill out your faith with virtue, your virtue with knowledge, <sup>6</sup>your knowledge with self-control, your self-control with endurance, your endurance with reverence for God, <sup>7</sup>your reverence for God with mutual affection, and your mutual affection with love. <sup>8</sup>If these things are in you and growing, they'll make you effective and fruitful<sup>h</sup>

as you come into the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>9</sup>Because the person without these qualities is blind and short-sighted. They're ignoring their cleansing from their past sins. <sup>10</sup>So try all the harder to make sure of your calling and election, brothers and sisters.<sup>i</sup> Because if you do these things, you'll be certain not to fail—<sup>11</sup>and your entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be generously provided for.<sup>j</sup>

<sup>12</sup>So I'm always going to remind you about these things—even though you know them, and you're well-grounded in the truth that you have.<sup>k</sup> <sup>13</sup>And I think it's right—as long as I'm in the tent of this mortal body<sup>l</sup>—to be stirring you up with reminders. <sup>14</sup>Because I know that the moment for taking off this tent of mine is coming very soon:<sup>m</sup> our Lord Jesus Christ has made that clear to me.<sup>n</sup> <sup>15</sup>So<sup>o</sup> I'm going to do my best to make sure that you'll always remember these things after my departure.

<sup>16</sup>Because when we told you about our Lord Jesus Christ's power, and about his coming, we weren't following clever myths. Far from it—we were eyewitnesses of his greatness. <sup>17</sup>Because when he received honor and glory from God the

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<sup>a</sup> Many mss spell it "Simeon" (see Acts 15:4).

<sup>b</sup> Traditionally, "righteousness".

<sup>c</sup> That is, Jesus Christ's.

<sup>d</sup> Or, "by".

<sup>e</sup> That is, Jesus. Some mss have "...called us through glory and virtue". Is Peter saying that we're given all we need through our knowledge of Jesus, or through his knowledge (see Isa. 53:11)?

<sup>f</sup> That is, rotteness, destruction.

<sup>g</sup> Lit. "...us, so that through these you may become sharers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that's in the world by lust".

<sup>h</sup> Lit. "they'll make you neither unproductive nor fruitless". In the Greek, the double negatives here

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("not unproductive", "not fruitless") convey a stronger, rather than weaker, positive sense.

<sup>i</sup> Lit. "make your calling and election reliable".

<sup>j</sup> Lit. "For, doing these things, you'll by no means ever stumble/fail, for thus entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be amply/richly provided to you".

<sup>k</sup> Lit. "in the truth that's present with you".

<sup>l</sup> Lit. "in this tent".

<sup>m</sup> Lit. "...reminders, knowing that the taking off of my tent is imminent". He knows he has only a very short time to live.

<sup>n</sup> Lit. "...soon, just as also our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me".

<sup>o</sup> Lit. "And also".

Father, a voice like this came<sup>a</sup> to him from the Majestic Glory: “This is my dear Son! I’m pleased with him!”<sup>18</sup> We were with him on that holy mountain, and we heard that voice coming from heaven.<sup>19</sup> And so we have all the more confidence in the message of the prophets.<sup>b</sup> You’ll do well to keep your attention on it: use it like a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns, and the morning star rises in your hearts.<sup>20</sup> Here’s the first point to understand:<sup>c</sup> none of the prophecies of scripture come out of somebody’s own interpretation.<sup>d</sup><sup>21</sup> Because prophecy never came by human will. No, it happened when people carried along by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

## Chapter 2

Now, there were also false prophets in Israel.<sup>e</sup> And in the same way, there are going to be false teachers among you. They’re going to bring in destructive philosophies—even denying the Master who bought them. They’ll bring swift destruction on themselves.<sup>f</sup><sup>2</sup> And lots of people are going to imitate<sup>g</sup> their promiscuous ways.<sup>h</sup> And because of them, the true Way<sup>i</sup> will be subjected to insults.<sup>3</sup> And in their greed for money, they’ll sell you<sup>j</sup>

made-up stories. Judgment has been ready for them for a long time, and their destruction is waiting attentively.<sup>k</sup>

