

Free Bible Version

Second Peter

1 ¹This 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. ²May you have ever more grace and peace as you grow in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. ³Through 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.

⁴Through these promises you can share in the divine nature, being rid of the corruption caused by this world's evil desires.

⁵For this same reason, do everything you can! Add to your trust in God, goodness; add to goodness, knowledge; ⁶add to knowledge, self-control; add to self-control, patience; add to patience, reverence; ⁷add to reverence, affection for fellow-believers, add to affection for fellow-believers, love.

⁸The more you have these qualities, the more they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹For anyone who doesn't have such qualities is short-sighted, or blind. They forget that they've been cleansed from their past sins. ¹⁰So, 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. ¹¹You will receive a tremendous welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

¹²That'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. ¹³But I still think it's a good idea to encourage you by giving you reminders while I live. ¹⁴I know the time when I shall leave this life will be coming soon— our Lord Jesus Christ has made this clear to me. ¹⁵I 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.

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¹⁶We 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^a. ¹⁷He 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.” ¹⁸We ourselves heard this voice speak from heaven when we were with him on the holy mountain.

¹⁹We 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 rises in your hearts. ²⁰Most of all you should realize that no prophecy of scripture is a matter for interpretation based on the whims of an individual, ²¹for no prophecy originated in human ideas, but prophets spoke for God as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

2 ¹But 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. ²Many will follow their immoral perversions, and because of them people will condemn the way of truth. ³They 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. ⁴For God didn't even spare the angels when they sinned. He threw them into Tartarus^b, holding them in dark pits ready for judgment. ⁵God 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.

⁶God condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to total destruction, burning them to ash, as an example of what will

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

^b 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.

happen to those who live evil lives. ⁷But God rescued Lot because he was a 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).

⁹As 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. ¹⁰This 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. ¹¹Angels, on the other hand, even though they are stronger and more powerful, don't disparage them before the Lord.

¹²These 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. ¹³They 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. ¹⁴They'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. ¹⁵They 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. ¹⁶But he was told off for his evil actions—a dumb donkey spoke with a human voice and stopped the prophet's foolishness!

¹⁷People like these are springs without water, mists blown away by the wind. They are destined for blackest darkness—forever. ¹⁸Inflated 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. ¹⁹They promise them freedom, even though they themselves are slaves to depravity. You are a slave to whatever conquers you. ²⁰If 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.

²¹It would have been better not to have known the right way of

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truth, than to have known it and then turn away from the sacred instructions they'd been given. ²²This 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."

3 ¹My 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. ²Remember the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets, and what the Lord and Savior commanded through your apostles. ³Above all you should know that derisive people will come in the last days, full of mockery and following their own evil desires. ⁴"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." ⁵But 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. ⁶It was through water that the world that then existed was destroyed—through being flooded by water. ⁷But by means of that same divine command the heavens and the earth that now exist are reserved for destruction by fire^a at the day of judgment when the wicked will be destroyed.

⁸However, 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. ⁹The 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.

¹⁰However the day of the Lord will come, unexpectedly like a thief. The heavens will explode with a thunderous roar, and the elements^b will be destroyed as they are burned up. The earth and everything in it will vanish^c. ¹¹Since 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, ¹²waiting expectantly and being eager for the coming of the day of God.

^a 3:7. "Destruction by fire": literally "in fire".

^b 3:10. It is not clear exactly what these "elements" refer to.

^c 3:10. Or, "will be seen for what it is."

That day the heavens will catch fire and be destroyed, and the elements will melt in the heat. ¹³But as for us, we are looking for new heavens and a new earth that God has promised where everything is right^a.

¹⁴So, my friends, since you're anticipating these things, make sure you'll be found pure and blameless, and at peace with God. ¹⁵Remember 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. ¹⁶He 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. ¹⁷My 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. ¹⁸May 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.

^a 3:13. Or "where righteousness dwells."

