

2 PETER

THE SECOND LETTER OF PETER

Greetings

- 1 **1** From Simeon Peter, servant and apostle of Jesus Christ; to all who treasure the same faith as ourselves, given through the righteousness of our God and saviour Jesus Christ.^a •May you have more and more grace and peace as you come to know our Lord^b more and more.

Ac 15:14+

[Jude 2

1:8
Ph 3:10
Col 2:6

A call to Christian living, and its reward

- 3 By his divine power, he has given us all the things that we need for life and for true devotion, bringing us to know God himself, who has called us by his own glory and goodness.^c •In making these gifts, he has given us^d the guarantee of something very great and wonderful to come: through them^e you will be able to share the divine nature and to escape corruption in a world that is sunk in vice.^f
5 But to attain this,^g you will have to do your utmost yourselves, adding goodness to the faith that you have, understanding to your goodness, •self-control to your understanding, patience to your self-control, true devotion to your patience, kindness towards your fellow men to your devotion, and, to this kindness, love.
8 If you have a generous supply of these, they will not leave you ineffectual or unproductive: they will bring you to a real knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.
9 But without them^h a man is blind or else short-sighted; he has forgotten how his past sins were washed away. •Brothers, you have been called and chosen: work all the harder to justify it.ⁱ If you do all these things there is no danger that you will
11 ever fall away. •In this way you will be granted admittance into the eternal kingdom^j of our Lord and saviour Jesus Christ.

Ep 3:16-19

Jn 1:14+

Ws 2:33
Jn 1:10+; 12
Ac 17:28+
2 Co 3:18
1 Jn 2:15f;
5:19

Gal 5:22+

1:2

2 Th 1:11
1 Jn 3:6+

The apostolic witness

- 12 That is why I am continually recalling the same truths to you, even though you already know them and firmly hold them. •I am sure it is my duty, as long as I am in this tent, to keep stirring you up with reminders, •since I know the time for taking off this tent is coming soon, as our Lord Jesus Christ foretold to me.
15 And I shall take great care that after my own departure you will still have a means to recall these things to memory.

[Jude 5

1 Jn 2:21
Ws 9:15
Is 38:12
2 Co 5:1
Jn 21:18-19

1 a. Or 'of our God and of the saviour Jesus Christ'.

b. Lit. 'through knowing our Lord'; var. 'through knowing God and Jesus (or Jesus Christ) our Lord'. All through this letter it is Christ who is proposed as the object of a Christian's knowledge, 1:3,8; 2:20; 3:18.

c. 'glory' here refers to the miracles done by Jesus as a sign of his divinity, cf. Jn 1:14+, but in particular it refers to the transfiguration, 2 P 1:16-18. 'goodness' could refer to his powers both natural and miraculous.

d. 'us', var. 'you'. What has been promised is something that concerns the 'Day of the Lord'. cf. 3:4,9-10,12-13.

e. I.e. as a result of the glory and goodness of Christ. Var. (Vulg.) 'through it'.

f. Var. (Vulg.) 'the corruption of the vice that is in the world'.

g. Lit. 'For this very reason'; var. (Vulg.) 'But you'.

h. This is the same sort of warning against Gnosticism that is given in the Johannine letters, cf. 1 Jn 1:8+. Gnostics claimed to know God without keeping his commandments.

i. Add. (Vulg.) 'by good deeds'.

j. This, like 1:4; 3:4,9-10, looks forward to the *parousia*.

It was not any cleverly invented myths that we were repeating^k when we brought you the knowledge of the power and the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ; we had seen his majesty for ourselves.^l •He was honoured and glorified by God the Father, when the Sublime Glory itself spoke to him and said, ^m 'This is my Son, the Beloved; he enjoys my favour'. •We heard this ourselves, spoken from heaven, when we were with him on the holy mountain.ⁿ

The value of prophecy

So we have confirmation of what was said in prophecies;^o and you will be right to depend on prophecy and take it as a lamp for lighting a way through the dark until the dawn comes and the morning star rises in your minds. At the same time, we must be most careful to remember that the interpretation of scriptural prophecy is never a matter for the individual. •Why? Because no prophecy ever came from man's initiative. When men spoke for God it was the Holy Spirit that moved them.