<sup>4</sup>After all, God didn’t spare angels when they sinned—far from it. God threw them in dark caves<sup>l</sup> in the deepest part of the underworld, and handed them over to be kept there until the judgment.<sup>5</sup> And God certainly didn’t spare the ancient world, but brought a flood on the world<sup>m</sup> of the godless.<sup>n</sup> God only protected Noah, a preacher of justice,<sup>o</sup> and seven others.<sup>6</sup> And God condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to destruction<sup>p</sup> by reducing them to ashes. God made them an example to people who’d be godless in the future.<sup>q</sup><sup>7</sup> And God rescued Lot, who was a good person,<sup>r</sup> when he was being oppressed by the behavior of lawless, promiscuous people.<sup>8</sup> (As he lived among them, that good<sup>t</sup> man felt tormented<sup>u</sup> day

<sup>a</sup> Lit. “was conveyed”.

<sup>b</sup> Lit. “And so we hold the prophetic word to be more sure”.

<sup>c</sup> Lit. “...hearts, knowing this first:”

<sup>d</sup> Or, “are a matter of one’s own interpretation”.

<sup>e</sup> Lit. “in the people (sg.)”.

<sup>f</sup> Or, “...philosophies, and by denying the Master who bought them, they’ll bring swift destruction on themselves”.

<sup>g</sup> Lit. “follow”.

<sup>h</sup> Or, “licentiousness ways”.

<sup>i</sup> Lit. “the path of truth”. The first Christians called their spiritual path “the Way”. See Acts 9:2.

<sup>j</sup> Or, “they’ll exploit you with”.

<sup>k</sup> Lit. “Judgment hasn’t been idle for them from long ago, and their destruction is not falling asleep”. Judgment and destruction are personified here, and the double negatives, as in 2 Pet. 1:8, are for emphasis.

<sup>l</sup> Many mss have, “in bonds of darkness”, the Greek words for “bonds” and “caves” being very close in spelling.

<sup>m</sup> Or, “civilization”.

<sup>n</sup> Gen. 6–7.

<sup>o</sup> Traditionally, “righteousness”.

<sup>p</sup> Many mss lack the words “to destruction”; they are implied in any case.

<sup>q</sup> Lit. “...ashes, having made them an example to coming godless people”, or, following other mss, “to those who were about to live godlessly”.

<sup>r</sup> Or, “who was a just person”; traditionally, “righteous Lot”.

<sup>s</sup> Gen. 19:1-29.

<sup>t</sup> Or, “just”; traditionally, “righteous”.

<sup>u</sup> Lit. “tormented his soul”.

after day, as he saw and heard<sup>a</sup> lawless things being done.)

<sup>9</sup>If that's all true, then<sup>b</sup> the Lord knows how to save people who have reverence for God from temptation. And God knows how to keep unjust people under punishment for the day of judgment—<sup>10</sup>and especially those who follow their flesh in a lust for filthiness, and despise authority.

They're daring and self-centered. They insult glorious angelic beings without fear.<sup>c</sup> <sup>11</sup>Yet<sup>d</sup> angels, though they're greater in strength and power, don't bring insulting accusations against them.<sup>e</sup> <sup>12</sup>But these people are like irrational animals in nature—bred to be hunted down and killed.<sup>f</sup> They insult things they know nothing about, and they're going to be killed just like those animals.<sup>g</sup> <sup>13</sup>They'll be wronged, as their reward for doing wrong.<sup>h</sup> They regard carousing<sup>i</sup> in broad daylight as a pleasure. They're spots and stains—partying away in their self-deceptions.<sup>j</sup> They share your feasts, <sup>14</sup>their heads filled

with fantasies about<sup>k</sup> seducing people's spouses. They never stop sinning. With a heart trained in greed, they seduce people with weak personalities.<sup>l</sup> They're a cursed breed!<sup>m</sup> <sup>15</sup>They've gone astray and left the straight path, and have followed the path of Balaam the son of Besor.<sup>n</sup> He loved getting paid for doing wrong, <sup>16</sup>but he got told off for his lawlessness: a mute donkey spoke with a human voice, and stopped that prophet's madness.

<sup>17</sup>These people are springs with no water, mists swept along by a stormy wind.<sup>o</sup> The deepest darkness is reserved for them.

