

Second Peter

1 ¹ This letter comes from Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who share with us the same priceless trust in our God and Savior Jesus Christ, the one who is truly good and right. ² May you have ever more grace and peace as you grow in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. ³ Through his divine power we have been given everything that's important to live a God-centered life. This comes through knowing him who called us to himself by his own glory and goodness.

In this way he's given us wonderful, priceless promises. ⁴ Through these promises you can share in the divine nature, being rid of the corruption caused by this world's evil desires. ⁵ For this same reason, do everything you can! Add to your trust in God, goodness; add to goodness, knowledge; ⁶ add to knowledge, self-control; add to self-control, patience; add to patience, reverence; ⁷ add to reverence, affection for fellow-believers, add to affection for fellow-believers, love.

⁸ The more you have these qualities, the more they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ For anyone who doesn't have such qualities is short-sighted, or blind. They forget that they've been cleansed from their past sins. ¹⁰ So, brothers and sisters, be all the more determined to make sure you are truly “called and chosen.” If you do this, you won't ever fall.^a ¹¹ You will receive a tremendous welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

¹² That's why I always remind you about these things, even though you know them already, and you stand firm in the truth that you possess. ¹³ But I still think it's a good idea to encourage you by giving you reminders while I live. ¹⁴ I know the time when I shall leave this life will be coming soon— our Lord Jesus Christ has made this clear to me. ¹⁵ I will do my best so that when I'm gone you will always be able to remember these things.

^a**1:10.** There has been much debate over this verse. The idea is that you are meant to do all you can to hold onto salvation. It does not necessarily lead to the conclusion that you cannot lose salvation.

¹⁶ We didn't follow made-up myths when we told you about the coming in power of our Lord Jesus Christ—we saw his majesty for ourselves.^b ¹⁷ He received honor and glory from God the Father when the voice of majestic glory spoke to him and announced, “This is my Son, the one I love, and who truly pleases me.”^c ¹⁸ We ourselves heard this voice speak from heaven when we were with him on the holy mountain.

¹⁹ We also have the confirming word of prophecy that's absolutely trustworthy, and you will benefit from paying close attention to it. It's like a lamp that shines in a dark place until the day dawns, and the morning star shines to illuminate your minds. ²⁰ Most of all you should realize that no prophecy of scripture is a matter for interpretation based on the whims of an individual, ²¹ for no prophecy originated in human ideas, but prophets spoke for God as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

2 ¹ But just as there were false prophets among the people then, there will be false teachers among you. They subtly introduce false and destructive teachings, even denying the Lord who redeemed them, quickly bringing destruction on themselves. ² Many will follow their immoral perversions, and because of them people will condemn the way of truth. ³ They will greedily exploit you with false tales. However, they are already condemned: their sentence has been hanging over them for a long time, their destruction won't be postponed. ⁴ For God didn't even spare the angels when they sinned. He threw them into Tartarus,^d holding them in dark pits ready for judgment. ⁵ God didn't spare the ancient world either, but he protected Noah who told people about the God who did right. He was one of the eight who were saved when God sent a flood upon a world of evil people.

⁶ God condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to total destruction, burning them to ash, as an example of what will happen to those who live evil lives. ⁷ But God rescued Lot because he was a

^b**1:16.** This passage is a reference to the Transfiguration.

^c**1:17.** Quoting Matthew 17:5 or parallel passage.

^d**2:4.** “Tartarus.” This is often translated as “hell,” however this word has associations from other mythologies. It seems that “Tartarus” was used to represent the word “sheol” of the Old Testament, meaning the place of the dead.

good man, sickened by the disgusting immorality of his neighbors.⁸ (Lot lived among them, but he did what was good and right. He saw and heard what they did day after day, and their wickedness tormented him.)

⁹ As you can see, the Lord is able to rescue from their troubles those who respect him, and to keep the wicked until the day of judgment when their punishment is completed.¹⁰ This is especially so for those who follow their corrupt human desires, and contemptuously disregard authority. Arrogant and proud, they're not even afraid to defame heavenly beings.¹¹ Angels, on the other hand, even though they are stronger and more powerful, don't disparage them before the Lord.