False teachers

2 As there were false prophets in the past history of our people, so you too will have your false teachers, who will insinuate their own disruptive views and disown the Master who purchased their freedom. They will destroy themselves very quickly; •but there will be many who copy their shameful behaviour and the Way of Truth will be brought into disrepute on their account. •They will eagerly try to buy you for themselves with insidious speeches, but for them the Condemnation, pronounced so long ago, is at its work already, and Destruction is not asleep.^a •When angels sinned, God did not spare them: he sent them down to the underworld and consigned them to the dark underground caves to be held there till the day of Judgement. •Nor did he spare the world in ancient times:^b it was only Noah he saved, the preacher of righteousness, along with seven others, when he sent the Flood over a disobedient world. •The cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, these too he condemned and reduced to ashes; he destroyed them completely,^c as a warning to anybody lacking reverence in the future; •he rescued Lot, however, a holy man who had been sickened by the shameless way in which these vile people behaved—•for that holy man, living among them, was outraged in his good soul by the crimes that he saw and heard of every day. •These are all examples of how the Lord can rescue the good from the ordeal, and hold the wicked for their punishment until the day of Judgement, •especially those who are governed by their corrupt bodily desires and have no respect for authority.^d

The punishment to come

Such self-willed people with no reverence are not afraid of offending against the glorious ones,^e •but the angels in their greater strength and power make no complaint or accusation against them in front of the Lord.^f •All the same, these people who only insult anything that they do not understand are not reasoning beings, but simply animals born to be caught and killed, and they will quite certainly destroy themselves by their own work of destruction, •and get their reward of evil for the evil that they do. They are unsightly blots on your society: men whose only object is dissipation all day long,^g and they amuse themselves deceiving you even when they are your guests at a meal; •with their eyes always looking for adultery,^h men with an infinite capacity for sinning, they will seduce any soul which is at all unstable. Greed is the one lesson their minds have learnt. They are under a curse. •They have left the right path and wandered off to follow the path of Balaam son of Beor,ⁱ who thought he could profit best by sinning, until he was called to order for his faults. The dumb donkey put a stop to that prophet's madness when it talked like a man. •People like this are dried-up rivers, fogs swirling in the wind, and the dark underworld is the place reserved for them. With their high-flown talk, which is all hollow, they tempt back the ones who

have only just escaped from paganism,¹ playing on their bodily desires with
 19 debaucheries. •They may promise freedom^k but they themselves are slaves, slaves
 to corruption; because if anyone lets himself be dominated by anything, then
 20 he is a slave to it; •and anyone who has escaped the pollution of the world once
 by coming to know our Lord and saviour Jesus Christ, and who then allows
 himself to be entangled^l by it a second time and mastered, will end up in a worse
 21 state than he began in. •It would even have been better for him never to have
 learnt the way of holiness, than to know it and afterwards desert the holy rule
 22 that was entrusted to him. •What he has done is exactly as the proverb rightly
 says: *The dog goes back to his own vomit* and: When the sow has been washed, it
 wallows in the mud.