<sup>18</sup>They talk boastful nonsense, and they seduce people by appealing to their physical lusts for promiscuity. They prey on people who are barely escaping from the majority<sup>p</sup> who live in error. <sup>19</sup>They promise them freedom, but they themselves are still slaves of self-destruction.<sup>q</sup> After all, if something has mastered somebody, that's what they're enslaved to. <sup>20</sup>Because suppose they've escaped from the filthy ways<sup>r</sup> of the world through the knowledge of our Lord<sup>s</sup> and Savior Jesus Christ—but then they get mixed up in them all over again, and they're overcome by them. In the end, they're worse off

<sup>a</sup> Lit. "...day after day, by seeing and hearing".

<sup>b</sup> This is the conclusion of an extended "if-then" argument form that starts in v. 4. I've removed the "if"s and created sentences that stand on their own; otherwise vv. 4-10 would be all one long sentence.

<sup>c</sup> Lit. "They don't tremble when insulting glories".

<sup>d</sup> Lit. "Whereas".

<sup>e</sup> Some mss add the words, "in front of the Lord", or "from the Lord". Any of these three wordings may be original.

<sup>f</sup> Lit. "born for capture and destruction".

<sup>g</sup> Lit. "in their destruction [i.e. in the destruction of the animals captured through human hunting], they also are going to be destroyed".

<sup>h</sup> Some mss have, "They'll suffer the penalty for doing wrong".

<sup>i</sup> That is, to party to excess, with intoxication and promiscuity.

<sup>j</sup> Some mss have, "in their love feasts" (see Jude 12).

<sup>k</sup> Lit. "with eyes full of".

<sup>l</sup> Lit. "weak/unstable souls".

<sup>m</sup> Lit. "They're children of a curse". When *x* is a thing, "children of *x*" is a standard expression that conveys participation in, or belonging to, *x*. See, e.g., Mt. 8:12; 9:15; 13:38; Mk 3:28; Rom. 9:8; Eph. 2:2; 3:5; 1 Jn 3:10.

<sup>n</sup> "Besor" is usually spelled "Beor". Num. 22–24.

<sup>o</sup> See Jude 12.

<sup>p</sup> Lit. "those".

<sup>q</sup> Lit. "corruption", i.e. rotteness, a metaphor for behaviors that inevitably lead to the breakdown of people's physical health (see Gal. 6:8).

<sup>r</sup> Lit. "defilements".

<sup>s</sup> Some mss have, "the Lord".

than they were in the first place.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>21</sup>Because it would have been better for them not to know the path of integrity<sup>b</sup> at all, than to know it, and to turn away<sup>c</sup> from the holy commandment that had been handed down to them. <sup>22</sup>They've experienced what's said in this true proverb:

A dog goes back to its own vomit,<sup>d</sup>

And,

A washed pig goes back to roll in the mud.

### Chapter 3

Dear friends, this is now the second letter I've written to you. In both of them, I've been trying to reawaken<sup>e</sup> your genuine<sup>f</sup> understanding with reminders. <sup>2</sup>I've wanted to remind you of the things that have been said by the holy prophets—and of the command of the Lord and Savior that your apostles have given. <sup>3</sup>The first thing to understand is this: in the last days,<sup>g</sup> scoffers are going to be living in mockery of the faith. They'll be living according to their own lusts. <sup>4</sup>And they'll be saying, "What happened to<sup>h</sup> the promise of his coming? Because from the time that our ancestors passed away, everything's been<sup>i</sup> the same as it has been since the beginning of creation." <sup>5</sup>They say that

<sup>a</sup> Lit. "The last things have become worse for them than the first".

<sup>b</sup> Traditionally, "righteousness".

<sup>c</sup> Lit. "it would have been better for them not to have known the path of integrity/righteousness, than, having known it, to have turned away".

<sup>d</sup> Prov. 26:11.

<sup>e</sup> "...you, in which I am waking up".

<sup>f</sup> Or, "pure/unmixed".

<sup>g</sup> This expression "the last days" indicates the time of the transition between this current "age" and the glorious age to come (see Isa. 2:2ff; Acts 2:17).

<sup>h</sup> Lit. "Where is".

<sup>i</sup> Lit. "everything remains the same way".

because they're deliberately ignoring something:<sup>j</sup> the heavens and the earth were long ago put together, out of water, and through water, by God's word.

