

1 Peter

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To the exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus,
Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, who have been chosen and destined
by God the Father and sanctified by the Spirit to be obedient to Jesus Christ
and to be sprinkled with his blood: May grace and peace be yours in
5 abundance. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his
great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the
resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that is
imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who are being
protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be
10 revealed in the last time. In this you rejoice, even if now for a little while
you have had to suffer various trials, so that the genuineness of your faith--
being more precious than gold that, though perishable, is tested by fire--may
be found to result in praise and glory and honor when Jesus Christ is
revealed. Although you have not seen him, you love him; and even though
15 you do not see him now, you believe in him and rejoice with an
indescribable and glorious joy, for you are receiving the outcome of your
faith, the salvation of your souls. Concerning this salvation, the prophets who
prophesied of the grace that was to be yours made careful search and
inquiry, inquiring about the person or time that the Spirit of Christ within
20 them indicated when it testified in advance to the sufferings destined for

Christ and the subsequent glory. It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in regard to the things that have now been announced to you through those who brought you good news by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven--things into which angels long to look! Therefore

5 prepare your minds for action; discipline yourselves; set all your hope on the grace that Jesus Christ will bring you when he is revealed. Like obedient children, do not be conformed to the desires that you formerly had in ignorance. Instead, as he who called you is holy, be holy yourselves in all your conduct; for it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy." If you

10 invoke as Father the one who judges all people impartially according to their deeds, live in reverent fear during the time of your exile. You know that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your ancestors, not with perishable things like silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without defect or blemish. He was destined before

15 the foundation of the world, but was revealed at the end of the ages for your sake. Through him you have come to trust in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are set on God. Now that you have purified your souls by your obedience to the truth so that you have genuine mutual love, love one another deeply from the

20 heart. You have been born anew, not of perishable but of imperishable seed,

through the living and enduring word of God. For "All flesh is like grass
and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower
falls, but the word of the Lord endures forever." That word is the good news
that was announced to you. Rid yourselves, therefore, of all malice, and all
5 guile, insincerity, envy, and all slander. Like newborn infants, long for the
pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation-- if indeed
you have tasted that the Lord is good. Come to him, a living stone, though
rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and like living
stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood,
10 to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For it
stands in scripture: "See, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen
and precious; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame." To
you then who believe, he is precious; but for those who do not believe, "The
stone that the builders rejected has become the very head of the corner," and
15 "A stone that makes them stumble, and a rock that makes them fall." They
stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do. But you
are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in
order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of
darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you
20 are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have

received mercy. Beloved, I urge you as aliens and exiles to abstain from the desires of the flesh that wage war against the soul. Conduct yourselves honorably among the Gentiles, so that, though they malign you as evildoers, they may see your honorable deeds and glorify God when he comes to judge. For the Lord's sake accept the authority of every human institution, whether of the emperor as supreme, or of governors, as sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to praise those who do right. For it is God's will that by doing right you should silence the ignorance of the foolish. As servants of God, live as free people, yet do not use your freedom as a pretext for evil. Honor everyone. Love the family of believers. Fear God. Honor the emperor. Slaves, accept the authority of your masters with all deference, not only those who are kind and gentle but also those who are harsh. For it is a credit to you if, being aware of God, you endure pain while suffering unjustly. If you endure when you are beaten for doing wrong, what credit is that? But if you endure when you do right and suffer for it, you have God's approval. For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in his steps. "He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth." When he was abused, he did not return abuse; when he suffered, he did not threaten; but he entrusted himself to the one who judges justly. He himself

bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, free from sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. For you were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls. Wives, in the same way, accept the authority of your

5 husbands, so that, even if some of them do not obey the word, they may be won over without a word by their wives' conduct, when they see the purity and reverence of your lives. Do not adorn yourselves outwardly by braiding your hair, and by wearing gold ornaments or fine clothing; rather, let your adornment be the inner self with the lasting beauty of a gentle and quiet

10 spirit, which is very precious in God's sight. It was in this way long ago that the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves by accepting the authority of their husbands. Thus Sarah obeyed Abraham and called him lord. You have become her daughters as long as you do what is good and never let fears alarm you. Husbands, in the same way, show