Jn 8:34
 Rm 6:16-17

Mt 12:45p

Ezk 3:20

1 Co 11:2+
 Pr 26:11

The Day of the Lord; the prophets and the apostles

- 1 **3** My friends, this is my second^a letter to you, and in both of them I have tried
 2 to awaken a true understanding in you by giving you a reminder: •recalling to
 you what was said in the past by the holy prophets and the commandments of the
 Lord and saviour which you were given by the apostles.
- 3 We must be careful to remember^b that during the last days^c there are bound
 to be people who will be scornful, the kind who always please themselves what
 4 they do, and they will make fun of the promise •and ask, 'Well, where is this
 coming? Everything goes on as it has since the Fathers^d died, as it has since it
 5 began at the creation.' •They are choosing to forget^e that there were heavens
 at the beginning, and that the earth was formed by the word of God out of
 6 water and between the waters, •so that the world of that time was destroyed by
 7 being flooded by water. •But by the same word, the present sky and earth are
 destined for fire, and are only being reserved until Judgement day so that all
 sinners may be destroyed.
- 8 But there is one thing, my friends, that you must never forget: that with the
 Lord, 'a day' can mean a thousand years, and *a thousand years is like a day*.
 9 The Lord is not being slow to carry out his promises, as anybody else might be
 called slow; but he is being patient with you all, wanting nobody to be lost and
 10 everybody to be brought to change his ways.^f •The Day of the Lord will come
 like a thief, and then with a roar the sky will vanish, the elements will catch fire
 and fall apart, the earth and all that it contains will be burnt up.^g

||Jude 17

Ezk 12:22
 1 Tm 4:1+
 ||Jude 18

1:16; 2:1

Is 5:19

Gn 1:2,6-9

Gn 7-9
 Mt 24:38-39

Is 51:6
 Mt 3:12+
 Rm 2:6+

Ps 90:4

Hab 2:2-3

Ezk 18:23

Rm 2:4-5

1 P 3:20

Mt 24:43p

1 Th 5:2

Mt 24:29+
 Rv 20:11

Conclusion and doxology

- 11 Since everything is coming to an end like this, you should be living holy and Ac 3:19-20

k. Lit. 'not following myths that have been cleverly devised'; this is another warning against Gnostics who had a doctrine of the *parousia* based not on logical proofs, but on an elaborate mythological system, cf. 3:4f.

l. At the transfiguration.

m. Lit. 'For receiving from God (the) Father honour and glory such a voice being borne to him by the magnificent glory'; var. (Vulg.) '...out of the magnificent glory'.

n. 'holy mountain' should perhaps be taken as a suggestion that the mountain of transfiguration was the antitype of Sinai.

o. Lit. 'We have more firm the prophetic word'. The transfiguration is a preliminary glimpse of scripture prophecy being fulfilled.

2 a. These false teachers have already been condemned, cf. Jude 4.

b. The antediluvian world.

c. Lit. 'he reduced to ashes and condemned them to extinction'; om. 'to extinction'.

d. The authority of Christ, cf. 2:1; Jude 4,8.

e. Lit. 'glories'; the angels.

f. 'in front of the Lord'; om. (Vulg.).

g. Lit. 'deeming daytime luxury to be pleasure', var. 'happy to give themselves up to debauchery in broad daylight'.

h. Lit. 'eyes full of adultery'; var. (Vulg.) '...of an

adulteress'.

i. 'Beor', misspelt in most MSS Bosor or even Beorsor.

j. Lit. 'from those who live in error'. The reference is to the 'unstable souls' of 2:14; many of them copy the shameful behaviour of the false teachers, 2:2.

k. Liberty, for the Gnostics, included freedom from any moral restrictions, cf. Jude 4.

l. This refers to those who have been seduced by the false teachers not to the teachers themselves.

3 a. Alludes probably to 1 P.

b. The prediction that follows seems to be based more on the teaching of the apostles than on O.T. prophecy, cf. Ac 20:29; 2 Tm 3:1-5. It fits into Jude 18 better than it fits in here.

c. That heretics should exist is itself a proof that the last days are near.

d. Either the patriarchs or the Christians of the first generation.

e. The inference is that the false teachers proved the impossibility of the *parousia* from the unchangeableness of the universe.

f. God's mercy is an alternative explanation for the alleged delay of the *parousia*, cf. Ws 11:23f; 12:8+.

g. 'burnt up', corr.: 'uncovered' (Greek). This destruction of the world by fire was, in Graeco-Roman times, a common topic for philosophers.