<sup>6</sup>Through those waters, the world of that time was destroyed by flooding. <sup>7</sup>And, by the same word, the present heavens and earth have been reserved for fire. They're being kept for the Day of Judgment, for the destruction of godless people.

<sup>8</sup>And here's one thing you shouldn't ignore,<sup>k</sup> dear friends: with the Lord, one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years is like one day.<sup>l</sup> <sup>9</sup>The Lord isn't slow about the promise—in the way that certain people regard him as slow.<sup>m</sup> Far from it—he's being patient with you.<sup>n</sup> He doesn't want people to be lost<sup>o</sup>—he wants everyone to get to the point of changing their life.<sup>p</sup> <sup>10</sup>But the Day of the Lord is going to come like a thief.<sup>q</sup> On that day,<sup>r</sup> the heavens are going to disappear with a roar,<sup>s</sup> and the elements will burn up and fall apart.<sup>t</sup> And the earth, and what's done in it, is going to be discovered.<sup>u</sup>

<sup>j</sup> Lit. "it escapes their attention willingly that".

<sup>k</sup> Lit. "And this one thing shouldn't escape your attention".

<sup>l</sup> Ps. 90:4.

<sup>m</sup> Lit. "as some reckon slowness".

<sup>n</sup> Some mss have, "he's being patient because of you".

<sup>o</sup> Lit. "...you, not wanting some to perish".

<sup>p</sup> Traditionally, "to reach repentance".

<sup>q</sup> See Mt. 24:43-44; Lk. 12:39-40; cf. 1 Thess. 5:2, 4; Rev. 3:3; 16:15.

<sup>r</sup> Lit. "in which".

<sup>s</sup> Or, "a whoosh".

<sup>t</sup> Or, "disintegrate".

<sup>u</sup> See Isa. 26:21. The mss are very divided about how this puzzling sentence should end: The oldest mss have "is going to be discovered"; other mss say "is going to be burned up completely"; some ancient translations have the word "not",

<sup>11</sup>Since everything's going to be destroyed like that,<sup>a</sup> what should you<sup>b</sup> be like? You should live holy and reverent lives,<sup>12</sup> as you wait for and work towards<sup>c</sup> the arrival of God's day. That day will set off the fiery disintegration of the heavens, and the elements will melt as they burn.<sup>d</sup> <sup>13</sup>But in line with God's promise, we're waiting for "a new heavens and a new earth",<sup>e</sup> where justice lives.

<sup>14</sup>So, dear friends, as you wait for these things, do your best to be found spotless and blameless—at peace with God.<sup>f</sup> <sup>15</sup>And look on our Lord Jesus' patience as your salvation. It's just like our dear brother Paul has also written to you, by the wisdom that's been given to him.<sup>g</sup> <sup>16</sup>He also talks about these things in all his letters. There are certain things in them that are hard to understand—which ignorant and unstable people twist. They also do the same thing to the other scriptures—leading to their own destruction. <sup>17</sup>So then, dear friends, be forewarned—be on your guard. Don't go along with the deception of lawless people and lose<sup>h</sup> your own stability. <sup>18</sup>Instead, grow in grace and the

knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Glory to him—both now and forever!<sup>i</sup> Amen.<sup>j</sup>

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producing "is *not* going to be discovered", i.e. "is not going to be found"; one has "is not going to be appear"; one says "is going to be found disintegrated"; and a number of Greek mss and ancient translations simply leave all or part of the clause out altogether.

<sup>a</sup> Some mss lack the words "like that", and make the word "since" explicit.

<sup>b</sup> Some mss have, "we", and some just leave it ambiguous between "you" and "we".

<sup>c</sup> Lit. "hastening".

<sup>d</sup> Lit. "...God's day, because of which the heavens, burning, will disintegrate, and the elements, burning up, will melt".

<sup>e</sup> Isa. 65:17; 66:22.

<sup>f</sup> Or, "spotless and blameless—at peace—by God".

<sup>g</sup> E.g. Rom. 2:4.

<sup>h</sup> Lit. "fall from".

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<sup>i</sup> Lit. "to the day of the age".

<sup>j</sup> Some mss lack the word "Amen".