¹² These people are like mindless beasts, produced like farm animals to be captured and slaughtered. They condemn things they don't know anything about, and just like animals they will be destroyed.¹³ They will be paid back in harm for the harm they have done. Their idea of fun is to commit their evil lusts in broad daylight. They are stains and blemishes on your community. They enjoy their deceptive pleasures even while they eat together with you.¹⁴ They're always on the lookout for adulterous relationships—they just can't stop sinning. They seduce the vulnerable; they have trained themselves in greed; they are offspring under a curse.¹⁵ They have abandoned the right path and went astray, following the way of Balaam, the son of Beor, who loved to be paid for doing evil.¹⁶ But he was told off for his evil actions—a dumb donkey spoke with a human voice and stopped the prophet's foolishness!

¹⁷ People like these are springs without water, mists blown away by the wind. They are destined for blackest darkness—forever.

¹⁸ Inflated with their own nonsense, they appeal to sensual desires, luring back into immorality those who have only just escaped from those who live in error.¹⁹ They promise them freedom, even though they themselves are slaves to depravity. “You are a slave to whatever conquers you.”²⁰ If people manage to escape from the evil influence of the world by knowing the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and then get tangled up in sin again and are defeated, they are worse off than they were in the first place.²¹ It would have been better not to have known the right way of truth, than to have known it and then turn away from the sacred instructions they'd been given.²² This proverb

has come true for them: “The dog has returned to its own vomit, and the washed pig has gone back to rolling in the mud.”^e

3¹ My friends, this is my second letter to you. In both of them I've tried to stir you up and remind you to think clearly with pure minds.² Remember the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets, and what the Lord and Savior commanded through your apostles.³ Above all you should know that derisive people will come in the last days, full of mockery and following their own evil desires.^f⁴ “So what happened to this coming he promised?” they ask. “Right from the time our ancestors died, everything's continued as it always has, ever since creation began.”⁵ But they deliberately ignore the fact that by God's command the heavens were created long ago. The earth came into existence from the water, and was surrounded by water.⁶ It was through water that the world that then existed was destroyed—through being flooded by water.⁷ But by means of that same divine command the heavens and the earth that now exist are reserved for destruction by fire^g at the day of judgment when the wicked will be destroyed.

⁸ However, my friends, don't forget this one thing: that for the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years is like a day.^h
⁹ The Lord is not delaying the fulfillment of his promise, as some define delay, but he is being very patient with you. He doesn't want anyone to be lost, but everyone to come and repent.

¹⁰ However, the day of the Lord will come, unexpectedly like a thief. The heavens will explode with a thunderous roar, and the elementsⁱ will be destroyed as they are burned up. The earth and everything in it will vanish.^j¹¹ Since everything is going to be destroyed in this way, what kind of people should you be? You should be living lives that are pure, dedicated to God,¹² waiting expectantly and being eager for the coming of the day of God. That day the heavens will catch fire and be destroyed, and the elements

^e2:22. Quoting Proverbs 26:11.

^f3:3. See Jude 1:18.

^g3:7. “Destruction by fire”: Literally, “in fire”.

^h3:8. See Psalms 90:4.

ⁱ3:10. It is not clear exactly what these “elements” refer to.

^j3:10. Or “will be seen for what it is.”

will melt in the heat. ¹³ But as for us, we are looking for new heavens and a new earth that God has promised where everything is good and right.^k

¹⁴ So, my friends, since you're anticipating these things, make sure you'll be found pure and blameless, and at peace with God.

¹⁵ Remember that it is our Lord's patience that gives the opportunity for salvation. That's what our dear brother Paul was explaining to you in all his letters with the wisdom given to him by God. ¹⁶ He spoke about these things, though some of what he wrote is certainly hard to understand. Some ignorant and unbalanced people have twisted what he wrote to their own loss—just as they do other scriptures. ¹⁷ My friends, since you already know this, make sure that these errors of the wicked don't lead you astray, and you don't fall from your firm position. ¹⁸ May you grow in the grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. May he have glory, both now and forever! Amen.

^k3:13. Or “where righteousness dwells.”