Is 34:4; 51:6+ saintly lives •while you wait and long for the Day of God to come, when the sky 12
 Rm 8:21 will dissolve in flames and the elements melt in the heat. •What we are waiting 13
 Heb 12:27+ for is what he promised: the new heavens and new earth, the place where right-
 Rv 20:11+ 1s 65:17: ousness will be at home. •So then, my friends, while you are waiting, do your 14
 66:22 best to live lives without spot or stain so that he will find you at peace. •Think of 15
 Rv 21:1,27 our Lord's patience as your opportunity to be saved: our brother Paul, who is so
 1s 60:21 dear to us, told you this when he wrote to you with the wisdom that is his special
 Rm 8:19+ gift. •He always writes like this when he deals with this sort of subject, and this 16
 1 Tm 1:15-16 makes some points^a in his letter hard to understand; these are the points that
 uneducated and unbalanced people distort, in the same way as they distort the rest
 Heb 2:1 of scriptureⁱ—a fatal thing for them to do. •You have been warned about this, 17
 my friends; be careful not to get carried away by the errors of unprincipled
 people, from the firm ground that you are standing on. •Instead, go on growing 18
 in the grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and saviour Jesus Christ. To him
 Rm 16:27+ be glory, in time and in eternity. Amen.

3 h. About the *parousia*, presumably, since that is the subject under discussion.

1. This implies that the letters of Paul were considered canonical.

1 JOHN

THE FIRST LETTER OF JOHN

INTRODUCTION

The incarnate Word

- 1 **1** Something which has existed since the beginning,
that we have heard,
and we have seen with our own eyes;
that we have watched
and touched with our hands:
the Word, who is life—
this is our subject.
- 2 That life was made visible:
we saw it and we are giving our testimony,
telling you of the eternal life
which was with the Father and has been made visible to us.
- 3 What we have seen and heard
we are telling you
so that you too may be in union^a with us,
as we are in union
with the Father
and with his Son Jesus Christ.
- 4 We are writing this to you to make our own^b joy complete.
- 2:13
Jn 1:1-5
Ac 22:15+
Jn 20:20,25,
27
Lk 24:39
Jn 1:1+; 3:
11+
- Jn 1:14+;
15:27
5:20
- 2:3,19,24,29
Ac 4:20; 26:
16
Ac 2:42f
- 1 Co 1:9
Jn 15:11;
16:22-24
2 Jn 12

I. WALK IN THE LIGHT

- 5 This is what we have heard from him,
and the message that we are announcing to you:
God is light; there is no darkness in him at all.
- 6 If we say that we are in union with God^c
while we are living in darkness,
we are lying because we are not living the truth.
- 7 But if we live our lives in the light,
as he is in the light,
we are in union with one another,^d
- 3:11
Dn 2:22
Jn 8:12+
1 Tm 6:16
Jm 1:17
Jn 3:21

1 a. Lit. 'have fellowship' (so also in v. 7). This union is the idea most central to John's mysticism, Jn 14:20; 15:1-6; 17:11,20-26; union between all Christians results from the union created by Christ between each Christian and God. This union is referred to in different ways: a Christian lives 'in' God and God lives 'in' him, 1 Jn 2:5,6,24,27; 3:6,24; 4:12,13,15,16; a Christian is begotten by God, has new life from him, 2:29; 3:9; 4:7; 5:1,18; the Christian is from God, is his child, 2:16; 3:10; 4:4-6; 5:19; the Christian knows God, 2:3,13,14; 3:6; 4:7,8 (on knowledge and presence cf. Jn 14:17; 2 Jn 1-2). This union with God shows itself in a person's faith and in his love for the brothers,

cf. 1:7+.

b. 'our own', var. (Vulg.) 'your'.

c. Lit. 'him'. In this translation the pronoun has been rendered 'God', or 'Christ', where it seemed necessary for the sense.

d. God is in Christians, 1:3+, as the principle of their new life. Since God is light, 1:5, virtue, 2:29, and love, 4:8,16, whoever lives in union with God must live a life of light, virtue and love, and keep God's commandments, especially the commandment to love all human beings, 2:10,11; 3:10; 4:8,16. Faith and love are thus the visible evidence of true union with God, 1:6,7; 2:3,6; 3:6,10,17,24; 4:6,8,13,16,20.