15 consideration for your wives in your life together, paying honor to the woman as the weaker sex, since they too are also heirs of the gracious gift of life--so that nothing may hinder your prayers. Finally, all of you, have unity of spirit, sympathy, love for one another, a tender heart, and a humble mind. Do not repay evil for evil or abuse for abuse; but, on the contrary,

20 repay with a blessing. It is for this that you were called--that you might

inherit a blessing. For "Those who desire life and desire to see good days,
let them keep their tongues from evil and their lips from speaking deceit; let
them turn away from evil and do good; let them seek peace and pursue it.
For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their
5 prayer. But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil." Now who
will harm you if you are eager to do what is good? But even if you do
suffer for doing what is right, you are blessed. Do not fear what they fear,
and do not be intimidated, but in your hearts sanctify Christ as Lord. Always
be ready to make your defense to anyone who demands from you an
10 accounting for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and
reverence. Keep your conscience clear, so that, when you are maligned, those
who abuse you for your good conduct in Christ may be put to shame. For it
is better to suffer for doing good, if suffering should be God's will, than to
suffer for doing evil. For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the
15 righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you to God. He was put to
death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit, in which also he went and
made a proclamation to the spirits in prison, who in former times did not
obey, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah, during the building of
the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were saved through water.
20 And baptism, which this prefigured, now saves you--not as a removal of dirt

from the body, but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers made subject to him. Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same

5 intention (for whoever has suffered in the flesh has finished with sin), so as to live for the rest of your earthly life no longer by human desires but by the will of God. You have already spent enough time in doing what the Gentiles like to do, living in licentiousness, passions, drunkenness, revels, carousing, and lawless idolatry. They are surprised that you no longer join

10 them in the same excesses of dissipation, and so they blaspheme. But they will have to give an accounting to him who stands ready to judge the living and the dead. For this is the reason the gospel was proclaimed even to the dead, so that, though they had been judged in the flesh as everyone is judged, they might live in the spirit as God does. The end of all things is

15 near; therefore be serious and discipline yourselves for the sake of your prayers. Above all, maintain constant love for one another, for love covers a multitude of sins. Be hospitable to one another without complaining. Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received. Whoever speaks must do so as one

20 speaking the very words of God; whoever serves must do so with the

strength that God supplies, so that God may be glorified in all things through Jesus Christ. To him belong the glory and the power forever and ever.

Amen. Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that is taking place among you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you.

5 But rejoice insofar as you are sharing Christ's sufferings, so that you may also be glad and shout for joy when his glory is revealed. If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the spirit of glory, which is the Spirit of God, is resting on you. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, a criminal, or even as a mischief maker. Yet if any of you
10 suffers as a Christian, do not consider it a disgrace, but glorify God because you bear this name. For the time has come for judgment to begin with the household of God; if it begins with us, what will be the end for those who do not obey the gospel of God? And "If it is hard for the righteous to be saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinners?" Therefore, let
15 those suffering in accordance with God's will entrust themselves to a faithful Creator, while continuing to do good. Now as an elder myself and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as one who shares in the glory to be revealed, I exhort the elders among you to tend the flock of God that is in your charge, exercising the oversight, not under compulsion but willingly, as
20 God would have you do it--not for sordid gain but eagerly. Do not lord it

over those in your charge, but be examples to the flock. And when the chief shepherd appears, you will win the crown of glory that never fades away. In the same way, you who are younger must accept the authority of the elders. And all of you must clothe yourselves with humility in your dealings with

5 one another, for "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, so that he may exalt you in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you. Discipline yourselves, keep alert. Like a roaring lion your adversary the devil prowls around, looking for someone to devour. Resist him, steadfast in

10 your faith, for you know that your brothers and sisters in all the world are undergoing the same kinds of suffering. And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, support, strengthen, and establish you. To him be the power forever and ever. Amen. Through Silvanus, whom I consider a

15 faithful brother, I have written this short letter to encourage you and to testify that this is the true grace of God. Stand fast in it. Your sister church in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you greetings; and so does my son Mark. Greet one another with a kiss of love. Peace to all of you who are in Christ.*

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